

THE STORY OF TORCH

THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TORCH CLUBS



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About the Author...

Tom Carroll's Torch experience began in the early 1940's, when he was invited to a member of the Torch Club in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

In 1959 Tom joined with Harry Krusz, also a former member at Winston-Salem (and a prime mover in the founding of the San Antonio Torch Club), in bringing Torch to a new club in Lincoln, Nebraska. He served as President of the Lincoln club in the 1960-61 year and then began a 27-year service as that club's Secretary-Treasurer.

In 1972 Tom was elected to the Board of the International Association of Torch Clubs. When a sudden illness forced the Secretary-Treasurer of the IATC to discontinue his service, Tom volunteered to serve the Association as part-time manager on an interim basis until the Board could find a successor to the former Secretary-Treasurer. This "interim" period lasted five years, until the decision was made to enter into a contract with the Bostrom Company (an association management firm based in Chicago).

At that point Tom volunteered to serve as the Association's first Archivist. The accumulated archival materials were shipped to Tom in Lincoln-where they are still securely stored in his condominium at Van Dorn Villa, a senior citizen retirement center. These memorabilia have provided the information contained in this Torch history.

Tom has had four of his Lincoln Torch Club papers published in The Torch, plus a Poem titled "Dream of Freedom" in 1949, when he was in the Winston-Salem Torch Club. In addition, he has written a number of Torch-oriented articles over the years, including "The Evolution of a Social Compact", "My Life in Torch", "Seven Stories of Courage", and others.

Among the awards Tom has received from the International Association have been the Gold Torch Award and an Honorary Life Membership. From the Lincoln, Nebraska, club he has received the Silver Torch Award, an Honorary Life Membership, and much appreciation for his many years of outstanding service as Secretary-Treasurer. The Lincoln Club has received several honors from the International Association, due greatly to Tom's leadership.

These historical notes were excerpted by Tom from the archives, and the International Association of Torch Clubs assumes no responsibility for the contents, or for any omission.

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THE TORCH STORY

By Thomas L. Carroll

CHAPTER ONE – The Twenties

Please join me for lunch at the Radisson Hotel in Minneapolis. The date is June 16, 1924, so we will have to be invisible guests. But even though we cannot participate, it will be an interesting experience for us to observe the beginning of The Torch Story.

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It is a much larger group than we had anticipated – about 75 gentlemen, all invited by the host, a man named William F. Bullock. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the development of a new professional association. But before we get into that, let's share some of our first impressions of the man at the head of the table.

He certainly doesn't look like a professional man. He is a wiry, dominating man with obvious signs of nervous strength, undoubtedly a hard worker.

In his introductory remarks, he explains that for some time he has had a dream of organizing an international association of clubs designed to give professional men an opportunity to meet men from other professions interested in the world about them so that they could exchange ideas and broaden their horizons. He says:

"It has been my experience that professional men are so absorbed in their own fields that they really have little time or inclination to acquire an understanding of other fields. When circumstances require that attention be given to the views and problems of others, they lack appropriate sympathy or understanding..."

He then reviews an experience he had in organizing a group called the Professional Men's Club. He says that he had served this group for the past two or three years and had organized six clubs for them, including one in Minneapolis and another in St. Paul. But he says he has resigned "to organize a new and better institution because of dissatisfaction with their changed objectives."

Curiously enough, no one pressures him for more of an explanation and we wonder to ourselves whether there was another side of the story. But we will never know.

It is clear from the reaction of those present that Bullock's vision of a professional Round Table "to get light and understanding on all vital subjects" has a strong appeal. The only question raised is whether or not another discussion club can be organized in a city already served by a similar club which Bullock himself had organized. But assured by their high-spirited host that this would present no problem, it is agreed that an organizing committee should be set up.

And so, it was – or could have been – that the idea of Torch was born.

There is some confusion in the records as to what happened next. Burdette R. Buckingham (President of the Association, 1928-31) in a speech at the 1946 convention said:

“Mr. Bullock, writing in 1929, said that an organization meeting took place on July 24th. My understanding is that the Committee on Permanent Organization reported at a meeting on July 10, 1924. This date is given rightly, I think, as the official birthday of our organization. I think there is a confusion between the Minneapolis club and the International Association of Torch Clubs. The two were not the same. The list of directors for the International Association was somewhat different from the list of directors at the local club...”

Torch leaders who knew and worked with William Bullock found various ways of describing him. One said he was a “flaming evangel.” Another said, “he had quite a temper but still a kindly man withal.” But everyone agreed that he was sincerely committed to the Torch idea. And all of us can be sure that without him there never would have been a Torch world created for our enjoyment and benefit.

He not only had a dream, but along with it a determination to turn vision into reality. Even before the first club was organized he referred to an Association of clubs. Thirteen years before the first Canadian club was formed, he thrust the word International into the name.

So, it is not surprising that under his forcing hand it was not long after the June luncheon that the “mother club” of Torch was organized.

Officers were elected and sights were set on officially setting up the Association structure. This was accomplished with the election of a corps of officers headed by Dr. F. Denton White, our first President.

Bullock then insisted that incorporation was in order “to fix the liability of the officers and to give the society a semblance of existence.” The draft of the corporate document was adopted on December 8, 1924, at a meeting held at the Elks Club. The records become a bit confusing at this point.

But clearly the focus was on extending the organization to other cities. The question was put to Bullock as to whether he could do it. His reply was that his faith in the future was strong and that it was his estimate that within ten years, seventy-five chapters could be formed in many principle cities.

If it was the purpose of our founder to impress his early recruits with his “Grand Design” for the future of the new organization, he must surely have succeeded. We don’t know who actually wrote the first Constitution, but in his memoirs, Bullock notes that he personally paid for it, since at that point there was not yet any treasury on which to draw.

On the day the document was adopted, the “Association” had not yet chartered its first member club. Yet the Constitution provided for annual conventions with minimal required representation from member clubs. It also made provision for a publication to be funded by subscriptions required of individual club members. Needless to say, it was some time before these – and other similar provisions – could be put into effect.

Modern readers of this document would find very little in it – other than the name – which would be recognizable in today’s Torch world. The “Objects” section, for example, was like an old-fashioned rhetorical garment – heavily decorated with words like “ethics” and “high moral standards” and starched stiff with phrases like “services to society” and expressions on “matters of importance.”

There actually was a motto: "True Service to Society Through the Professions."

Under an addendum titled "Exhibit A" there was a list of sixteen prescribed professions from which clubs could recruit "only men of good moral and ethical standing." The probability is that this list was a reflection of the membership of the "mother club" in Minneapolis.

Later that month – on December 27th – the Board met at the Ogden Hotel. The principal item of business was to grant charters to the Minneapolis club and to a newly organized club in St. Paul. Apparently some initiation fees were beginning to come in as authorization was given for the officers to open checking accounts. Moreover, there was a motion to transfer a check to Bullock for \$1,140 – the first record of any payment to him.

It must be understood that Bullock planned to make his living by organizing Torch clubs. It is also clear that he wanted to carry out that purpose with as little interference as possible. To accomplish that he had written into the constitution a provision for the appointment by the President of an "Extension Board" of three men with power to "make all necessary and proper arrangements for the expansion of the organization, including the selection and appointment of organizers and their assistants, subject to the approval of the Board of Directors."

He then proceeded to draw up a contract covering his services – which was quickly approved.

It was a strangely one-sided document which virtually permitted him to handle Torch extension as a personal business. He was to receive \$20 for every member of a local club whom he secured. The contract was for ten years and was renewable at his option.

The next year – 1925 – was, to put it as charitably as possible, a period a little gain. The St. Paul club must have died in its infancy, as it is not included in our archival records. Bullock had, for reasons not recorded, elected to begin his Torch extension career in the Southwest. One club – Fort Worth, Texas – survived. Two others – Dallas and Oklahoma City – tried but failed. So, at the end of the first year and a half we had a total of two active clubs!

Early in 1926, Bullock's luck changed. Undaunted by the disastrous experiences of the prior year, Bullock moved into New York State. By July 1 he had established clubs the length of the Mohawk Valley, in Albany, Syracuse, Utica, Rochester and Buffalo. Later in the year he organized our first club in Ohio, at Akron.

He then took on the services of an assistant, as his contract permitted him to do. This man, D. B. Zimmer, like Bullock, was not a professional man as defined in the terms employed in the Torch vernacular of those times. But, as one of our early leaders later said, "He looked a lot more like a professional man than Bullock ever did." Actually, the two men were so different in the techniques they used in approaching prospects that they complemented each other very well. Here is what one such prospect – later a devoted Torch leader – had to say about Zimmer:

"I well remember his approach to me. By appointment confidentiality secured, he opened the conversation with marked solemnity. He created in me the notion that he had a great secret to impart, something that might alter the rest of my life. His attitude was almost conspiratorial. I felt greatly flattered, and before long I was decidedly interested."

Years after his first encounter with Zimmer, another Torch leader said:

“Why, if anybody had told me that any living man could induce me to join a new organization that I never heard of, I should have thought him crazy. Yet all good reasons seemed to have lost their force. Somehow Zimmer got under my skin.”

If you get the impression that Zimmer was something of a high-pressure salesman, you are probably right. But he was dealing in a high-class product for discerning people. Somehow it worked. Before the end of the year he had organized clubs in two more Ohio cities – Canton and Columbus.

The year 1926 was also noteworthy in our history as it was in that year that our first directors from outside Minneapolis were added to the Board – two from Dallas and one from Fort Worth.

Early in 1927, the Board decided that the time had come to hold the first convention. A letter was sent to all clubs asking for invitations to entertain the event. One of these came to the club of Irving R. Templeton of Buffalo, who had just been named to the Board. On May 23, the Board officially accepted an invitation from Buffalo to hold the convention in that city in the month of October – an invitation which was gratefully accepted.

Four more clubs were added to the Torch roster prior to the convention, which was held on October 21 and 22, 1927, at the Hotel Statler. There were twenty-one delegates registered from twelve of the fourteen active clubs. Although the convention was shorter than those of today, it was not too unlike our modern version. There were business sessions, luncheon meetings, a banquet, and even an organized tour of key attractions for those so inclined.

The decisions reached at this first convention were highly significant. Briefly they were:

- That a proposed merger with the Professional Men’s Club, which was recommended by the Board, was not approved,
- That a provision in the constitution for a Committee on Public Affairs to recommend issues to be supported or opposed be removed. (The delegates felt that clubs should be encouraged to discuss such issues but remain neutral as far as official action was concerned),
- That members could transfer from one club to another without payment of another initiation fee,
- That communication between the Association and its member clubs be improved through asking the clubs to send reports to the Association and by having the Association get out a bulletin “from time to time.” (At a Board meeting following the convention the sum of \$1,000 was allotted for this purpose for one year),
- That Irving R. Templeton be named the first Secretary of the Association with headquarters at his law office in Buffalo,
- That annual individual member dues be increased from \$2 to \$3,
- That the number of directors be decreased to twelve and, probably the greatest significance of all,
- That the Minneapolis domination of the Board be ended by adding directors from Indianapolis, Akron, Columbus, Rochester, Cincinnati, Syracuse, Utica, Canton, Fort Worth, and Buffalo.

Dr. F. Denton White, a Minneapolis dentist and our first President, had told the delegates that Minneapolis had no intention of controlling the Association indefinitely. He said, “We have had only one thing in mind all of the time... our object was to make Torch the best it could possibly be.”

Dr. Dudley C. Frise, President of the Minneapolis club, gave an explanation of the Torch emblem, which had been designed by William K. Macomber of the "mother club." He said, "The water triangle bears on each of its sides one of the great branches of professional activity: Science, Literature, and Art. The torch is an ancient symbol of Light and Truth. The purpose of the emblem is to blaze the way with Light and Truth to a greater fraternal spirit among professional men in service to society."

The highlight of the convention was an address by Judge Charles Kirschbaum of the Canton, Ohio club. He said:

"We can do something in every community in which we meet; do something to create what I am pleased to call a civic conscience so that there will be a different spirit, a finer and more serious concept of living."

By resolution, the address was adopted by the Convention as "its declaration of purposes and aims" for the Association.

Templeton served as chairman of the Committee on Convention Arrangement. The delegates were happy to have found a man to serve as Secretary of the Association who had already established himself as "a natural born manager."

Templeton later wrote of this convention:

"We were brought together, exchanged views, and were given mountain-top glimpses of Torch ideals and aspirations by men of vision. Fundamentals were discussed thoroughly. Friendships were formed, a great future was prophesied, and last but not least, a real organization was created."

To complete the story of this first convention, we should probably add that there was one resolution passed and immediately forgotten. It was that the Morning Glory be adopted as the Torch flower. But aside from that, it was a truly momentous event which set the stage for the dramatic growth that was yet to come.

In January 1928, Irving Templeton edited and published our first Association publication designed to carry out the club communications assignment given him at the 1927 convention. Its name was The Torch Light, a twelve-page bulletin. Templeton said he had "dabbled with campus journalism at Syracuse University and loved this part of the job."

This first issue contained a short history of Torch, a list of clubs, program topics and speakers from ten clubs and the names of officers from eighteen clubs. There also was a group picture of the officers of the Association.

The second issue (in April) highlighted the lives and accomplishments of outstanding members with special identification of members who were college presidents. A third issue (in July) marked the first publication of a Torch paper, the address given at the 1927 convention banquet by Dr. B.R. Buckingham, Vice President of the Association and a member of the Columbus, Ohio Torch Club.

The October issue contained the program of the Columbus convention, held the same month. There was a long article on social work by C. M. Bookman of Cincinnati. The most unusual feature was the inclusion of an editorial from Good Housekeeping magazine presenting different views on education between John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and Arthur B. Morgan, a nationally known Torch member. (The editor expressed agreement with the latter!)

The Columbus convention on October 26 and 27, 1928 was held at the Hotel Deshler-Wallick. The program listed sixty-one delegates (and alternates) from different clubs. Highlights of the convention follow:

- The question of a possible merger with the Professional Men's Club was reopened for further consideration,
- A proposed plan for establishment of Torch "districts" was presented by William Bullock, Field Secretary,
- Proposals for amendments to the Constitution were made and referred for study and action at the next convention,
- Cincinnati was selected as the site for the 1929 Convention and
- An Education Committee was made a Standing Committee with a number of responsibilities, including assistance to staff members, suggestion of topics for discussion at the next convention, and utilization of "carefully selected magazines" to place Torch before groups of professional men.

It is also of interest to discover that the need to recruit more young members was given emphasis at the 1928 convention.

But probably the dominant subject in the discussions was the struggle with the question of eligibility. What about men who call himself a minister of the gospel but has never attended a seminary? What about the man who was trained as a professional in "one of the learned professions" but is now in banking? The debate ran on until the clock ran out! Subsequently it was decided that to the original eligibility list should be added librarians, museum curators, pharmacists, scientists, and "men employed in sociological and research work."

On the whole the spirit of the convention was high as the team of Bullock and Zimmer had been doing well in extension. Twelve new clubs were added in 1928 and none were lost that year. The only negative note was that Bullock had added two new assistants during the year, but neither had produced any results.

The history of that year would not be complete, however, without mentioning the election of Burdette Buckingham to the presidency.

The new Torch president had an illustrious background in educational work. He had written extensively in that field and was widely known as a public speaker.

A number of progressive decisions had been made at both the 1927 and 1928 conventions. But they were not self-activating. What Torch needed now was dynamic leadership. And it got that leadership in the team of Buckingham and Templeton, as we shall see as our story unfolds.

At the time of the 1928 convention where he was elected President, Buckingham was on a speaking tour and could not be present. But he called an interim board meeting for December 3, 1928, in Albany, New York. Although not all directors could be present, much was accomplished. Standing Committees were announced. Suggestions for an improved system of collections were drafted. Thought was given to an improved agenda for the next convention, with special emphasis on needed amendments to the Constitution.

The January issue of The Torch Light was expanded to thirty-two pages, most of it devoted to reports on the Columbus Convention. The first club directory, including places and dates of meetings, appeared in the April 1929 issue. With the July issue, the publication acquired its first cover, and an article giving a foretaste of the coming Cincinnati Convention, in addition to other articles and club news. The October issue, now with a heavier cover, devoted considerable space to preparing delegates for their consideration of items on the convention agenda.

Editor Templeton wrote:

“The national officers are much please with the progress that has been made... There has been a healthy growth in new clubs... a decided improvement in payment of dues... and a real interest among the clubs in raising their standards.”

There were 26 clubs represented at the at the 1929 convention, with 56 members registered as either delegates or alternates. It was at that Convention that the decision was made to add the duties of the treasurer to those assigned to Mr. Templeton, whose title thus became Secretary-Treasurer.

President Buckingham had hoped that consideration of changes in the Constitution and Bylaws could move expeditiously so that more time could be devoted to the needs of the clubs, most of which were of quite recent origin. But in the course of reviewing the proposed changes, some of the astute delegates from new clubs began to raise serious questions about the highly unorthodox “one-sided contract” with William Bullock. How could any association operate with two executive heads, neither responsible in any way to the other? Why was it that the Secretary-Treasurer was responsible to the Board, but the Field Services Manager was free to operate more or less independently? Would it not be better to place the Field Services man under the direction of the Secretary-Treasurer and on a salary rather than a fee-per-member-recruited plan?

This placed the President in an extremely awkward position as he had not been involved when the “ten-year-contract” was drafted and approved originally. He called on the central figure in debate, William Bullock, who made a long and fervent speech in defense of the arrangement, citing the gains achieved under it in the five years of its operation. He was roundly applauded, and the motion to change the situation failed.

This was not the only matter subjected to extensive discussion. (There was even some consideration given to whether Torch should have its own songbook!) At the closing session a wearied President, upon being nominated for a second term, did his best to decline, but the demand from the delegated body was so overwhelming that he was persuaded to accept. As one delegate said, “We feel that this is no time to make a change. There are certain matters before the organization that Dr. Buckingham should be prevailed upon to continue to deal with as our leader.” That speaker had foresight.

CHAPTER TWO – The Thirties

Burdette Buckingham's reluctance to accept a second term as president of the Association at the 1929 Convention was primarily because of plans he had for a six-month trip to Europe which would occur during the term. The Association had decided to move the convention dates from the fall to the spring. This meant that he would be serving two and half years in the office as the next convention would not occur until May of 1931.

He was deeply concerned about the state of affairs in the Association. Some years later he wrote, "These were quite critical days when we were literally fighting for survival."

Despite the endorsement William Bullock won for himself at the 1929 Convention, Buckingham felt strongly that the extension and retention policy of the Association was defective and that something had to be done about it. As soon as Bullock organized a club and collected his per-capita fees, he left it to survive as best it could and moved on to organize another. The survival rate was poor.

One of the positive factors in Buckingham's acceptance of the challenge of a second term was that he had as Vice-President a man he knew would carry on well for him during his absence from the country. That man was George B. Cutten. Both were distinguished educators. At that time Buckingham was on the Harvard Graduate School faculty and Cutten was President of Colgate College.

At a meeting of the Board following the 1929 Convention, President Buckingham found that he had the full support of the Directors. He and his Vice-President were asked to try to arrange for a change in the contract with Mr. Bullock to provide that he be placed under a salary rather than on commission.

Bullock resisted this change. His interest was in organizing clubs, not in serving them. But The Torch Light of December 5, 1930, carried the announcement that a new contract had been executed providing for the salary arrangement.

Later Buckingham wrote, "It was by the joint efforts of Dr. Cutten and myself that we were able to get rid of Mr. Bullock's contract."

Before his departure for Europe, Buckingham and Cutten met in Boston with Secretary Irving Templeton. At this conference:

- The name of The Torch Light (magazine) was changed to The Torch; and The Torch Light Ray (newsletter) became The Torch Light.
- The decision of the Professional Men's Institute to decline merger with the Association was received.
- Decision was made to ask each club to devote time at its December meeting to "The National Association and Its Problems", preferably with a representative of the Association present to speak briefly on the subject.

When The Torch first appeared in 1930 it listed a “Torch Advisory Board” (later changed to “Editorial Council”). There is no evidence, however, that this group played a very potent role in the life of the magazine.

With the name change in 1930, the size of the publication was enlarged to permit the inclusion of outstanding papers from the clubs, as well as book reviews, club reports, messages from the President, and other features.

In The Torch Light of March 16, 1931, the Editor wrote:

“The Washington Convention program promises that we shall have a convention approaching more nearly our Torch objects and ideals...”

He was right. The program, built around the theme on “Leadership”, was the first in which addresses that were not specifically about Torch were predominant over business sessions. Included in the plan was a sight-seeing tour of Washington and a visit to the White House where the delegates were greeted by President Herbert Hoover. There also was a one-act play performed by a dramatic club from American University.

The business convention was nominal:

- The “National Night” proposal was dropped. ****not sure if it is explained what this is
- A proposal to admit non-professionals to membership on a limited percentage basis was held over for later consideration.
- Clubs were asked to submit names for a Torch Speakers Bureau.
- Arthur Webster (Detroit) was elected Vice President and George Cutten succeeded Burdette Buckingham as President.

Buckingham later wrote:

“At Washington in 1931, the convention showed a different spirit. It was free from strain, its programs were high grade, and we all had our pictures taken with President Hoover!”

In tribute to Buckingham, one of his peers wrote:

“Dr. Buckingham accepted the leadership when some 17 clubs were just a loose confederation. A man with great insight and vision was needed in addition to enthusiasm for a great cause combined with practical leadership. He truly interpreted Torch in its full sweep for the first time... He clearly led Torch into the beginning of a new era.”

In the seven years since its founding, Torch had issued charters to 47 clubs—all organized under the much maligned Zimmer-Bullock commission system. The Washington Convention program listed 39 of these as still active.

[Fifty years later, 30 of these 39 clubs were still in existence. Many, if not most, of them were among the strongest clubs in the Association.]

The 1932 Convention at Albany, New York was historically significant in that it marked the beginning of the “Eligibility Debate” between the revisionists and the conservatives, which was destined to continue through several Torch leadership generations.

[It was not until 1957 that the issue was finally resolved by the decision to allow each club to decide for itself its definitions of eligibility.]

Attendance at the Albany Convention was reported to be 52 from 29 clubs plus 10 of the 11 members of the Board of Directors.

A proposal had been made at the 1931 Convention that clubs should be authorized to admit membership to a quota of no more than 5% of persons who were not engaged in professions on the "approved list" established in the Association Constitution. A committee of three was asked to study the proposal and report back on it to the Albany Convention.

The committee on a split vote recommended against the proposal. After extended debate the delegates voted four to one to support the rejection. The prevailing opinion was that "the amendment would be a departure from the principles upon which the local Torch Clubs had been founded."

The spokesman for the minority in favor of liberalization was O. L. Angevine (Rochester, New York). Here, in part, is what he said:

"As I see it, the main idea back of the Torch Club is not particularly the idea that the man is a professional man, as it is that he has a keen intellectual curiosity and wants to have a chance to share with his fellow men some of the cultural benefits we can give him.

I know many clubs which have used subterfuge to get such men in their membership... I don't think the Association wants to get into a scrap and tell a club 'You have to get out (of the Association) because you voted a man into membership who should not have been in because of the Constitution'."

When the vote had been recorded, President Cutten said, "All right, we will let it rest in peace." As we shall see, it was not the end of the debate, but the beginning.

[Whether Mr. Angevine lived to see his prophetic vision come true is not recorded]

It is interesting to note, however, that President Cutten asked that same committee to prepare "a revised list of professions whose members shall be eligible for membership in Torch."

Judge Arthur Webster (Detroit, Michigan), Chairman of the Extension Committee, reviewed conditions of the past year "including widespread economic depression and Mr. Bullock's illness." He advised against further extension work under existing conditions.

At a Board meeting, the decision was that responsibility for securing field organizers and for formulating a three to five-year plan for extension be given to George Ashley (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania), the Association's first Vice President.

Later a man named Arthur W. Wamack was authorized to undertake extension work on the Pacific Coast. But after a number of consultations with sources in that area, Mr. Wamack declined the assignment. He wrote a long letter to Secretary Templeton in which he said that "personally, I think the day (for Torch) in the scheme of things has gone by."

In October of that year, William Bullock submitted his resignation as Field Secretary. In reporting the resignation, The Torch carried an article which said:

“The many friends of William Bullock will regret to learn of his resignation because of illness... He has always to the highest ideals in his organization work and has ever proved himself to be a real gentleman.”

As the year 1932 came to an end, Torch extension had come to a complete halt.

The Great Depression continued to spread its gloom across the land in 1933. For millions of Americans, economic survival became the dominating concern in their lives. Privately supported organizations such as Torch were especially hit hard.

On December 18, 1933, the Association had a balance in its operating bank account of \$3.77. The Secretary’s minimal salary had not been paid and there was no money to pay the printer’s bill. Numerous clubs were behind in their dues payments; nine still owed for the first half of the year and some had not paid for a year and a half. Clubs actually were writing in saying that if their dues to the Association could not be cancelled, they might not survive.

President Arthur Webster suggested that the 1933 Convention, which was to be held in Detroit, be cancelled. The Detroit Club agreed to a postponement until 1934, a proposal that was readily and gratefully accepted. Webster hailed this as a “splendid service.” He then asked all officers, Directors, and committee personnel to continue in service until the 1934 Convention.

An unemployed professor, named Rolland Gray, was able to conclude efforts (originally begun by William Bullock) to organize the Lancaster, Pennsylvania Torch Club in May 1933. On the strength of this, he was asked to continue organizing clubs – curiously enough on the same “fee-for-member” basis which had been so soundly repudiated just a couple years before. However, this turned out to be an impossible mission and the agreement was terminated before the year had ended.

Throughout this dismal period, Torch slowly but painfully moved forward, largely through extensive correspondence among the leadership corps.

Judge Webster used wisdom and common sense to guide the Association through the lowest time of its young life. His spirit of courage and confidence in the face of adversity was reflected in a letter he wrote which was printed in the October issue of The Torch. He said:

“The fine spirit of cooperation between local clubs and the National Headquarters this year, as well as increased interest on the part of clubs in (making) their programs more varied and of higher standard, deserve a hearty vote of thanks.”

But no one would dispute giving a hero’s award to Secretary Templeton for his constancy and determination. He left behind a “diary” of his correspondence with President Webster which fully demonstrates and documents his dedication.

Included in this “diary” is his disinclination to accept a modest increase in his salary. Despite the low condition of the treasury, the salary was increased to a total of \$2,700 for the coming year.

[Before we return to the mainstream of the “Torch Story,” we should digress long enough to record an event which had no impact upon it, but which should be of interest to the modern interpreters of Torch tradition. In the April 1934 edition of The Torch there appeared a paper with the title “The Will to Peace.” It was by Marsy E. Wooley, the President of Mount Holyoke College. She was the only woman member of a U.S. delegation to the Disarmament Conference at Geneva. The address had been given before the

Buffalo Torch Club. So far as we can determine, this was the first time an article by a woman had appeared in The Torch. It would be more than 18 years before anyone had the temerity even to suggest that women ought to be admitted to membership, and nearly 40 years before the issue was pressed to the point of action.]

Attendance at the Detroit Convention in 1934 was low. Twenty-two of the 35 clubs then considered active were represented.

The financial situation had improved somewhat over the condition reported in early December 1933. The Auditing Committee reported a cash balance of \$1,144.37 at the end of the year. Unpaid club dues totaled \$1,417.50.

The most time-consuming subject of discussion at the business meetings was over a proposal to skip the 1935 convention for purposes of economy. Those in favor contended that it might encourage some marginal clubs to remain in the Association if the pressure to send delegates to the convention was removed. President Webster spoke against the proposal. He said:

“The annual convention is one of the most important tie-ups of the clubs that I know of... It is the outstanding thing which holds Torch Clubs together.”

Ultimately, the matter was referred to the Board for decision. (Later the Board voted to proceed with plans for the 1935 Convention to be held at Utica, New York).

There was one feature of the program which was unprecedented. It was a panel discussion on the subject, “Guiding Young Boys in Vocational Choices.” Apparently it was well received because the idea was recommended to local clubs for program consideration. Also highly recommended was the practice of exchanging speakers. It was thought that this might be a good way of improving club relations.

But the most noteworthy product of the Detroit Convention was the universal opinion that paid organizers should no longer be employed. The general agreement was that emphasis should be placed on organization by volunteers. Lee A. White (Detroit) said that his club would pledge to organize a “worthy new club to present to the membership of the Association in the coming year.”

George H. Ashley (Harrisburg, PA) was elected President for 1934-35. He advocated regional conferences as a means for clubs to draw strength from each other and to encourage the organization of new clubs.

Following adjournment, he immediately began work on the first such conference. It was held in Reading, Pennsylvania in September and included 58 representatives from the four Pennsylvania clubs. Torch business was on the agenda. In addition, Ashley gave a talk on “Reclaiming the American Dream.”

Additional regional meetings were held in Syracuse for the New York and New England clubs and in Baltimore for the clubs in the Mid-Atlantic area.

In response to the concerns which had been expressed at the Detroit Convention over the dues question, Ashley wrote a letter to the Association Secretary proposing that consideration be given to a dues reduction. He said that since the Association no longer had the problem of paying fees to paid organizers, it might be possible to reduce the initial fee to \$2 and the annual dues to \$3 per member.

When the 11th Convention met in Utica, New York in 1935, Lee White made good on his pledge that the Detroit Club would bring to the convention a new Torch Club, organized and ready to be a worthy member. It was the Oakland County, Michigan club chartered on April 9, 1935 with 30 members.

Unfortunately, that good news was offset by the loss of the Scranton, Pennsylvania club.

The concept of regional meetings as motivators for extension activity was not an immediate success. These “mini conventions” did bring about greater cohesion among the clubs and greater opportunities for individual members to become acquainted with fellow Torch men from other clubs. The fact remains that the Detroit Club had performed a noble service in demonstrating that extension could be accomplished on a voluntary basis.

Attendance at the Utica Convention came from 29 clubs. The Convention Committee, headed by E.S. Babcock, performed a monumental piece of work in planning and conducting the event. The printed program, for example, carried a brief history of the area, a description of points of interest, and highlights of the principal community institutions.

The business of the convention was fairly routine. Special emphasis was given to informational sessions on club management.

An invitation from the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania club for the 1936 Convention was excepted by William S. Linnell (Portland, Maine) was elected President for the coming year.

Following the convention, Secretary Templeton conducted an opinion survey by mail on the Utica Convention, along with a request for changes which might be made to improve future events. David R. Williams, President of the Rochester Club and a prominent minister in his denomination, wrote:

“It was by far and away the most profitable and stimulating convention I have ever attended... I came away, realizing as never before, the value of the International Torch Club.”

There were, of course, some complaints. One delegate wrote:

“It seemed to me that the considerable time was consumed in discussing details (in the business sessions) that could be left to the discretion of the committees.”

[This, it should be noted, has been a prevalent complaint in post-convention surveys down through the years!]

In the early months of 1936, four more clubs lost their will to live under the stresses of the depression. So when the program for the Harrisburg Convention went to press, there were only 32 clubs listed on the membership roster. However, in the week before the delegates assembled, two new clubs were chartered. These were the Finger Lakes and St. Lawrence County clubs, both in New York.

Except for the new clubs, all but four of the active clubs were represented at the convention.

In keeping with what has now become a Torch tradition, the host club produced a well rounded program. The highlight was a banquet address by Reinhold Niebuhr of Union Theological Seminary on “The Illusion and the Reality of Progress.” The speaker was a writer of widely read books on

contemporary thought and a contributor of articles to some of America's most prestigious national magazines.

Another speaker, Herman R. Miller (Reading, Pennsylvania) talked on "The Future of the Torch Movement." The welcome news of two new clubs must have made that future look brighter.

[It may not have been evident at that point that 1936 marked the turning point from the depression years to a new era in Torch development.]

E. W. Smith, Head of the English Department at Colgate University and a dynamic leader in the Utica Club, was the hero of the hour. He had been primarily responsible for the two new clubs. He had been strongly supported by his own club in organizing the St. Lawrence County Club, and secretary Templeton had aided him in the success at Finger lakes.

Before the year was out, Professor Smith chalked up another victory for Torch at Auburn, New York. The Syracuse Club was credited with being a moving force in bringing this about.

Meanwhile, The Torch magazine continued to serve the Association well. The January issue in 1936 added a new feature: book reviews by Torch members. (This department of the magazine continued for about three years.)

An interesting sidelight in the continuing debate over eligibility by Secretary Templeton appeared in The Torch. In it he said:

"A choir leader can be classified as a musician; a photographer as an artist; but a businessman who has never been in any of our professions previously can not be classified as a member."

Mention should also be made of a dramatic appeal made by Clarence E. Howell, (Trenton, New Jersey), Chairman of the Interclub Relations Committee. He called for greater cooperation among (and between) local clubs.

[He was not the first nor the last to feel a sense of frustration and disappointment over this problem.]

W. Howard Pillsbury (Schenectady, New York) was President of the Association when it met for the 13th Annual Convention in Rochester, New York in May of 1937.

Howard Hanson, Director of the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester, entertained the delegates and their guests with an evening of music at the Eastman Theater. he was in the forefront of American music educators and was internationally known as a speaker and a composer. Torch was proud to have him as a member of the Board of Directors of the Association at that time.

At a dinner prior to the evening of music, President Pillsbury presented "Chancellor's Awards" to the authors of the "three best addresses given before a Torch Club during 1936." (The Board of Counselors was composed of Past Presidents of the Association.)

On November 4 of that year, the International Association of Torch Clubs finally became international when the Buffalo Club succeeded in organizing a Torch Club in Hamilton, Canada.

Later in that month, Milton Simpson, described in The Torch as “the Torch evangelist of Kalamazoo,” organized a club in Battle Creek, Michigan, with the active cooperation of Lee A. White of Detroit, who had been the catalyst in the extension efforts of the Detroit Club.

So, the volunteer spirit of Torch extension work was beginning to spread both west and north.

Another fortunate development for Torch in 1937 occurred when Professor Elmer W. Smith retired at Colgate. When the Association Board heard that Smith planned to make annual trips to Florida by automobile, it saw this as an opportunity to avail itself of his services as a traveling organizer on a part-time basis. He accepted and was given the title “Extension Secretary.” His competence in organizational projects had already been demonstrated. His Torch enthusiasm was contagious. In addition to all of that, he was a man with professional contacts in many places.

One more item of interest in 1937 was the publication in The Torch of a directory of membership in all clubs, classified by professions.

The year 1938 began on an encouraging note when Elmer Smith, on his first trip to Florida, recruited 37 charter members for a new Torch Club in Tampa. In the same month (April) Milton Smith organized the Muskegon, Michigan club. This brought the number of active clubs to 38 when the Association met for its 14th Annual Convention in Toledo, Ohio.

George. B. Woods (Washington, DC) had been elected President of the Association at the prior convention.

Among the several highlights of the convention program were these: the panel discussion format was used again; the subject of the discussion was — “Is the American Education System Equal to the Requirements of Democracy?” Also, there was an address by John W. Bricker of Columbus, Ohio on “Political Trends.” At that time, he was a candidate for the office of Governor.

[He won that campaign and later became one of Ohio’s most distinguished United States Senators.]

The primary item of business at the Toledo Convention was a change in the Constitution to provide that the Board of the Association might create conferences on a regional basis and determine the areas thereof. Thus the concept of regionalism became part of the Torch structural system.

This, no doubt, was the product of the success Torch was enjoying in its district “mini-conventions.” Before 1938 drew to a close, there were four more in the series, all with good programs. The involvement of the International Office in planning and organizing these events had been vital to their success. This led to the inclusion in the Constitutional amendment of a provision that the Board be authorized to choose the Secretary of each regional organization, and also to make arrangements for their programs.

Harold W. Sanford (Rochester, New York) Chairman of a committee on The Torch said:

“We feel that a district advancement has been made in the publication by subordinating minor club reports to the presentation of papers.

One member of our committee has expressed hope that The Torch might become an important periodical of opinion, thus making a contribution to national thought.”

The Editor, Secretary Templeton, said to the Convention that the magazine was “just beginning to be what it should be— A real magazine devoting its pages to leading articles on a wide variety of timely and controversial subjects.”

So, pressing was the demand for space, however, that one popular feature, book reviews, had to be discontinued after “a bright three-year run.”

Before moving on from the Toledo Convention, mention should be made of the extensive press coverage it received. Unfortunately, the person responsible for this achievement was not identified in the program.

Lee A. White (Detroit), a pioneer in the “self-help” era of Torch extension, was elected to head the Association for 1938-39.

When the delegates gathered for the 15th annual convention at Binghamton, New York in May of 1939, the morale of those present must have been high as four new Torch Clubs had been chartered earlier in the year. Elmer W. Smith had continued his southern expansion by organizing clubs in Norfolk, Virginia and Raleigh, North Carolina. Secretary Templeton had managed to get one started in Atlanta, Georgia; and the Syracuse Club had brought to a successful conclusion, a campaign began in the prior year for a dual-city club to be known as the Oswego-Fulton, New York Torch Club. Two more clubs were chartered later in the year: Winston-Salem, North Carolina and Worcester, Massachusetts, both by Elmer Smith.

The program for the Binghamton Convention listed 44 clubs; but one— the Central Florida Club— did not actually get underway. There were 32 clubs represented at the Convention.

Among the special features of the program, was a symposium on “American Foreign Policy” with five speakers. It should also be noted that there were two speakers at the banquet, plus a musical recital by the Binghamton Choristers.

The program also lists a “Ladies Torch Club Meeting” — a luncheon with a speaker on “Streamlined Education,” followed by a discussion period.

President White was a vigorous spokesman for the conservative element of Torch on the matter of membership eligibility. He said:

“It is essential that the eligibility statement avoid allowing men dabbling in a profession to qualify. I recall a case of a banker admitted as a musician because he liked to play the bassoon in his leisure time.”

Another speaker, not identified, said that he feared that without adherence to the eligibility list, some Torch Clubs would open their membership to “butchers, bakers and candlestick makers.” Glenn H.

Teams (Toledo) put his objection to change in another way. He said, "if we open the gap, we will have just another service club."

It was in this year, 1938, that the sad news of the death of William Bullock came to the Torch world. He was not only the founder of Torch but, as we have reported, was the organizer of an astonishing number of its clubs.

As the decade of the 30s came to an end, there was a confident and forward-looking spirit in the air. The Great Depression had been a severe test for the stamina of the Association and had been more than some of the member clubs could survive. But slowly and surely through the last three years, a new promise of progress had developed.

Now a new threat was emerging. The world was on the brink of a war. Secretary Templeton wrote in The Torch:

"With the freedoms of man challenged or destroyed in so many parts of the earth, thinking men will naturally band together for discussion of ideas and for the redefinition and reassertion of the principles upon which a free people can continue to be free."

He looks to the future with a deep and abiding belief that Torch could play a significant role for its members in the coming conflict of forces and ideas.

CHAPTER THREE – The Forties

Despite the ominous news from the gathering storm of strife in Europe, Torch grew stronger as it emerged from the years of depression. Six clubs were organized and only two were lost in 1940.

Of the 47 clubs active at the time, 31 were represented at the June convention in Portland, Maine. The host club made it a happy occasion for everyone with scenic tours, a clam bake, and a short concert by the Portland Symphony Orchestra at the formal banquet.

The international situation, as might be expected, dominated the program of speakers. But Torch itself was also very much in focus. At the banquet, there were two Torch-related speeches by Association leaders in addition to the primary presentation by a guest on “Some Problems that Face America.”

There was a round table discussion on the subject of a model for an “All American Torch Club.” It must be reported, however, that no such model emerged. There was wide difference of opinion on programming, with the only agreement being on “quality papers” and the need for balance in subject selection.

[Also, of interest to latter-day readers will be that there were lamentations over “the tendency of too many clubs to invite older men into membership.”]

The principal— almost the only— item of business was a recommendation from the Constitutional Committee that the Initial Fee for membership be increased from \$5 to \$7. After much debate, the decision was to table the recommendation for further study. The delegate body was divided between those who felt that the time had come to provide the Association with increased revenues and those who were fearful that little support for the Association existed among the general membership in the local clubs.

Irving R. Templeton, Association Secretary, responded to the contention that club members did not properly appreciate the values of the relationship with the Association. He appealed to the delegates to become affirmative spokesmen for the Association. He said that the Association was cooperating with the clubs more often and in more ways than ever before. “Our speakers bureau, suggested programs, bulletin services, transfer system, visitor service, supplies, new member aids, regional conferences and extension services, and inter-club meetings— all contribute to the worth of the Torch movement.”

The board had a much more affirmative attitude toward the Association than was reflected in the delegate body. It voted to increase the salary of the Secretary from \$2,200 to \$2,500, authorized the publication of a membership directory, and created a new “district” of six southern clubs.

The convention ended with the election of Clement G. Bowers of Binghamton, New York, to the presidency for 1940-41.

The Baltimore, Maryland Torch Club was the host for the 1941 Convention. Under the chairmanship of Charles W. Sylvester, the high quality which had been set in previous conventions was maintained. Sylvester deserves special mention because he prepared a remarkably complete post-convention scrapbook and diary reviewing the convention procedures from beginning to end.

The principal speaker was Millard E. Tydings, US Senator from Maryland, who talked on "Some Problems Facing America."

In addition to special events "for the ladies," there was a boat trip for everyone to Annapolis, tea at the Governor's Mansion, and a buffet supper and dancing on the boat trip back to Baltimore.

The business sessions were relatively uneventful. Proposals were sent to the Board for the addition of a more idealistic statement in the purposes of the Association and selection of a name for Torch members, such as "Torchites." (The motivation for the latter suggestion was that "if members of Rotary could be called Rotarians there ought to be some name to identify members of Torch.")

[Neither of these suggestions, we are pleased to report, ever saw the light of day!]

Glenn H. Reams (Toledo, Ohio) did have the courage to raise the issue of the slow decline in the participation in regional (then called district) Conferences. He said that lack of leadership was the problem. "The delegates who do attend," he said, "have always seemed to have a good time, but without strong input from the Association, its interests can become neglected."

Even greater courage was shown by Gorden Hendrickson (Cincinnati, Ohio) who had the temerity to suggest that The Torch magazine should be primarily a means of "communication between the Association and the clubs." He said that it was the opinion of his club that "while the papers are undoubtedly effective when originally presented, they cannot possibly compete with articles in the major journals."

The Board in its sessions at the convention made a number of decisions, among which was one which would eliminate convention registration fees and meal charges for Directors. Another was a request to the clubs to clear any bylaw changes they might wish to make with the Association for purposes of coordination.

Two more items of historical interest relative to the convention must be mentioned. One was that the registration fee including the banquet, boat trip, two other meals, and the ladies' program was \$10 for members and \$7 for ladies and other guests. The other was that the aforementioned scrapbook included evidence of extensive press coverage of the convention and its highlights.

Of the 54 active clubs, 31 were represented.

Three new clubs were chartered in 1941. Among these was the Richmond, Virginia Club organized by Elwood Street. Street first became a member of Torch in Washington, DC in 1929. His recruitment methods were considered highly effective and he was asked to write a manual on the subject.

[Street was a highly regarded Community Chest (United Fund) executive whose career later took him to three other cities, in all of which he organized Torch Clubs. Through the Community Chest movement, I got to know Elwood. He was a man who represented Torch at its highest and best.]

In April of 1942, Clement G. Bower, Immediate Past President of the Association, wrote a letter to Secretary Templeton in which he said:

“Because of preoccupation with war matters since Pearl Harbor, some people seem to think that the war is monopolizing the attention of all to such an extent that men have little heart for anything else. If this is true, I would regard it as a temporary phenomenon. I think many of us are just waking up to the reality and seriousness of the war and may be temporarily stunned. After we get our stride, I believe we shall need Torch to help keep us stable and sane.

“I think of all this in connection with the advisability of starting new clubs. It seems as if it might be a bit difficult right now to get the interest of people in undertaking a new enterprise, but that it might be easier a few months hence.”

The preoccupation with war matters plus travel restrictions had a negative effect upon the Grand Rapids, Michigan Convention in June of that year. Only 28 clubs were represented. One scheduled speaker failed to appear, and two others sent substitutes. But the primary disappointment to the delegates and their guests was the absence of bus or boat trips.

Aside from the usual committee reports and resolutions, there was no business worthy of note. Hamilton, Ontario was chosen for the 1943 Convention. However President Edgar L. Weinland (Columbus, Ohio), who presided over the convention, called attention to the gas and tire rationing and a motion was passed to allow the Board to use its discretion as to whether the convention should be omitted in the following year.

The Board continued to struggle with the eligibility question, which was a constant source of difficulty. It recommended that the “economists” be added to the list of “eligible professions” at the next convention. It also recommended that the number of Directors be reduced from 6 to 4— undoubtedly another economy measure.

The year 1942 brought to an end the remarkable career of Elmer W. Smith (Utica, New York) in extension work. In the course of about four years he had been partly or mainly responsible for the acquisition of 11 new clubs. He personally opened up the southeast with 7 new clubs— plus three he had promoted in Pennsylvania and one in Massachusetts.

The Extension Committee had this to say about his work:

“Without his indefatigable efforts it would have been impossible to extend our club to other cities. With him, promulgation of the principles of Torch is not just a job, it is a mission fired by passion.”

As the 1942 convention came to a close, John C. Krantz, Jr. (Baltimore, Maryland) was elected President for 1942-43. He was described as “the youngest and one of the best equipped men ever to be honored by Torch with its highest office.”

The arrangement with Elmer Smith in which he was reimbursed for travel costs plus compensation (based upon the amount of time spent on Torch work) was continued; but travel restrictions put an end to anything more than correspondence through the remainder of the year.

Despite all the adversities, three new clubs were organized in 1942.

In January 1943, President Krantz asked Secretary Templeton to make a survey among the clubs to see what they thought about the possibility and prudence of holding the convention that year. The response was overwhelming in favor of postponement.

In March, the President of the Hamilton Torch Club, A. Emerson Warren, wrote to Templeton:

"I doubt whether any individual in our club would not concur heartily with the judgment of the 52 clubs which voted for postponement. This is not a favorable year in which to hold a convention, and we are relieved at heart to learn that postponement was deemed advisable. The Hamilton Club is most enthusiastic about holding the convention here just as early as conditions are favorable... Let us hope that 1944 is the year for the Victory Convention. There will be much of vital interest to discuss at that event."

On June 9, 1943 President Krantz wrote to the Directors a letter which said, in part:

"I am indeed sorry that I shall not have the opportunity to see each of you personally this year and have the pleasure of fellowship and deliberation with you. I am sure you are all as gratified as I am that Torch International has gone ahead in spite of difficulties of travel, transportation, and duress of the war effort. I trust that brighter days are ahead and that the Allied Victory might make possible a convention in 1944.

"Despite the difficulties of these dolorous times to promote an organization like ours, Mr. Templeton has worked indefatigably in the extension and club membership expansion areas.

"It is my recommendation that there be an increase in salary (as recommended by the Treasurer) in the amount of \$900 for our Secretary. I believe this is in keeping with his services and well within the budget."

Also worthy of note is that a study on the attitude of clubs toward publicity revealed that most clubs considered it undesirable, although there were a few which welcomed it within proper safeguards. They said that most newspapers had been cooperative in this manner.

It was found also that most clubs sent out advance notice of meetings two members— although generally somewhat restricted and content. Only two clubs reported the publication of monthly bulletins amplifying the usual information.

Meetings of the Board were not possible, but President Krantz kept in touch with the Directors by correspondence. He appointed a committee of seven to plan with the Hamilton Club for the observance of the 20th anniversary of the Association as part of the 1944 Convention program. He also appointed a committee of one— D. Claude Carey (Buffalo, New York)— to find ways to "bring back to active membership those on leave because of war duties." Another committee— the Welfare Committee— was asked to continue its research on "what the problems of clubs are and what we can do to help resolve them."

Except for the chartering of the Houston, Texas club (another product of Elwood Street's work), the year 1944 was probably the most uneventful in the 20-year history of the Association.

The "Victory Convention" at Hamilton, Ontario was not to be. Because of transportation problems and involvement of Directors in wartime activities, even Board meetings were impossible.

But Irving Templeton kept the Torch banner waving. On May 27, he wrote a letter to the Directors in which he said that Torch could "take pardonable pride in reviewing a very successful year." He pointed to an improved financial situation with "a cash balance increased over \$850 in a year of world confusion." He concluded that "the future of Torch continues to look bright... With more regional conferences and maybe a convention in 1945."

It is true that the clubs in New York and Canada held their 11th annual conference at Syracuse, New York; and the Ohio clubs also met with what Irving Templeton considered "real success."

In May 1945, the question of a possible merger with the American Interprofessional Institute was raised again after having lain dormant for a number of years. A letter from one of the leaders of the Institute suggested that Torch submit a "proposal of consolidation."

Secretary Templeton's hope for a 1945 convention faded.

Hostilities had ceased with the collapse of Germany and the disappearance of Hitler into the ash heaps of history. Then came the surrender of Japan. The hard road to peace was underway and the time for reactivation of progress in Torch had finally arrived. It began with a notice in the October issue of The Torch magazine in which President John Frantz, Jr. invited comment on an agenda he had prepared for the first Board meeting since 1942.

[Frantz was now approaching his fourth year as President, an all-time longevity record in Torch. We have already mentioned that when he was elected he was the youngest man to head to the Association. Now, as we shall discover, he also was a man of courage in challenging Torch leaders with new ideas.]

The agenda for the board meeting included a number of proposals, including:

- Appointment of an Assistant Secretary to renew the Torch extension effort,
- Investigation of the feasibility of financing The Torch magazine through paid advertising,
- Publication of a "Who's Who and Torch,"
- Expansion of the eligibility list,
- Seeking suggestions from the clubs on how the magazine could be improved,
- Improvement in the quality of the convention programs and reduction in the length of the conventions, and

- Holding conventions in alternate years with regional meetings in the “off years “.

These proposals were either approved for further study or for submission to the delegate body at the 1946 Convention.

In respect to the convention, it was decided that since there had not been a convention since 1942, it would be advisable to have it nearer to the geographical center of the Torch population. So Wilmington, Delaware was chosen with the understanding that the 1947 convention would go to Hamilton. This had been cleared in advance with the Hamilton Club.

Meanwhile, Director G. C. Carrie had written to all clubs emphasizing again the desire of the Association to offer assistance and encouragement in the return to membership of those who had been in war service. He said, “this is one of the ways in which Torch can help win the peace.”

In his annual message to the clubs in October of that year, Secretary Templeton echoed that promise. He wrote:

“This war is won. Now to win the peace. Time tells us that Torch, through these terrible years, stood the acid test with great success. Nearly 200 members were taken in during the past year... Over 200 former members have returned to their clubs after having been ‘on leave.’ Our membership is now about 2,700... Our cash balance on May 1st of this year was \$4,710.37, with all bills paid.”

And so, as 1945 ended, all sights were set on the 1946 Convention in which the Association would celebrate its 21st year.

On the very day before the 1946 Convention was to convene in Wilmington, leaders of the locomotive engineers and trainmen called the greatest railway strike in the history of the country. It could not possibly have come at a worse time for the convention.

While the results were not catastrophic, they were severe. Secretary Templeton later wrote, “the strike was a terrible test. If foreseen, no convention would have been held.”

[We must remind ourselves that in 1946 there was no Interstate Highway System. As for commercial aviation, it was only a few months since the government had released it from military control. In the 411 planes in commercial use at the time, the average number of seats was 21. Only the most adventuresome traveler would choose to bump around in turbulent air in the DC3’s which were the mainstays of air travel in those days.]

Despite the strike, 51 delegates from 30 clubs did find their way to Wilmington. Some who had fully intended to come could not make it. Among these were a number of leaders of Torch who were greatly missed.

Two delegates from the Rochester, New York Torch Club took a taxi cab to get there at great personal expense. The President of the new club in Houston, Texas— W. L. Kemper— came the longest distance. It took him two days by various means of transportation and circuitous route. He told the delegates that he was reminded of the pretty girl who said that, “While a straight line might be the shortest distance between two points, she had found that she could get places quicker with a few curves.”

Special recognition was given to the Baltimore club which sent a delegation of 35 people— The largest single group ever to attend a Torch convention.

There may have been one favorable development in an otherwise bleak experience for the host club. Hotel accommodations were limited, and the host committee had prepared to house some in their private homes. But cancellations may have made this unnecessary.

One scheduled speaker had to cancel and on an hours' notice George H. Ashley, a past president, won top honors as a pinch-hitter. Other than that, the program proceeded as planned, including special events for the ladies and a well-balanced program under the theme "Human Understanding and Relationships. "

At the business meeting, President Krantz reported that as of May 1st, Torch had 55 active clubs with a membership of nearly 3,000 and a cash balance of over \$5,800.

The recommendation that the conventions should begin on Thursday rather than Friday received approval. Another suggestion that the magazine might find additional funding through advertising also had some support. William J. Wilcox (Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania) reported for the committee appointed to study this question. He said, "we endorse the suggestion that high-grade advertisements be solicited so that the magazine can render a fuller service. "

[The Association actually did enter into a contract with an agent in New York City for this purpose. But nothing came of it as the agent soon discovered that the large advertisers were not interested since our circulation was small and our price was high.]

The Board held three sessions at the convention. Among its decisions were these:

- That beginning in 1947, every club should pay the convention registration fee of \$10 to the host club regardless of whether it is represented at the convention,
- That it be proposed at the next convention that the "per capita tax" be increased from \$3 to \$4 annually, and
- That a salary increase of \$900 be given to the Secretary.

As the convention moved toward its adjournment, F. R. Murgatroyd (Hamilton, Ontario) was elected to the presidency for the coming year.

President Truman, fearful of the food and fuel shortages which would result from the strike, or did the government to seize the railroads after a short period of time. But the problem of finding transportation back home had to be resolved for a number of the delegates and their guests. Again, the host club came to the front by working out shared auto transportation, which saved great inconvenience.

When it was over, Secretary Templeton paid high tribute to the host club in the July issue of The Torch. He said, "the Wilmington Club proved its leaders to be among the most efficient and hospitable in the history of Torch."

Another suggestion he had made a year earlier for the publication of a "Who's Who in Torch" had to be abandoned because of cost. The idea he had in mind was to bring to light the amazing number of prominent men in the membership of Torch. Among these were 37 college presidents, an Associate

Justice of the Supreme Court, a Senator, a former Governor, 10 or more editors of daily newspapers, and many leaders in a variety of other professions.

However, in the July 1946 issue was a feature entitled, "Who's Who Torch." It presented a paragraph on each member of the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania club. In the next issue a similar feature appeared with material supplied on its members by the Albany, New York Torch Club.

[The feature was then discontinued, probably because of the burden it placed upon club secretaries.]

At the 1947 convention in Hamilton, Ontario Association President Murgatroyd announced that there were 52 delegates and alternates present, representing 34 clubs. He said, "this is four more clubs than were represented in Wilmington in 1946, and six more than at the last convention prior to that in 1942."

In a post-convention commentary, the Reverend J. W. Kennedy of Lexington, Kentucky said, "delightful, yes, because of the people and the place; enjoyable, certainly, because of the endless care and attention of the hosts and hostesses..."

H. H. M. Bowman of Toledo, Ohio wrote, "the Hamilton Club did an excellent job as hosts. The entertainment was delightful; and above all, the friendly spirit... belied all aspersions of British reserve and aloofness."

The entertainment highlight was a luncheon at a local country club followed by a boat cruise around Hamilton Bay, with a buffet supper served on board. Secretary Templeton describe it as "the most delightful entertainment, which equalled the best ever given at any Torch convention."

The convention program, generally speaking, was on a lighter side— except for the address at the Banquet. There was a Chamber of Commerce color film of Hamilton, a poetry reading, and an address by Howard Hanson, of the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, on "Emotional Expression in Music."

A lively "Round Table" on Torch problems was conducted by past president John Krantz, Jr.

At the business sessions it was reported that Torch had 59 clubs with 3,100 members, and a treasury balance of \$6,500.

All of the major recommendations from the Board were approved by the delegate body. These included:

- The addition of two more professions to the "Eligibility List," actuaries and economists (with the proviso that the Board would define the word "economists"),
- The establishment of a registration fee for the convention from each club, regardless of attendance,
- The establishment of the initial membership fee at \$5 (to include the first-year dues), and
- A raise in the annual membership fee to \$4.

In the debate over the membership eligibility question, Clayton L. Jenks spoke for the Worcester, Massachusetts club. He said that they believed Torch could except change without diminution of its standards. "It seems to me that the criterion is not a man's profession but his education and interest in life, and primarily his imagination, his fair-minded analysis of problems, and his ability to discuss a subject— pro and con. He needs an alert and studious mind that is always seeking after truth."

William J. Wilcox, reporting for the Committee on Welfare and Regional Conferences, said, "regional conferences were almost a war casualty. Only the New York Conference carried through. The Ohio clubs are now meeting again."

G. C. Carey, Chairman of the special committee on the matter of finding a Field Secretary, recommended the appointment of Herbert L. Sackett, a retired educator and recent organizer of the Northern Chautauqua Country Club in New York. Sackett has been the first President of the Olean, New York Torch Club. Carey said, "I believe he could be persuaded to take on the office and do a first class job because of his experience in such efforts, his enthusiasm for Torch, and his efficiency and fine character as a man."

[Subsequently, the Board did vote to employ Sackett at a \$10 per day fee, plus expenses, starting in mid-September.]

Before adjournment, the delegates elected Dr. Glenn H. Reams (Toledo, Ohio) as President for the coming year and selected Reading, Pennsylvania for the next convention.

In the commentary by J. W. Kennedy, mentioned above, there was an assessment that "while the convention was not revolutionary, there were rumblings of things to come which were heard and tucked away for heeding."

He then said, "there was a determination to place more responsibility upon the officers and directors for the total work of Torch as an operating force rather than mere figureheads existing for stamping O.K. upon some things they had not helped to do."

[These were prophetic words and need to be read carefully to prepare us for the shock of the transition in management which was to come about in the year ahead.]

The extension efforts of the Association did begin to move forward in 1947. Two clubs were chartered in the first half of the year and 3 later— plus the first one produced under the new Field Service Secretary, Herbert Sackett—the Jamestown, New York Club.

At a meeting of the Board in Buffalo on January 31, 1948, Sherman G. Crayton, a Professor of Education at the New York State College for Teachers in Buffalo, was selected to fill the position of Assistant to the Secretary-Treasurer-Editor of the Association for a period of one year at a salary of \$1,000. He accepted and was scheduled to begin July 1st of that year.

This decision apparently was approved by Secretary Templeton. On February 2, he wrote a letter to Crayton congratulating him and expressing his anticipation in having his assistance. (He had been complaining to the Board for some time that he was overloaded with work and had to put in an inordinate amount of overtime.)

Then at an executive session at the Reading, Pennsylvania Convention in May, the Board made the following decisions:

- To rescind the offer it had made to Secretary Templeton on June 28, 1947 to make his position full-time,
- To terminate the services of Templeton as of June 30, 1948,

- To offer him an appointment as Secretary-Emeritus “in an advisory capacity” for three years with an honorarium of \$2,500 the first year, \$1,500 the second, and \$1,000 the third, and
- To employ Sherman G. Crayton as the Secretary-Treasurer-Editor for one year from July 1, 1948 at a salary of \$5,000.

The archives of the Association do not include any statement of the specific reasons for these decisions. There is a letter from the then President, Dr. Glenn H. Reams, which includes the following:

“Torch is too large, and made up of men who are too intelligent, to have one man, whether he be President or Secretary, make all the decisions and direct all the policies. So, it makes me very happy... To have the Directors and officers (willing) to take such a keen interest and to work so hard.”

On July 16, Templeton wrote to Crayton a letter covering the transfer of files and records, banking privileges, assets, and supplies. He also indicated in some detail the work which he was completing on the next issue of The Torch magazine and the sending out of semi-annual billings to the clubs.

A letter from Dr. Reams on July 1st to Crayton extended an official welcome to him in which he said:

“Mr. Templeton nursed and stimulated the infant Association, keeping it alive many times solely by his own willpower and energy and brought it to maturity with great promise for the future. We believe that under your care and tactful attention the clubs will come to feel a closer attachment to the organization and will cooperate more thoroughly. You may command me for any service I can render you or International Torch.”

The transition was not an easy one for Sherman Crayton. Secretary-Emeritus Templeton assumed that he would have continuing functions to perform for the Association and that payment for his clerical help would continue. Newly elected president William J. Wilcox (Allentown, Pennsylvania) immediately responded that only those expenses which are convenient to the new Secretary would be authorized.

In early August the resentment which apparently had been building up in Mr. Templeton over his dismissal came to the surface when he wrote a six page article for The Torch in which he “told his side of the story” (as he put it). It bitterly castigated those who took the action. Fortunately, the existence of this article (which was already typeset) was discovered in time to delete it before the magazine was mailed to the membership.

President Wilcox then wrote to Templeton:

“The officers and Directors did not come to the decision to make the change without much thought. Nothing was done with a desire to hurt you. It was only done because the considered judgment of all was that it was for the best of the organization.

“We do not want controversy. We want you to continue your interest and enthusiasm for Torch. No one denies that you have given much to the organization and I am sure you will not deny that you have received much from Torch.”

The lead article in the magazine, signed by President Wilcox, expressed appreciation to Mr. Templeton “for all that he has done” in the hope “that this happy association may continue for many

years.“ It also introduced Sherman Crayton as a man with a distinguished career in education with a doctorate in philosophy from Columbia. “We bespeak him for the cooperation of all the officers of the several clubs.”

Unfortunately, it was not possible to eliminate from the issue a short article by Templeton and which he described the decision as a “forced retirement of the International Secretary after 21 years of hard work to advance Torch.”

[In January 1965, the Buffalo Torch Club devoted one of its programs to a retrospective valuation of Mr. Templeton. David Peugeot, the speaker, said:

“He was deeply hurt when he was made Secretary-Emeritus of, first, the International Association, and then the Buffalo Club. He feared that his edifice might come tumbling down. But with the passing of time and the respect shown to him, he had the satisfaction of seeing both his club and the Association continue in growth in a way that he approved... We owe him a great debt. Irving R. Templeton did so much for all of us... He was a real upstanding man.”]

Delegates from 32 clubs enjoyed the 1948 convention at Reading, Pennsylvania in May unaware, no doubt, of the drama being played out behind the scenes. However, this number was less than half of the clubs reported as “active” by Secretary Templeton, which was distressing to the leadership.

The convention had as its theme, “Our Nation Faces the Future.” There were speakers on government, education, international relations, religion, and economics— all related to the theme.

The delegate body again heard an appeal from Clayton L. Jenks of the Worcester Torch Club to give further consideration to the liberalization of its membership policies. He presented a resolution which read, in part:

“Torch Clubs shall admit to membership only such well-educated men as have the equivalent of a college education and are imbued with intellectual curiosity, irrespective of their vocations, and provided each can present and defend a mentally provocative and stimulating thesis in an intellectual field... On subjects which pertain to the mental, moral and spiritual growth and welfare of mankind; but such admission to membership shall be subject to the maintenance by the club of a well-balanced representation in these fields.”

President Reams spoke on behalf of those who favored the retention of the “eligibility list.” He said:

“In order to protect the integrity of the Torch idea and movement it is necessary to have a comprehensive definition of the word (profession) by which individual clubs may be guided. All Torch members probably have outstanding and broadly intellectual business friends they would like to have join Torch. If we open the gap, we will have just another service club.”

The debate ended with a decision to submit the matter to the clubs so they could instruct their delegates on this matter prior to the 1949 convention.

Another action of interest, historically, was that after hearing a report on the proposal for an endowment fund by John Krantz, Jr., the proposal was tabled.

In his report to the delegate body, Secretary Templeton proposed a major change in convention procedures. He asked that the host club be requested to provide the entertainment, meals and other local arrangements while the International Secretary, with the approval of the President, “got up the program.”

In a discussion on The Torch magazine, Clayton Jenks again demonstrated his capacity for creative thinking when he suggested that it might be a good idea to have two publications— a quality journal and a newsletter reporting our service activities. He said, “this would make it possible to concentrate on upgrading the magazine to make it a more serious publication.”

William Wilcox spoke against this. He said, “it is my conclusion that the membership as a whole is pretty well satisfied with the magazine. It would be a mistake to harp on the subject as the effect might be simply to promote the idea that there is something wrong.”

After electing Mr. Wilcox president for the coming year and selecting Richmond, Virginia for the 1949 convention site the Reading Convention was adjourned.

A highly significant Board meeting occurred in October. The Directors were eager to hear the first report presented by the newly employed Secretary. Some key points from his report:

- He had ascertained that eight clubs listed as active were either dead or moribund,
- Torch finances were precarious,
- The magazine was over budget and costs would have to be reduced. (He proposed to do this by reducing the number of pages, which could be accomplished by eliminating much of the detail on conventions and Board meetings),
- Something should be done about the lack of attendance (and the infrequency) in the regional meetings. (His suggestion was to eliminate the workshop features and concentrate more on programs of more general interest),
- That necessary equipment be purchased for the central office, and
- Since local club secretaries object to typing mailing labels for the magazine, a plan should be devised to provide for central addressing.

The Board approved the recommendations of the Secretary and also took action to table the matter of seeking advertising to help finance the cost of the magazine. It also set up a committee to plan the program and to select the speakers for the 1949 Convention.

The problem of the moribund clubs was discussed. There was a suggestion that the Association offered to pay for the cost of dinners to try to reactivate a couple of clubs which had ceased to have meetings.

Just before Christmas in 1948, Herbert Sackett’s first planned extension trip was suddenly interrupted at Lexington, Kentucky. He had an ulcer which necessitated a serious operation and convalescence. But by February 15, he was on the road again. The product of the trip was the organization of clubs in Nashville and Chattanooga, Tennessee and Columbia, South Carolina.

[A personal note: in 1948, as a member of the Winston-Salem Torch Club, I presented as a Torch paper a full-length poem titled “Dream of Freedom.” The Secretary of the club submitted it to the Editor of The

Torch and it was published in the January 1949 issue this was the first (and fortunately the last) full length poem used in the magazine.]

In January 1949, the committee from the Board which had been created to prepare the program for the 1949 Convention met with representatives of Richmond, Virginia, the host club, in a meeting which was described as one of “splendid cooperation.” The idea that the Association should take over the program development and it’s entirety had not appealed to Sherman Crayton. He said, “speakers should be mutually acceptable to the host club and the Association, working together through a joint program committee.”

[However, this must have proved difficult in practice because it was only a few years later that Crayton wrote to an upcoming convention host club committee that “the Board assumes only an advisory role with respect to the principal speakers at the convention.”]

Early 1949, the full weight of the accumulated problems of the Association descended upon its new Secretary. He was especially concerned over the problem of weak clubs. He said:

“One would have to be psychic to know when a club is foundering. Correspondence is not enough. Failure to report may mean only that the Secretary is negligent, not necessarily that the club is in trouble.”

He was also concerned about Torch extension.

His suggestion was that both problems— club development and extension— could best be served by dividing the clubs among the officers and Directors on a sort of territorial basis. In his prepared report to the Convention he included all of these concerns and his thoughts about a possible course of action. He also identified another concern in his finding that clubs which are dependent on “one-man-leadership” tend to fall apart if that man dies or leaves the community.

When the convention convened in late April for the Silver Anniversary of the Association, there were 37 clubs represented— a new high. The theme of the convention was “professional man’s role in world peace.” The principal speaker at the Banquet was distinguished Past President of the Association, Lee A. White of Detroit (President in 1938-39). His address was titled, “The Silver Anniversary of Torch.” It was a profound and far-reaching statement of the meaning of Torch.

One of the key points he made was that the clubs which gained the most from Torch were those which were the most responsive to the needs of the Association and the most participative in its affairs. He said:

“Impoverished and ***** clubs are tempted to ‘go it alone.’ We know that the life expectancy of a withdrawn club is approximately zero years. This is a blow to any exponent of complete autonomy. Moreover, we have confidence born of experience that a club prospers when a considerable part of its members has participated in a Torch conference or convention.”

In addition to his report as Secretary, Crayton gave a Treasurer’s Report in which he pointed out that the receipts had been overestimated in the budget which he inherited, while the allowances for extension and the magazine were deficient.

[Later at a board meeting Crayton offered to help by taking a cut in salary, but the offer was declined.]

When he proposed the idea of using officers and Directors as regional overseers of extension, Elwood Street rose in opposition. He said he did not believe that the Board members were trained and equipped for extension activity, with some exceptions. He thought it would be better to set up an Extension Committee made up of volunteers who had demonstrated their abilities in this type of service to the Association.

Another note of historical interest: The Board proposed that necessary changes in the Constitution and Bylaws be made to open up the possibility of chartering Torch Clubs in other nations.

The proposal by the Worcester Club to liberalize the eligibility requirements was again postponed. A number of delegates said that they had come to the Convention instructed to vote against it on the assumption that it would "open the gates to non-professionals." Since they had now found that this was a misinterpretation, they asked for another opportunity to discuss the matter with their club members.

A proposal for the design and adoption of a membership pin was defeated.

As the business meetings continued, it became increasingly clear that the time had come for a complete review of the Constitution and Bylaws. Some of the questions raised on the floor were:

- Should retired members be freed from payment of dues?
- Should the prohibition on allowing clubs to take stands on controversial issues be relaxed?
- Should Torch adopt a program designed to encourage the utilization of retired professionals in public service?
- Should the duties of the officers in the Association be revised from the original descriptions to reflect current needs?

Before adjournment, former Secretary Templeton was made an Honorary Life Member. G. Claude Carey (Buffalo, New York) was elected to the position as President for 1949-50, and Lexington, Kentucky was selected for the 1950 Convention.

After the convention, Secretary Crayton continued to express concern over the extension problem. The assignment of responsibilities to the officers and Directors seemed to be impractical since there was only an expense allowance of \$700 to be split among 10 men. As for broadening the activity to a committee of volunteers, he thought this would inevitably involve costs the Association could not afford.

At a Board meeting on September 10 in Buffalo, James W. Kennedy brought in a lengthy and detailed plan for regional operation designed to carry out the assignment to Board members.

It was agreed this needed a great deal of further study. So, the only immediate action was an agreement to prepare and publish a new handbook on extension.

On the matter of changes in the Constitution, it was agreed that, first, there should be an amendment to give more power to the delegates at the conventions to make changes.

Also, of historical interest was the suggestion that possibly the function of the editing of the magazine should be given to someone other than the Secretary-Treasurer. William Wilcox, who made the

suggestion, said that it was not to be interpreted as a criticism of the present editor, but simply as a constructive suggestion for improvement in both the magazine and the general administration.

On December 8th, tragedy struck. The newly elected President, G. Claude Carey, died of a sudden heart attack. J. W. Kennedy was asked to serve the rest of the term of office. He accepted and on December 21st, notification of his acceptance was sent all the clubs.

THE TORCH STORY

CHAPTER FOUR – The Fifties

The decade of the 1950s began like the bright dawn of a new day. Field Services Secretary Herb Sackett organized six new clubs in the first half of the year in one state! In the words of Secretary Crayton, "Sackett captured Indiana for Torch." It must be mentioned, however, that he had great help from volunteers like Karl Kauffman (Indianapolis, Indiana) and others.

Later in the year, two more clubs were chartered, which brought the total for the year to eight.

But there is another side of the Association story at that time. In a report to the Board on May 1, 1950, Secretary Crayton reported "an alarming number of weak clubs." He said, "our problem, as always, is to find better ways of helping these clubs back to vigor."

Fortunately, Sackett was not only a dauntless organizer of new clubs but also a "goodwill ambassador to clubs in need of assistance." Then, too, there were volunteers ready to help out in a number of troubled situations. Crayton wrote: "you have no way of knowing how constantly we are occupied and giving encouragement and guidance to languishing clubs."

On a number of occasions, the Board had voted to go more than halfway in easing the financial burden of clubs which had been permitted by poor financial management to become deeply indebted to the Association.

In respect to extension, Crayton wrote that one of his biggest problems was in finding "the most favorable field for Mr. Sackett. Perhaps we should be looking for another Mr. Sackett. He cannot be everywhere at one time."

The Lexington, Kentucky Club produced a well-crafted convention under the general theme: The Sciences and the Humanities Join Hands. The banquet speaker was Mark F. Etheridge, the well-known editor of the Courier-Journal of Louisville, Kentucky.

Another feature of the Convention Banquet Program was a recital of folk music with the singer accompanied by a dulcimer.

There was an exhibit which, in addition to the usual club materials, included a display of books written by members of Torch.

Tours included visits to horse farms, the Transylvania Medical Library, and various historical places in the area.

In addition to all of the traditional features of a successful Torch convention, there were some which were unique. One was an address with two speakers. Another was a 10 PM “Smoker” on the horse industry, led by the editor of The Blood-Horse magazine.

Also noteworthy was the extensive press coverage given to the convention— before, during, and after the event.

At the business sessions, Leonard Frieburg (Cincinnati, Ohio) appealed for greater use of regional meetings. He said, “the value of these meetings impresses anyone who has ever attended one.” He recognized that the travel problem accounted for the fact that only in areas where the clubs were in close proximity to each other had these meetings met with any continuing success. He said that one possible alternative might be to hold small conferences for top club officials early in the fall when the clubs were just getting underway again.

The principal item of business at the Convention was the long-awaited report of the Constitutional Committee. Most of the changes were minor or were made only for purposes of clarification and modernization of the document. Primary attention was given to the question of procedures on amendments. The final decision was that a provision be included to require that changes adopted at a convention should be subject to ratification by a majority of the clubs with a prescribed period of time.

[Curiously enough, there is no mention in the records of the proposal made at the past two conventions to liberalize the eligibility provisions as proposed by the Worcester Club through its spokesman, Clayton L. Jenks. Although he was listed as a member of the committee which brought in the report on revisions to the Constitution, Jenks was reported as “absent.”]

Also of interest, was a report from the Retirement Committee which had been asked to look into the proposal from the Kalamazoo Club that Torch undertake a program to mobilize the capacities of retired professional men in services to the community. The decision on this was “to continue to carry on the study.”

Another proposal which had been under discussion was that Torch be divided into geographical regions. This was referred back to the Board for further consideration.

In the final session, James W. Kennedy was elected to continue as President for 1950-51 and Rochester, New York was selected as the convention site for 1951.

In June, Mr. Frieburg reported to the Board that on its request, he had re-opened with the American Interprofessional Institute the question of a possible merger, which had been considered off and on for several years. This organization now had 11 chapters in five states, primarily in the Middle West. Although such a merger would present difficulties for both organizations, it did appear attractive as a way of extending Torch into areas in which it was not presently represented. There was, however, no response from the Institute.

At a meeting of the Board in Buffalo on September 30, President Kennedy presented a proposal from some ladies who wanted to form a Torch club for professional women. The proposal was opposed unanimously.

At a Board meeting prior to the 1951 Convention, Secretary Crayton reported that one of the strong clubs in the Association had written of its desire to admit to membership a prominent city planner and an insurance man who had qualified as a Certified Life Underwriter. He was advised to inform the club that it should interpret the qualifications broadly, if necessary, to include men of high-quality.

President Kennedy reported that during study trips in Great Britain, he was making efforts to organize Torch clubs there.

When Rochester, New York was selected for the 1951 Convention, it marked the first time that one of the member clubs would host a convention for the second time. The earlier event had been in 1937. O. Lawrence Angevine, the General Chairman of the Convention Committee for the club, wrote to Secretary Crayton in October 1950 that his entire committee structure had been completed and was already at work.

Needless to say, Rochester produced a model convention. When it convened on May 17, there were 42 clubs represented— undoubtedly a new high for the Association. The theme was: Mature Living in the Twentieth Century.

The entertainment at the Rochester Convention included tours of the local parks, the University of Rochester, and the Rochester Museum.

In the business meetings, Elwood Street, reporting for the Committee on Regional Organization, said:

“In general, the membership does not seem to want regional meetings... Members like the informality and lack of pressure of their local clubs, but have no special kinship with Torch membership in general... But there are values in regional meetings, club officer conferences, and inter-club events. I would urge that they be continued as a basis for such association as may be feasible.”

Considerable discussion was devoted to The Torch magazine. The Editor reported rising costs. He also cited as a problem the need for more and better material. He urged club leaders to stress the value of prepared manuscripts. He said this would not only improve the quality of local programs but would also provide more copy material for the magazine.

Discussion on various aspects of club management was characterized by the prevalence of differing opinions.

The matter of speaker selection, for example, indicated that there were some clubs which strongly favored the procedure of selecting the subject first and the speakers second, even if it meant going outside the membership to find someone with qualifications on the topic. Others felt this was in conflict with one of the principles of Torch— the presentation of original papers by members. The Cumberland Valley Club spokesman said: “any person truly qualified for Torch should be able and willing to participate as a speaker. In our club, members take turns alphabetically in our programs.”

There also was strong disagreement over the use of visual aids. Leonard Kercher (Kalamazoo, Michigan) said, “the best that can be said for that practice is that about one of these per year ought to be sufficient!”

In the discussion on extension, it was pointed out that Torch had not fared well in the largest metropolitan areas. Leonard Frieberg said, "university centers are where it seems we do our best extension work. In these locations, the leaders of Town and Gown meet and get to know each other better. This creates a situation in which members get to see each other in better perspective... The practical attitudes of the Town members blend with the academic atmosphere in which the Gown members carry on their professions."

Leonard Frieberg (Cincinnati, Ohio) was elected President for 1951-52 and Columbus, Ohio was selected as the host club for the 1952 Convention. (This also was the second time a club had served as host for a convention of the Association. Columbus was the site of the second convention in 1928.)

Shortly after the convention, President Frieberg found himself in an awkward situation. His predecessor had received letters from former Secretary Templeton asking for a pension in view of his many years of service when the Association was struggling under the Great Depression and the war years of the 1940s. The Board had considered the request and had voted unanimously that it could not grant it. Frieberg wrote Templeton:

"It is not— and has not been— possible for us to compensate our staff members at anything like the level they deserve.... Our board has high respect for you. As trustees of the funds of Torch, they felt impelled to disregard what may have been their personal choice or liking....you have a status of honor for your many years of service. There is an aura that surrounds the memory of your work which remains untarnished."

At the fall Board meeting in Baltimore on September 15, 1951, Past President Kennedy reported progress in organizing small nucleus clubs in London and Birmingham in England.

Arrangements were authorized to employ a retired member of the Washington, DC club M. C. Merrill, to serve the Association as its Field Service Representative in the New England states.

Because of the serious illness of his wife, Herb Sackett was limited in his extension activities. Yet he still brought in four new clubs in 1951— two in Illinois and one each in New York and Canada.

The year 1952 began on a promising note as three new clubs were chartered before the convention convened in Columbus, Ohio on May 22 with 35 clubs represented.

The general theme of the convention was: World Leadership. In a letter reporting on the convention to all clubs, Norris Paxton, then of Albany, New York, and a member of the Board of the Association, wrote that the Convention Committee of the Columbus Club had "arranged the program so that the subject was attacked from the point of view of government, education, religion, and science."

An interesting sidelight on the program was that in a meeting for the ladies in attendance, Mrs. Augusta Street, wife of Elwood Street, then of Bridgeport, Connecticut spoke on "Education for Marriage and Family Life." In the post-convention issue of The Torch, the reporter said: "whenever Mrs. Street was seen during the remainder of the convention, she was surrounded by people who either wanted to share in her experience and insight or who delighted in her diverting comments."

Another special feature in the convention was that an airplane trip was offered to those who were interested in observing agricultural practices in the area from the air.

In his report to the convention, Secretary Crayton gave special emphasis to extension activities and the importance of these in the necessity for growth in the organization. He also reported that from a financial point of view, substantial progress was being made. The cash balance on April 30th, he reported, was \$1,200 larger than on the same date a year earlier; and the total assets of the Association were increasing year-by-year. He also reported that the Association had reached a new high in active clubs with 80 on the roster.

Not all of the news was good, however. Crayton spoke of his unhappiness in failing to find a way to make weak clubs strong. He said, in effect, that these appear to be satisfied to remain weak. He also reported that a man who had been employed in the fall of 1951 to work on extension in the New England area had given up as his efforts had produced no results.

He concluded his report with these words:

“And now, I should like to remind you that the work I am doing for Torch is in addition to the numerous other activities in which I am engaged, including my professorship at the New York University unit at Buffalo. You may reflect, therefore, that Torch welfare might be better promoted by someone less active in other capacities. Whenever you so decide, I hope that you will not hesitate to make any changes which you think to be in the best interest of Torch.”

Although the business sessions produce no official action on issues, the discussions were extensive on a variety of subjects. A recorder had been employed to produce a 181-page typed document which was a complete transcript of the proceedings. Extension was a prime subject, with considerable time given to testimonials on actual extension activities. President Frieberg said, “it must be understood that Torch is not interested in the idea of growing big. We emphasize growth because we believe that we have something precious to share with other men so that they might also enjoy the benefits of the Torch experience.”

Discussion was also devoted to every aspect of club management. Most of this consisted of statements by delegates on their local club experiences and practices.

By far, the most interesting moment from the historian’s point of view was when Chauncey Deputy of the Cumberland Valley Club said, “we are situated in a town with two women’s colleges with many women on the faculties. Am I correct that the Torch Constitution provides for restriction of membership to men? Or are there clubs with women members?”

The President indicated that the answer to the first question was yes. Former Secretary Templeton then arose to say that the only club which at one time had women in regular attendance was the Minneapolis chapter, which was the “Mother Club of the Association.” (At that point in the transcript the recorder inserted the word “laughter.”)

Prior to adjournment, Elwood Street was elevated to the Presidency of the Association for 1952-53. Later at a Board meeting, the Trenton, New Jersey Club was selected to host the 1953 convention.

Secretary Crayton received a letter from President Street indicating that in an executive session, the Board had voted to raise the Secretary’s salary by \$500, and had added \$750 to provide more clerical assistance for him so that he might devote more time to creative endeavors on behalf of the association. The Board also approved his request that the magazine be permitted to increase its size by eight pages.

Later, Secretary Crayton requested that the \$500 increase in his salary be transferred to the budget item for "Secretarial and Editorial Assistance."

[It must be understood that Sherman Crayton was a man whose frugality was deeply entrenched in his personality. He was also consistent in its application. For example, he had the temerity at one time to take the stand that Association funds should not be expended to cover the costs of visits to clubs by Directors "except to encourage and help weak or newly organized clubs."

It must also be said that his frugality was matched by his modesty. At one time he wrote: "it is only because of many ardent Torch enthusiasts who gives so much 'labor of love' that we are able to make our income finance the Association activities."]

The accession of Elwood Street to the Presidency came at a good time. Torch had lost as many clubs in the second half of the year as it had gained in the first. But Elwood was a success-minded crusader who had organized clubs in Richmond, Virginia when he lived there and, as he moved about in the country in his profession, had created clubs in Houston, Texas and Bridgeport and Hartford, Connecticut.

When President Street opened the 1953 convention at Trenton, New Jersey, 34 of the 85 active clubs were represented. William Abbotts, General Chairman of the Host Committee, and his associates had planned another stellar program for the delegates and their guests.

The most noteworthy speaker was Dr. M. F. Ashley Montagu, Chairman of the Department of Anthropology at Rutgers University. He was internationally known as an author and lecturer. His subject was, "The Good and the Clever."

At the Trenton Convention, the tours included a visit to Princeton University, the Firestone Library, and the Fairless Steel Plant. Unfortunately, there was a strike in progress at the plant, so all that the "tourists" got to see was the outside of the buildings.

Although not featured as a part of the formal program, the delegates were especially pleased to hear a short presentation by one of the early heroes of Torch, Burdette R. Buckingham. His talk was on reminiscences of the early years of the Association.

Secretary Crayton in his report began with the good news that six new charters had been presented to clubs established in the months prior to the convention in that year. He also gave a favorable report on the financial situation, indicating that in the past year, receipts had exceeded disbursements by nearly \$2,000. In the month of April, the Association had a working balance of \$24,000.

Also reporting as the Editor of the magazine, he stated that the Association was distributing 4,600 copies as compared with 3,000 five years before. He then paid tribute to his wife, Lois, who, he said, was largely responsible for the editing of the publication— strictly on a voluntary basis.

Dr. Marius P. Johnson, an officer of the Association, spoke quite candidly on some of the problems of concern to the Board. He said:

"When it comes to club welfare, we have found that the worst thing to do is to give an ailing club any help. Usually, it has killed it. So now we have to leave it up to Secretary Crayton to use his best judgment in these situations.

“As for regional conferences, that has leveled out to be a form of activity that some sections prefer and others do not.

“We are also disappointed with the lack of growth in attendance at our conventions. We seem to have reached a plateau. In searching for an answer, it has occurred to me that our problem is that we meet in the center of busy metropolitan life. Possibly we might do better if we went to a more open spot with country atmosphere and scenery.

“This might be more appealing to potential delegates and their guests, and certainly less expensive.”

Once again, the host club had arranged for a complete stenographic transcript of the proceedings of the meetings. Discussion of club policy seemed to receive most of the attention. However, as in prior conventions, this consisted primarily of a procession of “here’s-how-we-do-it” testimonials rather than indoctrination by someone qualified professionally in association management.

[This is especially difficult to understand when the Association had as its president Elwood Street, unquestionably one of the most highly qualified professional association management experts in the country at the time.]

Two amendments to the Constitution were put before the delegate body for consideration. One was a proposal to increase the number of directors on the Board from 6 to 9 to provide for better representation. This passed unanimously. The second was prompted by a letter received in September of the prior year from Frederick E. Ems, president of the San Francisco Torch Club. He stated that his club wish to propose that Torch membership be opened to women, provided they met the eligibility standards of the Association. Only one voice was raised in support of the amendment, and the vote was nearly unanimous in opposition to the proposal.

After being elected to the position of President of the Association for the coming year, C. H. Stearn (Hamilton, Ontario) made an acceptance speech in which he said:

“I will confess that when the resolution to admit women was read my heart sank... But we have been saved by the good sense of this remarkable gathering!”

At a board meeting in Buffalo on October 3, 1953, a letter was read from the American Professional Institute indicating that it was not interested in further discussion of the possibility of merger with the Association.

When the Board met later in the year, it was aware of considerable dissatisfaction with the “eligibility list,” which over the years had grown to 22 categories. The President of the Washington, DC Club had written describing the list as “a heterogeneous and ill-considered collection of names of professions.”

Various suggestions were made at the meeting, and after. Some favored further revisions in the list; some favored discarding it and substituting a simple philosophical statement of Torch principles to be interpreted by the clubs; some favored a combination of both. The matter was referred to a Constitutional Revision Committee for further study.

Meanwhile, extension activity came to a halt in the second half of the year 1953 because of the illness of both Mr. Sackett and his wife. No new clubs were organized and one expired in this period.

In a letter to Leonard Kercher of the Kalamazoo Club on March 16, 1954, Sherman Crayton discussed the proposals for changes in the eligibility requirements. He said that he felt personally that there was room for improvement. However, he said, "there is so much diversity of opinion that it may be difficult to attain unanimity."

Dr. Marius P. Johnson, First Vice President of the Association, made his position clear when he wrote: "were I joining Torch I would feel more comfortable if I knew that the membership was limited to professional men in definite walks of life as now enumerated."

Karl Kaufman of the Indianapolis Club wrote that he believed the important consideration of men for membership should be that they are able to present and defend a thesis. He favored having the Association express standards in rather general terms with the understanding that it would be the responsibility of the local clubs to add whatever additional requirements they might consider necessary.

Past President Lee A. White of Detroit wrote that the problem, in his opinion, was to work out a list that would not encourage what he described as "the slippery eels in our organization." He then added:

"Some of the suggestions being made would open a hole through which you could drive a Sherman tank. No statement is a safe one which expands the healing arts, for example, to make osteopaths, chiropractors, and a flock of other cults eligible.

"It is essential that the eligibility statement avoid allowing men dabbling in a profession to qualify, as in the case of a banker I recall who was admitted as a musician because he plays the piano or the bassoon, or something, in his leisure."

Apparently the debate continued through the 1954 Convention at Cincinnati, Ohio without any resolution being reached.

In his report to the Board on the day before the Convention, Secretary Crayton said, "we have had a very good year, despite the fact that the number of new clubs has been less than in any of the previous four years."

From a financial point of view, it had been another good year. Receipts had exceeded disbursements by \$2,000. Net resources had now grown to \$16,275.

His primary concern was in the area of extension. The illness of the Field Secretary and his wife had brought his activity to a halt. Efforts to organize new clubs had been limited to the work of volunteers. While he believed in giving encouragement to volunteer effort, it was still imperative to carry on the kind of work Mr. Sackett had performed.

It is also of interest to note that Crayton said, "we do not charter a group of fewer than 25."

He indicated that there had been a change in the policy of the Association in respect to regional conferences. He said, "our policy now is to give general approval to the idea of regional meetings, but to leave it up to the local clubs which desire them to work out the plan."

[He also wrote: "I still have hope for the London, England Club. Dr. Kercher will be in England this summer and we hope this group will be ready to receive a charter from him." The only prior mention of this possibility had been made a few years before that time when the Rev. James Kennedy, a Past President

of the Association, had evidently gathered a group together on one of his visits to England in the hope that it would mature into a member club. Monetary exchange problems and communication barriers probably made this impossible.]

Of the 82 clubs considered to be active at that time, only 36 were represented at the 1954 Convention.

Again, Norris Paxton prepared a resume of the Convention to distribute to all clubs. In it he said: “Neither spoken nor printed description can do justice to the 30th Annual Convention at Cincinnati. Mere words cannot capture the warmth of the sessions. There was no general theme... But each of the addresses was a gem in its own right. There were enjoyable convention detours, such as an afternoon of symphonic music by the Cincinnati Orchestra.... But the highlights were probably the opportunities to become better acquainted, compare notes on club affairs back home, and debate issues in typical Torch fashion.”

The General Chairman for the Convention was George Garnatz.

Before adjournment, Dr. Johnson was advanced the Presidency for 1954-55 and, at a subsequent Board meeting, Baltimore Maryland, was selected as the site for the 1955 Convention.

Because of the death of his wife after her long illness, as well as his own physical difficulties, it still was not possible for Herb Sackett to continue his work in the field of extension. However, he was determined to return to this work as soon as he possibly could. His doctor wrote to Secretary Crayton that the difficulties involved in his extended field trips would be harmful to Mr. Sackett. But he then said, “on the other hand I certainly do not feel justified in advising him to fold his hands and do absolutely nothing, particularly when he enjoys his Torch work so much..... so it seems to me that it a reasonable compromise might be for him to carry out his work in this area of the country— that is, New York and northern Pennsylvania, etc.”

No one in the association wanted to encourage him to work beyond his limitations, but everyone was glad to have him return, even on a limited basis. So, beginning November 10th, he returned to work part-time.

The year 1955 was a busy one for the Association and especially for Secretary Crayton. All year long, his desk was the net over which arguments, pro and con, were volleyed back-and-forth between the conservatives and the modernists on the membership eligibility question.

In addition, he had to deal with a succession of questions on the interpretation of the existing eligibility list. He was asked about whether or not Torch clubs could admit business administrators, Christian Science practitioners, officers in the Armed Forces, staff members in foreign embassies— and so on.

[There even was a question on whether a club could admit a Negro. Fortunately, there was no question about this. The answer was— yes. But, in a letter to the President of the Association, Crayton confessed that he had some anxiety about what the experience would be if a Negro attended a convention in one of our four cities in the South.]

Again, as he had on a number of previous occasions, Burdette Buckingham came forward with a constructive suggestion. It was that the Association enter into a thoughtful study of the question, "What Is a Professional Man?" He wrote, "I do think that the leading society of professional men, a society not limited to any particular profession, might properly be expected—and indeed expect itself— to declare the credo by which it lives... I should think that one way of setting up a general code would be to compare the legal, medical, architectural, educational, and other codes already in existence."

In a Board meeting toward the end of the year this proposal was approved in a committee was set up to make the study. The Chairman was Leonard Kercher (Kalamazoo, Michigan), along with William Abbotts (Trenton, New Jersey) and Karl Kaufmann (Indianapolis, Indiana). In his usual systematic and thoughtful way, Kercher immediately began work on the project. He wrote, "upon return from the Board meeting, I sent two of my better graduate students searching through the available literature here for references on the professions..."

He also developed a complete outline for the research project and sent it to the other members of the committee with a request that they indicate to him areas of special interest which they might wish to explore.

The year 1955 was also a year of progress and extension. Eight new clubs were chartered. None were lost. Despite his age and infirmity, Herb Sackett had one of his most productive years as Field Secretary.

It was also an outstanding year for Board member participation, both in respect to club relations and extension activity. In his report to the Board at the Baltimore Convention, Secretary Crayton said, "from practically every point of view, this has been one of the best— possibly our best— years in Torch. This is largely attributable to generous expenditure of time and energy by members of the Board."

At the 31st Annual Convention, which opened in Baltimore on May 5, 1955, delegates for the first time we urged to register on Wednesday, so that the program might begin with a full attendance on Thursday morning.

In his post-convention report, Norris Paxton wrote that more than 240 members and wives were present. There were 36 clubs represented. Paxton wrote:

"Everyone present had good reason to congratulate themselves on their good fortune. The speakers were excellent, it was a balmy spring in Baltimore, and hospitality was unfettered... On Friday, the delegates and guests were given a bus tour of Baltimore, ending in Annapolis where lunch was served in historic Carvel Hall. Afterwards the visitors watched white uniformed to cadets from the Naval Academy execute precision drills."

Secretary Crayton made special mention (in his post-convention letter of thanks to the club) of the exhibit prepared for the interest of the delegates.

[There is no record of the nature of the material exhibited. Presumably, it consisted of programs and other printed material submitted by member clubs.]

In his report to the convention, Crayton said, "if dollars speak louder than words, they reveal something of the good health of the Association. Our bank balance on April 30th was practically three times the amount it was 10 years ago. The per capita dues total was about 2 1/2 times the figure of 10

years ago." The total resources of the Association came to \$19,317, an increase of over \$3,000 in one year.

Dr. Marius Johnson, presiding, reported that there was nothing pending in new business. But he assured the delegates that this was not because of any lack of activity. "The fact," he said, "is that Torch has had a year of growth." As the convention came to a close, he expressed appreciation to Charles W. Sylvester, General Chairman, and his committee, and said, "I have attended all but one of the conventions since 1937 and consider this one of the finest I have ever experienced."

In the closing business session, W. Norris Paxton (Albany, New York) was elected President for the new year and all present were reminded that the 1956 convention would be held in Albany, with the Schenectady, New York Club as co-host.

At the Saturday morning meeting of the Board, Director B. Edward Burgess of the Houston, Texas Club protested against what he said he and his fellow delegates from his club considered the "too liberal policies" of Torch in permitting the presentation of papers at Conventions which were controversial. He also protested the publication of such papers in The Torch. He said that those responsible should screen papers more carefully to determine their points of view before making selections.

The reply was that Torch is a discussion club and that controversial issues afford the best setting for pro and con opinion. "Torch encourages freedom of speech and conversely discourages censorship. Torch by its very nature provides an atmosphere in which men may listen to points of view which may or may not differ from their own. Every man is free to emerge from Torch discussions and react solely on the basis of his own judgment."

Norris Paxton suggested that a statement be printed in The Torch to the effect that the Association assumes no responsibility for the opinions of those who speak at Torch meetings or who write for publication in the magazine. Burgess said he consider this an excellent idea.

At a Board meeting in Buffalo in October 1955, a number of items of interest were acted upon. The first was an increase in salary for Mr. Sackett from \$15 to \$20 per working day. It was also agreed that more attention should be given at the next convention to the need to be more helpful to delegates who attend hoping to receive practical help on club administration. Consideration was also given to the development of a better policy to guide the members of the Nominating Committee in choosing candidates for the election. The principal item of business, as we reported earlier, was the establishment of the committee to carry out "a scholarly piece of research" and to determine "what a profession is" and "who is a professional."

Although Leonard Kercher was the active worker on the eligibility research project, he was ably assisted by his two associates in what might best be described as reactive capacities. As rapidly as Leonard produced elements in his findings, he sent them on to Abbotts and Kaufman for their evaluation and responses.

Out of the extensive correspondence we can select only some highlights.

William Abbotts wrote that after examining the material gathered by the Chairman from a number of authorities, the conclusion seemed to him to be inescapable that there was no definition of the word "professional" which would not lead to controversy and confusion.

He reported that he had attended a Torch club meeting where the suggestion was made that there be certain specific occupations classified as professions and that each club then be permitted to include other persons whom it deemed to have the characteristics of professional behavior in their occupations, provided that the number of men so admitted did not exceed a specified small percentage of the total membership. He went on to say that he had resisted this idea at first, but had come around to the belief that it might solve the problem by allowing the local clubs to admit some very good men believed to be well qualified for Torch.

Karl Kaufman reached a somewhat similar conclusion. He suggested that the committee develop a definition of "professional persons" which, along with a brief classification list, could give guidance to local clubs in membership recruitment. His thought was that in the list of categories eligible for membership there should be a final one which might become a loophole through which a local club might select those considered by it to be of professional stature.

He also took exception to a proposal which had been made by Secretary Crayton that if a "loophole" solution was adopted, there be created an International Association committee to pass upon any doubtful cases of eligibility. Kaufman said this would not only be time consuming but would inevitably lead to resentment by local clubs.

President Norris Paxton kept in close touch with the work of the study committee. Since he had been elected to the position, he had visited a number of clubs—probably as many as eight or nine— and had attended at least one regional meeting. Wherever he went he made special efforts to obtain reaction to the eligibility question.

On January 24, 1956, he wrote to Leonard Kercher that there appeared to him to be a "tendency by some clubs to ignore the whole thing and do whatever was needed to grant memberships to favored applicants." On another occasion, he summed up his findings by saying: "most of the members with whom I talked favored expanding the specific classifications and adding a clause to include other professions satisfactory to the membership of the club."

He also said that if consideration is given to this proposition, he would recommend that it be worded so that no club could have more than 10 or 15% of its members under what he called the "proposed shirttail clause."

At a Board meeting just prior to the opening of the Albany Convention on May 9, 1956, the Research Committee on Eligibility, through its Chairman, submitted an 18 page, single spaced "Progress Report..." Since the members of the Board would need time to study this voluminous document, it was agreed that consideration of it would be scheduled at a Board meeting in the fall.

Extension was the immediate and pressing problem. It was clear that Herb Sackett would no longer be physically able to carry on the duties of the Field Services position on anything like a full-time schedule. Secretary Crayton was given the authority to negotiate with any individual who seemed to be the right man to carry on extension activity in any given locality. He was to underwrite any such effort to the extent of \$500.

Since the convention was jointly hosted by the Albany and Schenectady clubs, the convention committee had two heads: Albert B. Corey from Albany and Leonard B. Clark from Schenectady.

A number of interesting notes should be recorded on this convention. Not the least of these was the fact that the flat rates offered by the hotel were seven dollars for single occupancy and \$11 double!

Separate tours were planned for men and women. The ladies were invited to a tea at the Executive Mansion by the wife of the Governor. The men toured State office buildings and selected industrial sites.

Instead of the usual "Round Tables," the committee set up three panel discussions on various aspects of club management. At the conclusion, the delegates then assembled in one room and moderators from the three discussion groups gave brief reports.

Again, there was an elaborate exhibit. It included: paintings, photographs, books, professional papers, scrapbooks, group photographs, folders of sites of future conventions, and even a collection of rocks and minerals.

The only item of business reported was a resolution encouraging clubs to make a special effort to attract young men in the 28 to 45 age range.

The number of clubs represented was less than in the immediate past, but it was reported that "the banquet was a delightful occasion attended by more than 200."

The Treasurer's Report showed that the Association had continued to do well financially. Again, the receipts had substantially exceeded disbursements and total resources had grown to nearly \$23,000.

Secretary Crayton indicated that the primary reason for the financial gains was to be found in what he described as "internal growth." For the past year, for example, there had been an increase in club memberships of 361.

The cost of the magazine continued to rise. But Crayton said, "we are getting more for our money because we are now printing 5,200 per quarter as compared with 4,200 5 years ago." In addition, the magazine was now slightly larger.

In the closing session, Karl Kaufman was elected President for the coming year (1956-57).

Norfolk, Virginia was scheduled for the 1957 Convention site.

On September 29, 1956, the Board met again in Buffalo. Before it took up the primary subject on the agenda, it disposed of a number of other matters. One of these was the establishment of a new policy on the financial relationships between the Association and convention host clubs. The decision was that the Association would reimburse the host club for any deficit it might incur, with the understanding that if there is a surplus it would be paid the Association.

The Board thanked the Research Committee on Membership Eligibility for "the fine piece of work it had done." Then a motion was made to approve a recommendation which (in somewhat abbreviated form) provided the following qualifications for membership:

- Must be in good standing in one of 24 specified professional categories plus one titled "other professionals" which is not to include more than 20% of the total membership,
- Must satisfy the criteria of a truly professional person, and

- Must be able and willing to contribute to club programs... And be intellectually alert and socially companionable.

It was decided that there would be an article in a magazine to acquaint the numbers with the study but that the actual presentation of the recommendations growing out of the study would not be presented until the Norfolk convention.

[In 1953, Dr. Marius P. Johnson of Baltimore, and officer of the Association had suggested that attendance at the conventions might be improved if they could be held in a more attractive and quieter area than in the usual central city environment. If he had attended the 1957 convention at Old Point Comfort, Fort Monroe, Virginia, hosted by the Norfolk Club, he would have found out how right he was!]

When President Karl Kaufman called the convention to order on May 1st, more than 300 members and guests were in attendance and the number of clubs represented was over 50. This represented a 50% increase over the usual turnout in the past several years.

There were three apparent reasons for this: the first was the setting; the second was the quality of the program; the third was the entertainment.

In his welcoming address, the City Manager of Norfolk said: "the setting of this meeting place presents a commanding view of the largest harbor in the world and the entrance to Chesapeake Bay. Just across the water lies Norfolk, Virginia's largest city. Without leaving your front porch you have a ringside seat at the largest engineering project ever undertaken in the State of Virginia, the connecting of Norfolk on the other side with this peninsula by a bridge tunnel. Without leaving the porch you can see merchant ships from all over the world in addition to many ships of the United States Navy. Moreover, the Norfolk Azalea Gardens are at their very best right now. And on this peninsula, the 350th celebration of the founding of Jamestown is now in full swing."

As for the program, the speakers were Dr. Frank Porter Graham, educator, US Senator, historian and diplomat; Paul Green, author of famous historical dramas (including "The Lost Colony"), a Pulitzer Prize winner and faculty member at the University of North Carolina; and Lenoir Chambers, editor of the Norfolk Virginian-Pilot and one of the most colorful voices on the speaking platforms of the South.

The entertainment was fabulous. There was a walking tour of Fort Monroe, a bus ride to the Mariner's Museum, Yorktown Battlefield, and Langley Air Force Base and yet another tour to Jamestown Island, then to Williamsburg and Fort Eustis.

The principal item of business was, of course, consideration of the recommendations from the Board on the Study of the Eligibility Question. The Board said:

"The problem of eligibility is clearly rooted in social change. it stems directly from our failure to adapt to the changing vocational scheme. There is no consensus among us, or the public in general, on what constitutes a profession or a professional person. Some would accord this valued status only to those who are members of long established and traditional groups. Others would recognize those whose groups have achieved a certain academic background. Still others would maintain virtually no qualification other than local community status."

The recommendation received almost unanimous approval. So, the controversy, which has been a disturbing factor in the life of the Association for a number of years, was finally brought to an end.

Permission was thus given to the local clubs to determine their own interpretation of professional eligibility.

Secretary Crayton's Report to the Convention dealt primarily with extension. There had been virtually no accomplishment in this area since the Field Service position had become vacant because of the retirement of Mr. Sackett. At the same time, he was able to report that the Association had enjoyed another favorable year financially. The Auditor's Report of April 30, 1957, indicated that the net resources had increased more than \$3,000, bringing the total to approximately \$26,000.

In the Convention Program, Bertran S. Nusbaum was listed as General Chairman, with Aubrey Hustad as Co-Chairman. Mrs. Nusbaum was the Women's Chairman with Mrs. Hustad as her Co-Chairman.

[This was before Women's Liberation came along to begin calling people "Chairs."]

As the convention came to a close, Leonard Kercher was elevated to the Presidency of the Association for 1957-58.

[Before moving on we should share with you one of the finer episodes in the life of the Association. Burdette Buckingham was a paragon of Torch leadership and the conservator of Torch tradition. But he accepted the decision to liberalize eligibility with these eloquent words: "Torch puts into practical effect, as no other organization does, a certain significant concept— a concept, namely, of a cultural background common to all true professions. This concept is communicable as each member tells his story either formally in a prepared talk or informally in discussion. Every profession has its martyrs, its thinkers, and heroes. The life of every professional person has its thrilling moments, its dark hours, and its abundant rewards. These facets of our great concept give drama to our meetings."]

At a meeting of the Board and Buffalo on October 12, 1957, an extension plan prepared by Elwood Street was endorsed. \$5,000 was allocated for the program with the proviso that no more than \$500 be spent on any one project. In essence, the plan was focused upon what was described as "colonizing." It was to encourage local clubs to organize new clubs within the immediate area.

Another interesting development in that meeting was a report by Secretary Crayton on a survey which indicated that many clubs needed to seek larger memberships plus higher dues. Many smaller clubs lacked sufficient funds to provide subsidies to delegates for convention attendance.

Also, of historical significance was a draft report from the Committee of Composition and Policy on Nominations. This resulted in a decision by the Board to provide that a Nominating Committee be created to operate under the policy that no more than two persons from anyone professional category should sit on the Board at a given time; that nominations be made with due regard for geographical representation; and that seats on the Board should rotate so that every area is represented sooner or later.

Finally, a committee was established to study the question of exhibits at conventions.

Another important event which occurred in this year of progress and change was that a new publisher was selected for the magazine. The Publisher was Charles H. Esser of Kutztown, Pennsylvania. He and the head of the Art Department at Kutztown State Teachers College restyled the magazine and a regular publication schedule was agreed-upon.

At a meeting of the Board prior to the Detroit Convention in May 1958, Secretary Crayton reported that the year had been one of extreme contrasts in the experiences of the Association. In extension, there had been no new clubs chartered, but in club development there had been substantial progress. He said, "we have had the best acquisition of new members in the history of the Association. There were 420 reported to us." This, of course, resulted in financial progress for the Association. Assets were now over \$30,000, an increase of more than \$4,000 in the past 12 months.

The last issue of The Torch had listed 90 active clubs. (Some on the list had not shown any evidence of activity for some time).

[There is no evidence in the files that there was a firm policy on lifting charter status from inactive clubs. As long as there was even a remote possibility that something could be done to restore the club, it apparently was the Secretary's prerogative to keep the club on the roster until its demise was a certainty.]

Manuals describing the extension plan adopted at the last Board meeting were ready for distribution to local clubs which might be ready to participate. Under this plan, the Association was ready to pay for expenses such as an initial luncheon or dinner, letter service for getting out notices, and other necessary expenses related to recruitment of prospective members. The limit was \$500. But that was restricted to initial recruitment of 100 members (the figure suggested by Elwood Street). If the number of founding members was less than that, the subsidy from the Association was to be reduced.

As part of his report on extension, Crayton read part of a letter he had received from a Torch member in Windsor named John P. Smith, a man with considerable experience in community organization. Smith said that while plans for the extension activity are fine, the fact remains that the first task is to find "that one man in the community who will carry the project through... The right man can do it... But he must be found."

Also reported was that an article on Torch programs which had been included in the April issue of the magazine would be available to clubs with the suggestion that they would do well to distribute it to upcoming speakers because of its valuable suggestions.

A folder on "Introducing Torch" was available as an aid to membership development.

[This folder was also printed in Spanish! Someone, not identified, had hopes of organizing a club in Peru and there was some mention of the possibility that the San Antonio Club might be interested in extending Torch across the border into Mexico. There was, however, no further word on the Torch group which had been reported in London, England.]

A report was made by the committee headed by Bertram Nusbaum on Convention Exhibits. On the basis of this report, it was decided to continue the exhibits.

Although identified as the Detroit Convention, the official program indicated that the 1958 convention was hosted by three clubs: Detroit, Oakland County, and Windsor, Ontario. The General Chairman was Marquis E. Shattuck.

Over 200 members and guests were present, representing 40 clubs.

In addition to a program of speakers of quality worthy of the high standards of Torch, tours were provided of downtown Detroit, Greenfield Village, the Henry Ford Museum, and a walking tour of the cultural center of activities of Detroit.

Charles A. Jones of Columbus, Ohio was named President for the coming year.

Leonard Kercher, the outgoing President, brought the convention to a close with what he called "An Exaugural Address." In it he said that in his term of office there had been "three E's" in his program. These were: Elections, Eligibility, and Extension.

As to Elections, a partial solution had been accomplished in the objective of improving the nominating procedures. (He added, however, that this reminded him of another problem: maintaining activity and interest of past leaders, too many of whom, he said, tend to "drop out" once their leadership terms had ended).

In the Eligibility matter, the Association had taken a giant step forward; but not without awareness that it was now up to the local clubs to exercise their new right to maintain the high standards of eligibility necessary to a quality organization.

The third activity, Extension, was on "dead center." He said he had checked over the past six years and had found that the actual net gain in that period of time in number of active clubs was only 12.

He concluded by expressing his great appreciation to the husband and wife team of Sherman and Lois Crayton who, he said, "had given constant protection to the interests of Torch on every front."

[In the Pantheon of Torch Heroes, a special place of prominence must be given to Leonard Kercher. One can only speculate on what he might have accomplished if he had not been restricted by Torch governance to a single term. (There had been two exceptions: Buckingham in the early 30s and Krantz in the early years of the war. Both of these men served with distinction). It was virtually impossible to expect anyone to create, develop, and execute a strong presidential program in one year.]

At a Board meeting in September 1958 in Buffalo, a most unusual problem was encountered. There had been an article by a Torch member in The Torch on the subject of fluoridation. Somehow it was copied and distributed in Columbus, Ohio as part of a pre-campaign effort in an upcoming election on the subject. Although the Board was greatly disturbed by this, it decided not to take legal action unless there was any further such unauthorized use of the article.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted largely to discussion of the implementation of the new extension plan. The Chairman of the Extension Committee said that in his opinion it might be possible to employ Elwood Street on a part-time basis to do extension work for the Association. He was authorized to explore this possibility.

The moving force in bringing the 1959 Convention to Greenville, South Carolina, was Dr. W. H. Powe, Sr. He had attended most of the 11 previous conventions, had made many friends, and served the Association well. As the First Vice President, he was slated to move up to the Presidency.

But, just a few days before the Greenville Convention he became seriously ill and had to undergo major surgery. He was unable to see his dream come true. This was probably one of the saddest stories in the history of the Association.

The delegates proceeded to elect Dr. Powe to the Presidency. But his son wrote an open letter to the delegates indicating that it would not be possible for his father to accept the honor. His son wrote: "Torch for him has been his greatest inspiration. Nothing in his long and useful life has meant more to him than Torch..."

Despite this setback, the convention proceeded under the able management of its Chairman, D. P. Polatty, and his associates in the Western South Carolina Club, the host for the event.

It was springtime in the Southland, the magnolias were in bloom, and the sweet smell of honeysuckle filled the air. Moreover, the Poinsett Hotel provided the delegates and their guests with a comfortable, charming, and gracious accommodation.

There had been some apprehension when the decision was made to hold a Torch Convention for the first time in what was considered "the deep South." The question was what would happen to attendance. No official attendance list was kept. But the local press reported that there were 165 members and their guests in attendance. A retrospective list made from memory by Secretary Crayton indicated approximately 32 clubs were represented.

A report transmitted to the delegates from the Auditing Committee included information that the receipts had exceeded disbursements in the past year by \$9,143. Total resources had reached more than \$36,800!

[An examination of the report brought out that one of the primary reasons for the financial success that year was that while \$6,500 had been allocated for "Extension and Club Welfare," only \$1,174 had actually been used. This is clear evidence that the "Extension Plan" adopted at the last Board Meeting, had been virtually inoperative.]

The Convention Committee had arranged a number of campus visits in the area, including Furman University, The Art Gallery at Bob Jones University, and Clemson College. Also included, was a tour of a cotton mill.

Among the speakers on the program, the most noteworthy was a talk on "Hypnosis" at the Convention Banquet. The speaker was Dr. Corbett H. Thigpen, co-author of the book titled "The Three Faces of Eve."

There was no major item of business on the agenda. There was a report by Edwin M. Bartlett of the Columbia-Montour Club in Pennsylvania. He presented an analysis of Torch members by professional classification. (He found, for example, that nearly 25% of Torch members at that time were classified as educators). The purpose of his report was to encourage local clubs to try to include as many professions as possible in their membership.

The Greenville newspaper gave the Convention an unusual amount of space. It began with the welcoming editorial, continued with gavel to gavel coverage and several photographs of Torch leaders, and even featured an interview with former United States Senator John W. Bricker of the Columbus, Ohio Club on the "State of the Nation."

[It would be interesting to know what the reaction of some of the delegates was to this, when they read that their colleague had used this opportunity to lecture the readers on the need to convert the South to

a two-party political system! He also included a strong endorsement of Vice President Nixon's candidacy for the Republican nomination for President.]

Edward M. Shortt of the London, Ontario Club was elected to head the Association in the year 1959-60.

[Everyone who got to know Leonard Kercher— even those of us who knew him only in the latter years of his life— will be pleased to know that he was given a plaque at the 1959 Convention for his meritorious service and that in the July issue of The Torch, there was a tribute in which it was written: “Leonard Kercher did more than lend dignity to the office of President. His contributions began long before he was elected to the Board and will continue indefinitely. His chief motive has not been recognition for himself, but the furtherance of what he calls, ‘The First Value of Torch— intellectual freedom and the free and responsible mind’.”]

After the convention, Secretary Crayton wrote Rear Admiral Polatty that he felt: “the Convention was an outstanding demonstration of fine Southern hospitality... I don't think that I have ever seen a group that seemed to be more pleased with convention arrangements.”

In the summer months, Sherman Crayton and his wife Lois made a 10,000-mile motor tour of the West on Torch business. This was fulfillment of a dream he had long held. He made contact with three existing clubs, counseled with three groups interested in chartering, and held exploratory discussions with five potential groups as well as a number of individuals with whom he discussed Torch along the way.

The Board met on September 12, 1959, at the Crayton home in Kenmore, New York. Here are some highlights of that meeting:

- On the conventions: it was agreed that preference should be given to the use of Torch members of speakers; that care should be exercised to avoid repetition in subjects in papers; that something should be done to attract more new club officers to the conventions since the attendance now seemed to be dominated by older and retired men; and that while the exhibits attracted little attention at the last convention, the effort should be made again at the upcoming Indianapolis Convention.
- On memberships: it was agreed that local clubs should be informed that it was acceptable to establish “inactive” or “associate” memberships for those who for one reason or another cannot remain active, with the understanding that if such member wishes to receive the magazine, there would be a two dollar annual fee to the Association.
- On the magazine: the principal problem was the difficulty in selecting which papers to use. It would be helpful to set up a system to secure advice from carefully selected advisers from various professions to help on this matter.
- On extension: it was reported that Elwood Street had declined the offer of the position as Field Secretary. It was clear that the Street Plan, which had worked so well for him in the past, was not being utilized as anticipated. It was suggested that the plan be revised to offer alternative courses of action.

By the end of 1959 there has been four new clubs chartered— the first since 1957. However, in the 1957-59 period, there was no net gain as the number of new clubs (five) was offset by the number lost.

THE TORCH STORY

CHAPTER FIVE – The Sixties

The year 1960 marked the midpoint of what might be described as “the golden age” of Torch, which began in the mid-50s and extended into the mid60s. Eight new clubs were chartered in that year and only one was lost. Association receipts for the year ended March 30, exceeded disbursements by more than \$1,000 and the net resources of the Association reached a new high of \$38,134. The April issue of The Torch listed 92 active clubs.

[Sherman Crayton added an interesting footnote to the financial report which read as follows: “please note that I serve the Association without salary. The salary indicated is paid to Lois Crayton.”]

From the point of view of all those who considered growth the sine qua non of Torch achievement, the Association was experiencing one of its best years.

There was an exception. Attendance at the Indianapolis Convention on May 4 to 7, 1960 was disappointing. Less than half of the member clubs were represented. The total attendance, aside from the host club itself, was 122 members and guests.

Karl L. Kaufman, General Chairman, and his associates on the Convention Committee, had planned a very full program. In addition to two welcoming addresses, there were seven speakers on the program. Also included, was a record number of tours including research centers, a planetarium show, an exhibit at the General Motors Corporation, a visit to the Speedway Track and Museum, the Medical Center at Indiana University and a tour of landmarks of the city. (Some of these overlap so that the delegates and their guests might have a choice). There was also a special program for ladies, which featured a talk on orchids.

The schedule was so tight that there was one occasion when the buses did not return in time for the next scheduled event.

Since some of the sessions provided for more than one speaker, there was little time left for the discussion periods, which were always anticipated by Torch members.

Despite this rather tiring experience, it was agreed that there was a genuine spirit of hospitality throughout the convention which was evidenced by the host club’s efforts.

Edward M. Short, President of the Association, presided over business sessions which were fairly brief as there really was no business to transact, except for the usual reports and resolutions.

Secretary Crayton’s report dealt almost exclusively with extension. He reported that he and his wife had made a trip in the past year into the Pacific Northwest, down the California Coast, and into Arizona and Texas and that on this trip he had made many contacts which he hoped would advance the growth process for the Association.

He also reported that a roster of the Association had been published and distributed to all members in order to stimulate interest in extension.

At the closing session, Bertram Nusbaum (Norfolk, Virginia) was elected to head the Association in the coming year.

At the Board meeting following adjournment, the primary subject of discussion was the need to find ways to attract higher attendance at future conventions. It was agreed that one constructive step would be to devise and distribute a convention manual representing the conclusions of recent Convention Chairman. This manual should provide much more time for club workshops and much less time for addresses and tours.

Some concern was also expressed by Secretary Crayton over the problem of unstable clubs. He suggested that one approach to this problem might be more activity in the area of regional meetings.

The Torch magazine for April 1960 consisted of 66 pages, of which 49 were devoted to 10 articles taken from selected Torch papers sent in by the clubs. The remaining 17 pages included lists of officers and directors of the Association, past presidents, editorials and brief news from the Association, a column titled "Honorable Mention" (achievements of Torch members), a club directory, a section titled "Torch in Action" (brief digests of papers from the clubs), a listing of new members, and a two-page spread on the next convention.

At a Board meeting on September 10, 1960, at the home of the Crayton's in Kenmore, New York, concerns over convention attendance again received considerable attention. It was suggested that the Association magazine might be used effectively and convention promotion.

However, Secretary Crayton reported that he had made an effort to determine reasons for non-attendance and had concluded that one of the primary reasons was that there was really no business to be transacted at most of the conventions and that the clubs saw no practical benefits in being represented. He said that in his opinion the primary justification for having the conventions was the stimulation and guidance of officers in club improvement. But the fact is, he said, that most of those in attendance came because it was a pleasant vacation trip for retired members who had already served their time in club leadership. So, his conclusion was that the primary need was to attract current officers. He thought it might help to be sure that the workshops were well planned and given adequate pre-convention promotion. He also suggested that individualized letters should be sent to the club officers—especially to those in clubs which had not been represented in recent years.

In discussion on extension, it was reported that Elwood Street would be retiring in 1961 and that he might be interested in a part-time extension position with the Association. This proposal was accepted, with the proviso that he works under the direction of the Secretary.

On April 6, 1961, Torch chartered its 100th club in Hampton Roads, Virginia. Although only one other new club was organized in the year, Torch experienced another year of progress. The April issue of The Torch had a circulation of 5,600. The financial report on March 31st showed an excess of receipts over disbursements of nearly \$5,000. This brought its total resources to a new high of \$43,500.

Attendance at the Hartford, Connecticut Convention on May 3 to 6 was reported to be 292 people, a substantial increase over the last convention. The total number of clubs represented was 45— still less

than half of the active clubs— which meant that there were multiple more attendees from the represented clubs that had been the case in 1960.

The Convention Program indicated that the event had co-hosts: the Connecticut Valley (Hartford) and the Bridgeport clubs. However, the primary responsibility was carried by the Connecticut Valley Club. (Only four members of the Bridgeport Club were in attendance at the Convention). It should be mentioned that the Connecticut Valley Club had only been in existence for four years, so it was the youngest club to serve as host of the event since the early years of the Association.

The large turnout was generated by the location. The Association had helped in the promotion, although the original plan for a direct mail effort to all clubs in the eastern area of the country had been abandoned because of cost. But the April issue of the magazine made the point that “the New England region fairly reeks with the romance of times past. Reminders of our ancestors who struggled for the liberty we now enjoy are now on every hand in the Convention area.”

It should also be mentioned that the registration fee covering all the items on the Convention program was only \$20!

Dr. Allen E. Hogg was General Chairman. He and his committee planned a rich variety of attractive tours and special events for the delegates and their guests. These included the State Library, the Wadsworth Atheneum, Mark Twain’s home, and an inner look at the Connecticut General Life Insurance Company’s Headquarters. For the ladies there was a visit to a large department store. Included on that tour was a talk on “Educational Opportunities for Women.”

As has been suggested, more time was devoted to workshops. There were four: conventions, club programming, club finance, and extension.

Again, as in recent years, there was no substantial item of business on the agenda. A proposal was made by one of the delegates to drop the annual membership fee from four dollars to three dollars. This idea died “for want of a second.” In its place was another suggestion to raise the dues by one dollar which was referred to the Board for action at the next convention.

Prior to adjournment, Eaton V. W. Read (Bridgeport, Connecticut) was elected president for 1961-62.

After the Convention adjourned, Secretary Crayton, and letters of thanks to the Convention Committee, described it as “thoroughly delightful and inspiring.”

The proposal made in the fall of 1960 that arrangements be made with Elwood Street to do field service work on a part-time basis was put into effect in the fall of 1961. His assignment was described in the July issue of The Torch: “this will be a fresh approach to strengthening existing clubs as well as assisting in extension efforts. For the first time we will have a Field Secretary to advise and counsel with local leaders, but he will not be asked to recruit members for new clubs.”

When the Board met on September 9, 1961 at the Crayton residence in Kenmore, New York, Secretary Crayton reported that he was quite disappointed by the lack of persons who had indicated a willingness to help locate local organizers with whom the new Field Secretary could work.

The new President, Eaton Read, said:

“I believe the Board should be very careful not to stress numerical evaluation of Elwood’s work. I am sure we would prefer to add a few very good clubs with good men rather than simply to add more groups with a large proportion of marginal members.”

It was agreed that Elwood should begin his new assignment by concentrating on the eastern areas of the country.

Much of the time at the Board meeting was given to rather detailed planning of the program for the 1962 Convention to be held in Toledo.

There were two items of business on the agenda. The first was a decision to report to the clubs the proposal for an increase in Association dues from four dollars to five dollars per year to be acted upon at the next convention. The other item was an immediate increase in salary to the Craytons from \$5000 to \$7500.

When the convention came to Toledo in 1962, the host committee had the advantage of having as its General Chairman a Past-President of the Association. Dr. Glenn H. Reams had been president in 1947 to 48.

The headquarters for the event was the Commodore Perry Hotel on May 16-19. The attendance was 134 from out of town, plus 47 from the host club. The number of clubs represented was 46, about the same as in the past several years.

The program followed the general pattern which had been established. One item of special interest was that the Banquet speaker was a woman— Mrs. Phyllis Grosshans, a political scientist from the University of Toledo, who spoke on international policy.

In response to the suggestions of those who had expressed the opinion that the primary purpose of the conventions should be to provide information and inspiration for club development, two sessions were devoted to workshops.

It should also be noted that special efforts were made for the entertainment of the wives of those in attendance. There was a “welcoming party” on Thursday morning with a book review. There was a garden tour and a luncheon at the Toledo Museum of Art.

The principal tour for men was at the Libby Glass Division of Owens-Illinois glass company.

Association President Ethan Read presided at the business sessions where the principal item of concern was the proposal, endorsed by the Board, to raise the annual membership dues from four dollars to five dollars. Apparently there was little opposition, and it was adopted. Of course, the action could not become final until the clubs had been given an opportunity to vote on it in the post-convention period.

The only other item of business was a proposal to approve a lapel pin to be made available to those wishing to purchase one.

In his annual report, Secretary Crayton was again able to indicate that receipt exceeded disbursements— this time by more than \$4000. This brought the net worth of the Association to \$49,050.

The primary emphasis of his presentation, however, was on the subject of extension. He appealed to the delegates to provide prospective local organizers in communities where Torch was not represented.

He said that the current extension plan required local leadership— people with whom Elwood Street could consult in carrying out the steps necessary to effective organizational results.

In the closing section Dr. J. J. Witt of Utica, New York, was elected President for 1962-63.

The first concern of the new President had to do with the committee structure of the Association as provided in the Constitution. Secretary Crayton wrote to him that some of the committees had been more or less inactive and that, quite frankly, he was not altogether clear himself on what purposes some of them served. He suggested that it might be in order to review the whole question with the possibility of some eliminations. He said that on the other hand these committees might provide an opportunity to involve more people (and more clubs) in Association affairs. Dr. Witt's decision was that the committees should be set up again and asked to carry out the provisions of the Constitution as best they could.

Of much greater concern, however, was the disappointment over the lack of progress in the current extension activity. There had been few requests for Elwood Street's services. Moreover, it was becoming clear that the "Street Plan," which had worked well for him in the past, was not meeting current needs. In addition, Mr. Street had indicated that because of other projects, he would not be able to give more than one week per month at most to Torch work. Both the President and immediate Past President of the Association advised Secretary Crayton to call on Elwood's services only when there were specific needs, and to pay him only "after the fact."

Secretary Crayton summed it all up in these words:

"So long as clubs feel that the extension program is being well taken care of by the staff and the Board, they simply are not going to exert themselves very much. If they really did understand how vital their help is needed, we might have had more support."

At the Board meeting on September 8, 1962 at the Crayton home in Kenmore, New York, this subject was thoroughly discussed. It was then agreed that the Extension Manual be revised.

Another problem was those clubs which were too small to retain vitality. There were 12 clubs with less than 30 members— some with less than 10. The recommendation was that each Board member take responsibility for local visitations in the situations to try to help and encourage their development.

The 1962 Convention was reviewed. One delegate had made a formal complaint that he thought a disproportionate amount of time had been given to the club workshops. His point was that many of those in attendance did not feel that they needed help on club administration. The decision of the Board was that either less time be given to workshops at the next convention or that some alternative programming be provided for those not interested in club management.

There also was some discussion of exhibits. Apparently there had been some experience of loss or damage.

The Secretary said that he was still having problems over the questions of eligibility. He said:

"We have a few members who are not truly professionals. This is unavoidable as long as we follow the policy of accepting anyone the local club has already accepted. But as this develops, the clubs which do it become less attractive to members of the older professions and lose the distinction of Torch as a

purely professional discussion club. On the other hand, it is true that vocational groups are raising their standards now and are moving toward meeting criteria which could be considered a professional level.”

Finally, he reported that the number of clubs which had accepted the dues increase was now sufficient to indicate that the action was assured. There were a few clubs which wrote in asking for the reasons for the proposed increase. Secretary Crayton responded as follows: “I can understand your concerns since our financial report shows an excess of receipts over disbursements. I should explain that I have asked the Board to give thought to a successor since my wife and I plan to retire in the near future when suitable replacements can be found. It is expected that the office would then need two full-time people plus adequate clerical help plus office and storage space (which for the past 14 years has been provided without cost to the Association). Also, the costs of printing the magazine increase with almost every order. We pay about as much for one issue now as we paid for four issues a few years ago. Mailing costs are going up and will continue to increase in the years to come.”

It must be recorded that despite the failure of the extension scenario to produce the results which were anticipated, 1962 was still a good year. Six new clubs were organized through a variety of efforts—primarily voluntary in nature.

Secretary Crayton later reported to the Board that he had received favorable votes from 48 clubs on the dues increase and eight against it. There were 49 clubs which failed to respond, all of which were recorded as favoring the increase under the voting provisions in the Constitution.

The host club for the 1963 convention on June 20-22, was the Utica Club, which had also served as the host club in 1935. It was a strong club with good leadership. Moreover, it had a special motivation to produce a successful event as a tribute to one of its members, Dr. J. J. Witt, who would be presiding over the Convention in his capacity as President of the Association.

The program and the attractions of the area were well publicized in advance and, as a result, the number of clubs represented (54) was higher than in recent years. Although the official registration from out of town was reported to be 124, the number at the banquet on Friday night was 208, which included members and guests from the host club (plus others who participated in part, but not all, of the convention events).

Under the leadership of General Chairman Charles H. Hetherington, a full program of six well-chosen speakers and a wide variety of tours and special events kept everyone entertained. The most unusual event was an all-day bus tour to Cooperstown to visit the Baseball Hall of Fame, the Fenimore House, and the Farmer’s Museum.

For the ladies, the highlight of their program was a trip to the Oneida Silversmith Community Mansion House.

There was no major item of business to be considered. Secretary Crayton made his usual “state of the Association” report in which he was again able to report a year of substantial increase in the financial stability of the Association. The net worth was \$53,827 on March 31, 1963.

One outstanding feature of the Convention was unusually complete and accurate newspaper coverage—attributed to the fact that it was handled by a member who was a newspaper man himself.

At the closing session Lon L. Nusom (San Antonio) was elevated to the Presidency for the upcoming year.

Following the Convention, there was some debate in the Board as to whether it needed to meet again in the fall, as representatives of the next host club (Knoxville, Tennessee) had given the Board an opportunity to go over their plans quite thoroughly in a post-convention Board meeting. President Nusom and others contended that the meeting was necessary in order to keep in touch with all administrative needs. So, the interim meeting took place at the home of the Crayton's in Kenmore, New York on October 26.

It was agreed that the convention workshop sessions could be improved if some effort were made in advance to ascertain the subjects which the clubs would like to have on the table for discussion. It was also agreed that there should be one hour set aside specifically as an "Officers' School."

In a discussion on weak clubs, Sherman Crayton gave strong emphasis to his testimony that letters do not produce results. He said that only by personal visitations from officers and Directors could the true state of affairs in such clubs be drawn out and suggested remedies be transmitted. While members of the Board recognize this, he said, the fact is that they are usually men with heavy personal, professional and civic involvement with little time for Torch visitations.

The most urgent matter at this point in time for the Association was Secretary Crayton's announcement that he would be retiring from teaching in June of 1964 and would like to bring the services of himself and his wife to an end after the 1965 Convention in Buffalo. The Board accepted his proposal and authorized him to begin looking for possible successors.

The current situation with respect to extension also came under extensive discussion.

Only one club was chartered in 1963, and this was offset by one loss. Sherman Crayton's suggestion was that an effort be made to recruit retired Torch members to work in extension in the various regions of the country with expenses paid, but without compensation.

[No further mention of Elwood Street's services was made in minutes of the meeting. Some correspondence indicated that both he and his wife were in ill health. But the fact is that he had been directly involved in only two instances of new club organization since he had been a part-time staff person.]

Anyone who read the lead article in The Torch of January 1964 would have sensed that the upcoming Knoxville Convention was going to be something special. Here's how it began:

"If intentions count, Knoxville Torch members will make the 1964 Convention the best in history. True Southern hospitality will be dispensed. Included in the program will be two outstanding tours: the first will be to the Great Smoky Mountains and the second will be to Oak Ridge, the Atomic City. And all this for a registration fee of only \$20!"

Once again the attractiveness of the site and the promises of the entertainment resulted in a record attendance. When the tally was taken, it showed that 255 members and guests were present for one or more functions. The Convention Committee, headed by Stewart W. Maher, produced a program of five well-chosen speakers plus the two bus tours mentioned above.

On the Great Smokies tour, the group had luncheon at Gatlinburg, Tennessee followed by visits to his famous craft school and shops. Those on the Oak Ridge trip had a choice of visiting the Museum of Atomic Energy or a nuclear reactor.

For the ladies (who in those days were assumed to be interested in anything scientific or technological) there were visits to local museums and houses of historical and cultural significance.

On Thursday evening after the formal program, there was a brief "Officers' Training School" (which must not have been too successful as its chairman, Fred Heisner, later recommended that it not be included in the program for the next convention).

A four-part workshop under the title "Keeping Torch Clubs Active" was held on Friday morning.

[The effort to obtain guidance from the local clubs on the content of the workshops had produced responses from substantially less than half of the clubs; most of the replies were said to have come too late to be more than minimally helpful.]

In his annual report to the delegates, Secretary Crayton had the unpleasant experience of reporting the only one club had been organized so far in 1964, with little firm prospects for others. He presented the financial report, from the Auditors, as of March 31st which showed an astonishing \$9000 excess of receipts over disbursements for the prior year. This brought the net worth of the Association to \$62,217.37. His comment was, "I would rather be reporting new clubs than an addition of \$8889.99 to the reserves." (The budget for the year had included \$5000 for extension; only a small part of which had been spent, owing to the lack of extension activity).

At the closing session, E. Vernon Lewis (Newark, Delaware) was made President for the coming year. As he prepared to bring the convention to adjournment, outgoing President Nusom announced that the officers and directors would form a line at the door to greet the delegates as they departed. He said, "this is not an exit line; it is a line to begin the new year."

[We cannot close this account without recognizing the influence L. M. Josephson had on the success of the event. He was the prime mover in getting the Board to agree to come to Knoxville; when the Convention was underway, he was the power behind (and sometimes in front of) the scene. Also of special interest, is a letter in the archives from Sherman Crayton to Bob Nagel expressing special appreciation to him for his "presence in the right place when something needed to be done."]

The Board held its interim meeting on September 19, 1964 in Buffalo, the site of the next Convention. In addition to detail discussion of the program for the convention, consideration was given to invitations from six clubs wishing to serve as hosts for future such events.

There was some question about the wisdom of extensive convention press coverage. On this subject, Past President Norris Paxton, a newspaper man himself, had written:

"It has been somewhat difficult for Torch leaders to accept a concept of publicity.... Which appears to be in conflict with the general restraint in the majority of our clubs. But I believe that representatives of the media should be invited to attend. It makes for goodwill and good publicity if they are made welcome and are given complementary meal tickets."

In discussion of the magazine, there was a suggestion that it might be helpful to the Editor if there was an editorial board. Crayton replied that there had been one in the past. But, he said, they were problems with this; "sometimes experts ask to read a paper for its reliability turned down one of our best papers if it wasn't what the reviewer would have said."

Most of the attention, as always, was on the extension problem. Director John Vitko (Saint Paul, Minnesota) could not attend and had written:

"Maybe the use again of a professional agency or promoter (as Field Secretary) can serve a useful purpose. Either that or some advice to the Directors from a professional agency or a promoter to add some glamour so that we ourselves can spread from the inside out... I know there has been some effort in this direction by respected people in Torch. However, I feel that this has many limitations. I would like to explore more fully a professional type."

Secretary Crayton took a dim view of professional organizers. He looked back over the 38 expired clubs since the founding of Torch and concluded that:

"With paid organizers there's always a temptation to shade the qualifications of membership or to oversell to the point that some of those who sign the charter never show up again after the first meeting."

He did not have much faith either in extension work by local clubs. He said that all too often they lack both the motivation and procedural knowledge to get the job done. He came down strongly on the side of local on the scene leadership, preferably by former members who have moved into the prospective club site from a good background of Torch experience.

Not mentioned in the meeting, but found in the archives, is a letter from M. Webster Price of Redlands, California, who had made a conscientious effort to organize for Torch in what was considered to be "the fertile fields of California and the West Coast in general." He wrote:

"The greatest hurdle in starting a new Torch Club today is that too often the more eligible the prospect is, the more he tends to shy away from the already heavy demands upon his time. Free time, so-called, is more alluring to him than the prospective benefits of Torch. The tempo of demand on professional men has now increased so greatly that few persons will volunteer for the task of organizing a new club."

Then, too, there were occasional voices raised in some opposition to expansion. Lloyd Bartlett, President of the Saginaw Valley Club, wrote:

"I am not particularly enthusiastic about expansion. I have seen too many organizations stress tremendous growth... Without spending enough time on keeping what they have. America is a great country for organization. Everybody wants to be big... I would rather see the clubs emphasize excellence."

Webster Price's prophetic appraisal of the changing professional scene and Lloyd Bartlett's challenge to the "bigger is better" philosophy do not appear to have received official consideration.

[Before moving on, we should pay tribute to Sherman Crayton for another major contribution to Torch. It was in this year that he began to assemble material on Torch history, which ultimately became the source of most of the information on which this history has been based.]

The host club for the 1965 Convention was the Buffalo, New York, Club which was one of the brightest stars in the Torch firmament. It was organized in 1926 and served as host for the momentous first Torch Convention the following year. One of its members, Irving R. Templeton, was elected Secretary of the Association at that convention and served until 1948 when he was named Secretary-Treasurer-Editor Emeritus. And of course, Buffalo was the home club of his successor, Sherman Crayton.

Unhappily, Mr. Templeton did not live to enjoy the 1965 Convention. The January 1965, issue of The Torch announced his death and paid high tribute to his memory with the words, "Torch owes a great deal to the pioneering spirit and the unique abilities of Irving R. Templeton." Burdette Buckingham, one of the early heroes and revered leaders of Torch, once wrote, "It was the tireless energy and unfailing faith (of Irving Templeton) which brought us through both war and depression."

The Convention opened on Wednesday evening, June 16, with a reception and social hour which featured a travelogue on India presented by an official of the State University at Buffalo.

The General Chairman was Rolland J. Gladeaux. In addition to a number of entertaining and informative speakers there was a schedule of tours in and around the area. These included the Albright Knox Art Gallery and the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Museum. For the ladies there was an opportunity to visit a manufacturer of period design furniture. But for everyone the highlight was "Niagara Falls Day" on Friday which included both the Canadian and American sides of the river and the spectacular falls.

In the business sessions Secretary Crayton reported the chartering of two new clubs. But he said, "When we look at numerous projects that seemed quite promising in the last two to four years we could become disheartened."

At the same time, he again reported striking gains in the financial security of the Association. The net worth had grown to \$71,538.

The current issue of The Torch carried a new high of 106 clubs.

One of the most interesting features of the 1965 Convention was the conversion of the usual workshop session to a dramatization by a 7-man cast of a mock meeting "of the Board of the Utopia Torch Club." This hour-and-a-half session included a question period with responses from the participating "board members."

At the banquet on Friday evening, which attracted 213 members and guests, President E. Vernon Lewis presented a silver Revere bowl to Sherman Crayton, suitably inscribed, and a silver plate to Lois Crayton.

At the closing session on Saturday, James S. Owens was elected President for the new year. He had the distinction of having been a Torch member in three cities--Lancaster, Pennsylvania; Columbus, Ohio; and now Detroit, Michigan.

To the surprise and delight of everyone, the usual formality of the report of the Resolutions Committee gave way to the presentation of the report in Latin by H. C. Maynard of Toronto. For the benefit of those whose knowledge of "the universal language" had faded with the passage of time, Dr. E. T. Peer (St. Catherines, Ontario) gave the translation. In response, President Lewis thanked the committee in Norwegian. Robert Pierce (Cincinnati) then rose to sing the first line from the Norwegian national anthem!

In keeping with the spirit of the occasion, the officers and directors again formed an exit line at the door as had been inaugurated a year before at the 1964 Convention.

In an issue of The Torch following the event, Norris Paxton wrote:

"Those who attended the Buffalo Convention were challenged by new ideas, awed by the thunder of Niagara Falls, and again tasted the warm excitement of exposure to kindred spirits representing a cross section of North American culture."

The interim meeting of the Board was again held at the Crayton home on October 23, 1965. Much of the time was devoted to planning the upcoming Cincinnati Convention plus the usual review of extension possibilities.

But the subject of finding a successor to Secretary Crayton (and his wife, Lois) was discussed at length. Crayton said, "I will be glad to turn over the job to someone else as soon as that person (or persons) is located--but not later than June 1966."

He indicated that both he and Lois would be willing to help in the transition stage if desired. But when asked if he had anyone in mind for the job, he said he had not found anyone who seemed to be both available and qualified.

[Curiously enough, the minutes do not indicate that the Board came up with any plan or designation of responsibility for a search for candidates]

There were two other items on the agenda which should be mentioned. One was a proposal which had been made for the creation of Honorary Memberships in local clubs. This was rejected as not only undesirable, but in opposition to the constitutional provision for active members or members emeritus. The other was a proposal that Torch clubs be officially encouraged to take a stand against racial segregation in their memberships. This, too, was rejected as unnecessary since Torch does not have racial restrictions.

Later in the year Secretary Crayton wrote a letter to Norris Paxton inviting him to serve as guest editor of the magazine for either the April or July issue so that the Craytons could devote more time to getting the archival materials in shape.

When the Cincinnati Torch Club agreed to become the host for the 1966 Convention it was the first time in the history of the Association that any club had volunteered to accept that responsibility for the third time. Cincinnati first served as host in 1929; and then again in 1954.

No doubt the Club took on the task with confidence because it had Hilmar C. Kreuger as General Chairman of its Convention Committee. He was a many talented man--probably the nearest thing to a Renaissance Man in the Torch world.

[The characteristic that most endeared him to his fellow Torchmen was that he combined keen intellectualism with a delightful sense of humor. To illustrate: In his promotional article in the magazine, he said: "The Committee promises to keep business to a minimum--only enough to keep the officers of the International Association happy!"]

The two most colorful attractions were to be a dinner trip by boat on the "Beautiful Ohio" with strolling guides on board to indicate points of interest on the river bank; and a bus trip over to Dayton, Ohio, for a visit to the Air Museum, plus a tour of the National Cash Register Company for those so inclined.

One of the most noteworthy features of the Convention was a line on the pre-convention program which read: "Ladies are welcome at all sessions."

[Later at one of the business sessions, Mrs. W. W. Heckert of Wilmington, Delaware, rose to express appreciation for this. She said, "I like to participate in the program and am grateful for the opportunity."]

When President James S. Owens brought the Convention to order, there were 45 clubs represented--substantially below 50 percent of the 109 clubs listed as "active" in the magazine at that time.

[It must be noted, however, that some clubs listed in the magazine were less than active. Secretary Crayton had reported to the Board that he was concerned about the condition of at least three; and thirteen more had not paid their dues in the past year. There apparently was no policy by the Board on when a delinquent club should be dropped. This was left up to the Secretary; and he was reluctant to take such action if he had any hope that the club might be reorganized.]

The highlight of the business meetings was a skit prepared by Dr. Peer on "Early Stages of Organizing a New Club". It portrayed the efforts of the "Blaze Torch Club" to organize a club in "Deadwood." It was reported that a spirited discussion was provoked by this skit.

In his annual report, Sherman Crayton told of the chartering of two new clubs earlier in the year. And once again his financial report showed record gains in the net worth of the Association to a total of \$82,019.66. Nearly \$11,000 had been added to this total in the year ended March 31, 1966!

One of the members of the Resolutions Committee, Dr. Edward Stone, Jr., of the Baltimore Club, made a fervent plea to the delegates to take a stand for the promulgation of a policy of encouraging clubs to recruit young men. He said that the prime problem in Torch was the disproportionate number of elderly (or near elderly) men in most of the clubs. He said: "Experience is necessary; but drive is engendered by young men for the most part."

[Although his plea received general approval there was no suggestion as to how it could be implemented. One delegate said that it was his observation that most clubs left recruitment up to individual members who tended to bring in their friends. The solution, he suggested, was that clubs should be encouraged to establish membership committees to analyze the composition of the club from the standpoint of balance in age, professional representation, and other factors.]

At the closing session, H. Fred Heisner of the San Bernardino Club in California was elected to the Presidency; and again the "exit line" was formed by the officers and Directors as the meeting came to an end.

After adjournment a committee from the Board interviewed Norris Paxton on the possibility of his taking over the editorship of The Torch beginning July 1st. He was agreeable and terms of his compensation and necessary expenses were worked out.

There was the usual interim Board meeting at the Crayton home on October 8. Among the subjects discussed was a proposal that the Association try to find a way to deal with the lack of club representation at the conventions by providing a small financial subsidy to at least one official delegate per club. Those opposed said that this might work fine for one year but that it would not be financially possible to continue it.

It was suggested that one approach to the problem of weak clubs might be to invite up to 20 selected clubs to send one delegate each to participate in a closed session at the next convention for the purpose of a frank and open discussion of such subjects as club activity (and non-activity), services needed, and related matters. To encourage attendance the Association would pay part of the expenses of the person delegated to represent the club. The idea was put in the form of a motion. It passed with one dissenting vote.

[The minutes of the meeting included this note: "The Secretary did not have a vote. But he expressed definite opposition to the motion." Unfortunately, he did not include his reasons for his opposition.]

Crayton talked at some length on his personal situation. He said that Lois's brother had died and left a family farm in Indiana where Lois's mother lived. "We will move there," he said, "as soon as we can dispose of our Buffalo property. That is why Lois had to discontinue her work on The Torch." He indicated that he would be willing to continue to serve Torch by sharing his background of experience with his successor as soon as one was found.

The meeting concluded with a brief discussion by Norris Paxton of some of his plans and aspirations for the magazine.

[His willingness to take on this responsibility must be recorded as one of the most fortunate happenings in the history of the Association. He had served as a counselor to the Craytons on the magazine since 1950. He had been on the Board for four years, had been President of the Association in 1955-56, and had been a steady contributor to the magazine for the past 15 years. Before he retired he had enjoyed a long and distinguished career with the Associated Press.]

Although he had reached the age of retirement from his journalistic career, Paxton entered upon his editorship of The Torch with all the zest and determination of a young man on a new job. Here is a brief description of his January 1967, issue:

It had 62 pages plus cover. In addition to presenting eight Torch papers, it included 17 pages of club reports and other Association material. There was an Editor's Corner, an article reviewing the last meeting of the Board, and a generous preview of the coming Grand Rapids Convention.

He had a clear concept of what he wanted the magazine to be. Never at any time did he refer to it as a "learned magazine", He said he wanted it to be "...a family institution dedicated to reader interest and the creation of a spirit of cooperation with the Association." As for the papers he said that his purpose was to "advance the interest of Torch... by presenting the most interesting papers available." To accomplish this, he edited them with a heavy hand. He said:

"I receive very few manuscripts which can easily be edited. Most of them require extended correspondence with the author (to get them ready for publication)."

As for an "advisory board" he said that he would have no objection to having a policy group appointed, but that it was the editor's job to select the papers and produce the product.

The April issue reported the death of Herbert Sackett. The Editor wrote:

"He was a dedicated and prodigious "father" of about 40 Torch Clubs in his service as our Field Services Secretary from 1947 to 1955. While some of these did not survive, most of them are still alive. He was the last of our traveling organizers, and he did not even begin until he was 70!"

The host for the 1967 Convention was the Grand Rapids, Michigan Club, which had been organized in 1928 and had served as host to the 1942 Convention.

Sad to say, attendance at the 1967 Convention was disappointing—only 115 members and guests from out-of-town. But General Chairman B. G. Brown and his committees made it an entertaining and stimulating event for all who were fortunate enough to be there.

There were seven papers presented. One should especially be noted. The title was: "Viet Nam—the Case for Military Withdrawal". Needless to say, it was by far the liveliest discussion period of the Convention.

There was a luncheon visit to Grand Valley State College and a memorable tour to Holland, Michigan, which included a scenic drive and a tour of the Dutch Village (and its shops).

For the ladies there was a special luncheon at which an investment counselor spoke on the subject: "Is Your Financial House in Order?"

One innovation which was greeted with enthusiasm by its participants was a Past President's Breakfast.

Association President H. Fred Heisner introduced a feature which had been in preparation for some time. It was a panel under the title: "Increasing Torch Candle Power." In it five Torch luminaries discussed subjects of major concern to the clubs. The moderator was L. M. Josephson.

Secretary Crayton reported further gains in the Association's net worth which now had reached \$93,114.54. He also reported two new clubs which had been chartered earlier in the year—and one loss.

The special "closed session" for selected clubs which had been planned at the fall meeting of the Board in 1966 turned out to be a "waste of time" in the words of its Chairman, Fred Heisner. Few invited clubs attended.

At the closing session the Presidency was awarded to Dr. E. T. Peer of the St. Catherine's, Ontario Torch Club.

At the post-convention Board meeting, and all through the summer months and the interim Board meeting in the fall, the primary subject of concern was lack of attendance at the recent convention. The following are some of the highlights of the discussions which ensued:

JOHN VITKO: We should have less of a pre-canned approach in the workshops and more opportunity for participation by the delegates on matters which are on their minds.

DR. EDGAR PEER: There is an exhilaration in the delegates when they are actually a part of the decision making.

CHARLES PROUDLEY: We should increase dues by \$3 and put the money in a separate fund to be given back to those clubs which send delegates.

SHERMAN CRAYTON: We have gone about as far as we can go in promotional schemes. Maybe we should examine the product. We must try to find a way to make the delegates eager to come again. A delegate likes to feel that he is representing his club in the decisions of the Association. As it is, they go home in vague discontent if they are not heard.

LEO HAUPTMAN: We ought to ask local clubs to make convention attendance a requirement of its President-elect. One reason some clubs are indifferent toward the conventions is that they hear very little about them, even though the club may have been represented at the convention.

Another issue arising from the 1967 Convention was a recommendation from the Nominating Committee that the number of directors be increased to nine to reduce the embarrassment involved in selecting between two directors for the office leading ultimately to the Presidency. Apparently one of the arguments on behalf of the recommendation was that more directors would aid the extension activities. Secretary Crayton challenged this by saying: "Very few of our clubs have been organized or given significant assistance by Board members in the last 20 years."

It became clear to the leadership of the Association during the summer months that Secretary Crayton did not want them to delay any longer in finding someone to succeed him. Dr. Peer, always a man of action, appointed a committee consisting of Heisner, Josephson and Vitko, to find an answer.

President Peer was strongly committed to the proposition that members of the Board should accept more responsibility for active participation in the affairs of the Association. Prior to the interim meeting in the fall, he appointed a number of committees to prepare positions on subjects on the agenda. Then he had these committees assemble on the day before the meeting to bring their ideas into focus.

The meeting convened on the morning of October 28 at the Crayton farm in Indiana.

The committee on finding a successor to Secretary Crayton reported on its efforts in some detail and then recommended the employment of Robert Nagel of Knoxville, Tennessee. Nagel, a long-time Torch member, was Executive Secretary of Tau Beta Pi, a national honorary engineering society. He was chosen because "of his terrific competence, his experience, and the fact that he had two women assistants who are familiar with the type of work required." His acceptance would be contingent upon his getting approval to take on the added work by the directors of the fraternity. The motion to approve his employment was passed.

The Board then voted to extend an Honorary Life Membership to Sherman Crayton as an expression of its gratitude for his long and faithful service.

Discussion continued on the problem of convention attendance. Dr. Peer suggested that the Resolutions Committee be replaced by what he described as a "House of Delegates." Each club would be

asked to send one of its top officers to participate in discussions of policy and to suggest ways and means for improvements in the Association.

Another suggestion was that instead of having one person nominated to head the Association in the closing session at each convention that two persons should be nominated so that the delegates could participate in the election process.

There also was some criticism of the exhibits at the conventions and a committee was created to study the matter and suggest improvements. In reviewing the state of the Association, President Peer noted that the increase in receipts from dues over the past few years had been a result of a dues increase and not because of an increase in the number of dues paying members. There was the usual suggestion that there ought to be more visitations to weak clubs. But Secretary Crayton testified that this appeared to be an improbable solution to the problem. He said, "Possibly we should adopt a tougher attitude toward clubs that drift away. Should we require them to meet some reasonable standards if they are to continue?"

Director Proudley suggested that consideration might be given to the possibility that local clubs be required to increase their dues to provide an expense allowance for at least one delegate to each convention. This was considered objectionable; but his earlier idea that dues to the Association be increased by \$3 to provide special convention attendance supplement fund was recommended for consideration at the next convention.

Later in the year all the necessary arrangements for Bob Nagel's appointment as Secretary Treasurer were completed, and he was scheduled to take over the position after the 1968 Convention.

President Peer lost no time in getting the year 1968 off to a positive beginning. On January 1, he wrote a strong letter to all club presidents appealing to them to be present (or officially represented) at the Washington D.C. Convention "to help lay a foundation for the future."

To the Board he expressed his conviction that the Association needed a broader base of decision making than it had experienced in the past. He indicated his depth of appreciation He for Sherman Crayton's services, but left no room for doubt that he felt the Board should provide a more vital and active role. To that end he set up a Committee on Board Organization, headed by Leonard Josephson, to study this problem and suggest answers.

This was the year which would mark the end of the Crayton era. The transition had already begun as Norris Paxton took over the editing of The Torch in the prior year. It would be completed when Bob Nagel became the Secretary-Treasurer after the 1968 Convention.

But as we shall see as the story unfolds, this was to be more than a year of transition. It was to be a watershed year in the history of the Association.

The Convention itself was a reflection of change.

But first, we should review the dramatic circumstances in which it took place. It developed that on the very opening day there was to be an invasion of the city by thousands of people participating in a "Poor People's March." This presented the Association with a sticky situation. But finally, it was decided to accept the risk and go ahead with the convention as planned.

This was a fortunate decision as a new all-time high in attendance was achieved with 59 clubs represented and, except for minor confusions in traffic, the march presented no problems. Some clubs were represented for the first time in years; and nearly half of the delegates were attending their first convention.

And what a convention it was! There were no tours. There was no separate program for the ladies as they were encouraged to attend any program event in which they had an interest. Except for the Association "business meetings" the program was an intellectual smorgasbord. There were speakers on art and computers, prehistoric behavior and the urban crisis, foreign policy and relations with Canada. There were two symposiums: one on the environment and one on criminal law.

The General Chairman, Sigmund Timberg, and his associates deserved—and received—a tribute for the quality of the event from beginning to end.

Sherman Crayton in his final report to a Torch Convention spoke feelingly, as he always had, on the need for greater emphasis on extension. He also reported that on April 30, the net worth of the Association was \$98,728.84. He said that it had been his desire to leave the Association with a balance of at least \$100,000 and that if club accounts then due were paid, that goal had been reached.

[It should be remembered that when Crayton took over in 1948, the surplus was \$7,000. During this period, membership had grown from 3,000 to over 5,000, and the number of clubs from 60 to 115.]

A memory book of letters of appreciation was presented to the Craytons along with a gift of a motion picture camera and projector.

At the business meeting, President Peer talked at length about the state of the Association as he saw it. He began with four questions:

- * Should membership standards be set?
- * If such standards are set, how far should the Association go in their enforcement?
- * Is the committee structure in need of changes?
- * Should the "House of Delegates" procedure be continued in future conventions?

He then held up the mirror of reality by stating that 23 of the present roster of clubs had memberships of 30 or less; and pointed to the fact that membership had been static for the past five years.

He said, "I am terrified by the number of members over 60 in the clubs I have visited... Torch will die unless we regain more youthful energy." The problem, he said, is not that we don't know what good procedures are in club management. The problem is that too many clubs lack good management. Too much, he said, is made of the principle of club autonomy. What we need is not protection against invasion of local rights, but new directions—with innovation and excellence the goals.

He also discussed the problem Torch faced in a changing society. Torch, he said, "began when communities were smaller and means of cultural exchange poorly developed. But now with greater activities the problems related to cultural exchange are more subtle."

Sherman Crayton made somewhat the same point when he said:

"The pace of life for professional men today is very much accelerated as compared with 20 or 30 years ago. Local leaders have greater responsibilities. This makes convention attendance more difficult now than in the past."

In the only major issue up for decision the proposal to increase the annual dues to \$8.00 was negated. But, on the affirmative side there was general agreement that the idea of regional meetings was endorsed.

Upon being elected to the Presidency for 1968-69, L. M. Josephson (Knoxville, Tennessee) said:

"Torch was born so that we all might share a little of our light. Minds touching each other regularly tend to produce life-giving warmth and illumination."

With the end of the Convention, the time for transfer of records, responsibilities, invested funds, and a mass of archival material had come. It was a monumental task. At one point, Bob Nagel wrote, "A total of 1,515 pounds of meaty stuff has arrived." Correspondence flowed back and forth, visits were exchanged, and finally order emerged.

[To the credit of these two men it must be recorded that they handled the transition with good will and good spirit. They were about as different as two men could be. Sherman was quiet, self-effacing, and patient--a model of a caring college professor. Bob was kinetic, sometimes acerbic, and a perfectionist-- a man whose engineering background was reflected in his commitment to precision. But they shared a common love of Torch and a fervent dedication to its service.]

The interim Board meeting at Knoxville on October 11 and 12, 1968, was a busy one. Here are some highlights:

Convention: There had been a financial deficit in the 1968 Convention which caused some misunderstanding. A new and clarified policy on the relations between the host committees and the Association was developed.

Committees: Past President Peer's recommendation that there be only two major committees (with necessary sub-committees) was adopted for trial.

Exhibits: Because of transportation problems with convention exhibit material, it was decided to abandon the effort.

Representation: A proposal to require regional election of directors to provide better representation was referred to a study committee.

Regional Council Meetings: Regional meetings were endorsed, and it was agreed that expenses be paid for transportation of Directors to such meetings, and also that the Association pay the cost of meals for those in attendance from the clubs.

Club Standards: The President was authorized to set up a committee to study the question of standards to be met by the clubs.

Fiscal Year: The fiscal year of the Association was changed to the calendar year.

This brought to an end the year of transition--truly a watershed year in the life of the Association.

As would be expected after the end of an era, the year following was a period of many changes in the Torch world. Before the year had ended almost every phase of the Torch experience was touched by the winds of passage from old to new. Here is a summary of the highlights of that year's development:

CONSTITUTION. In the early part of the year Secretary Nagel suggested that some procedural changes were needed in the Constitution. President Josephson then appointed Nelson Torbet (Toledo) to head a Constitution Committee to prepare recommendations for consideration at the Durham Convention. The committee's report included a plan for assuring regional representation on the Board; establishment of membership classifications; budget setting authority; clarification of convention fee provisions; and modification of the amendment procedures. All were approved.

When John Vitko became President, he asked Torbet to continue in working toward a complete review and revision of the Constitution. Torbet brought a proposed new Constitution and Bylaws to the Board. The decision was to submit it for consideration by the delegates at the 1970 Convention.

FINANCIAL. Sweeping changes were made in the financial management of the Association. Responsibility for the management of the invested funds was transferred to the new Secretary. The portfolio was moved into higher yielding investments. Auditing was transferred to a CPA in Knoxville. The fiscal year was changed to the calendar year.

Various questions arose as to how to use the surplus. Should there be some subsidization of convention attendance? Should another Field Services Secretary be hired? Should regional and subregional conferences be subsidized? Should greater provision be made for financing visitations to clubs by Board members?

Bob Nagel's thought was that before any such actions be taken, the Association should develop a long-range plan. This fell under the responsibilities of the Committee on Finances and Long-Range Planning headed by Sigmund Timberg (Washington, D.C.).

REGIONALISM. The regional conference idea, which had been emphasized in the early years of Torch (then called "District Meetings") was resuscitated in 1968 in St. Catherine's, Ontario; Chattanooga, Tennessee; and Toledo, Ohio. Then Sigmund Timberg set up a "Regional Caucus" for the clubs in his area at the 1969 Convention-- which inspired a few other Directors to do likewise. This brought about a resurgence of the regionalism concept. A resolution was adopted urging implementation of regional organization, including a suggestion that Directors be nominated by regional councils of clubs.

[In all probability no one was left who had experienced the failure of this activity thirty years ago and there is no evidence that there was any effort to learn from that experience.]

ADMINISTRATIVE. Putting the new headquarters on procedures desired by the new Secretary proved to be much more of a task than he had anticipated. Bringing the mailing list for the magazine into the central office, for example, was a monumental task. Then there were suggestions from the Board for revision of the various manuals and "How to..." publications.

CONVENTION. Basically, the convention patterns were so well established that there were no demands for major changes. Secretary Nagel stated that in his opinion, "...all convention arrangements and basic programming should be left in the hands of the host club."

The only basic change indicated by the Board was that the concept of the Resolutions Committee as a "house of delegates" should be abandoned and the committee should return to its traditional functions.

CLUB RELATIONS. It was proposed that the Association require each club to appoint a person (or committee) as its regional representative to serve in Association and interclub matters. But this was rejected by the Board.

A "Sherman G. Crayton Lectureship Program" was set up to offer to weak clubs an opportunity to select recommended speakers from a list supplied by the Association. An appropriation of \$500 was made for this purpose.

[This well-intentioned project did not prove to be a success, however, as there was little demand for it from the clubs.]

Past-President Peer suggested that a procedure be set up dealing with the problem of the weak clubs. First, a telephone call should be made to the President of the club calling his attention to the club's financial delinquency and establishing a date at which the Association would contemplate suspension if the amount was not paid. It would be provided that if circumstances justified it, some waiver of past dues could be possible. The proposal was held for study.

Norris Paxton and Bob Nagel were asked to consider the possibility of setting up an awards system to recognize club achievements at the annual conventions.

THE TORCH. The most significant change in the magazine was that the dimensions were increased to 8½ by 11 inches. A new cover design which incorporated a picture was adopted; and the list of articles was moved to page 1.

With one interesting exception the 1969 Convention reverted back to the more traditional format. The exception was that it began on a Sunday and ended at mid-week.

Responsibility for it was shared between the Durham-Chapel Hill Club and the Raleigh Club. There were two men sharing the General Chairmanship: C. C. Scarborough for Raleigh, and C. C. Ainsworth for Durham-Chapel Hill. The theme for the program was "The Changing South in Changing Nation." This theme was developed by four speakers and a panel of three which included two eminent Torch members, Oscar Ewing and Paul Green, and a non-member, Dr. Paul Gross.

The principal tour was to Chapel Hill, which included a visit to the Morehead Planetarium. Optional tours were available for points of scenic delight and interest in both the Durham and Raleigh areas.

More than the usual amount of time was devoted to business sessions and workshops, of which there were four on subjects of paramount concern to the delegates. There also was a "Show and Tell" session.

Once again, as at the Washington, D.C. Convention, there were 59 clubs represented. John P. Vitko, who was elected President for the coming year had this to say about the Convention in the July issue of The Torch:

"The program was stimulating, provocative, and human with many references to our troubled and anguished times. It was interesting, however, that the same speakers also talked much about the bright future that could reward the sincere effort, hope and understanding of dedicated persons."

But there was one more dramatic episode to be played out before this momentous year came to an end. On August 25, a letter was received from the Niagara Torch Club which carried with it a resolution unanimously passed by that club stating that it wished to open its membership to qualified women and requesting the Association to take the necessary action to make this possible. The resolution stated that in the opinion of the club this action was "timely and overdue in view of the increasing role of women in the professions."

Secretary Nagel (unlike his predecessor who had consistently opposed such action) spoke out strongly in favor of it. He said: "Societal attitudes are changing and Torch must change with them. The Association should no longer maintain a discriminating stand on the subject of sex within its membership."

President Vitko took the position that nothing should be done which would seem to place the Association in the position of endorsement of opening membership to women. But he said he would not oppose a Constitutional amendment to change all references to "men" to the word "persons". This would make it possible for any club which wished to admit qualified women to do so without forcing such a decision upon those clubs wishing to remain all male in their membership. Thus, the principle of local autonomy would prevail.

This proposal was made at the interim Board meeting and it was agreed that it could go to the delegate body at the next Convention for consideration.

THE TORCH STORY

CHAPTER SIX – 1970 - 1974

At the end of 1969 Secretary Nagel issued the following report on the state of the Association:

"The word most descriptive of the general state of the Association is 'static'. We have one club which has been delinquent in payment of dues since 1964; another since 1965; and another since 1968. Eight more are delinquent for lesser periods. Our total number of members is 5,333--about the same as four years ago. Prior to that we have no way of reconstructing the number, as no membership records were kept. The counts reported were estimates based on dues collected. But this could be misleading as the books were kept on a cash rather than an accrual basis. So, variations in collections could cause misleading conclusions. Reports of having 6,000 members were inaccurate as we never had that many."

There were some positive factors to be reported. Metal address plates were purchased and set up on a system which would provide for control of mailing lists for the magazine and for membership lists. The billing process was improved. Greater income from invested funds was achieved.

Meanwhile, the Committee on Revision of the Constitution and Bylaws was hard at work under (and with the primary work performed by) Nelson Torbet. The proposal (approved by the Board) was distributed to the clubs in preparation for consideration at the 1970 Convention at Windsor, Ontario. There were four major elements of change:

1. The word "persons" to be substituted for the word "men" so that local clubs would have the right to admit qualified women;
2. Membership categories for inactive and non-resident members to be eliminated;
3. The regional concept of organization be adopted (without restricting the actions of the Nominating Committee); and
4. Annual dues to be increased to \$7.00; Emeritus members to pay \$4.00; and the Convention Fee to be advanced to \$15.00 per club.

The Convention at Windsor set new records in both attendance and number of clubs represented. There were 272 persons at the Banquet; and there were 65 clubs officially represented.

The General Chairman was Eric J. Pope. In addition to a stimulating program of speakers--all Canadians--there were bus trips to points of interest and a gala boat trip on the Detroit River.

Among the innovations were open houses for groups of visiting members and their guests at the homes of host club members; a reception for first-time convention attenders; and a presentation on the arts by a trio of experts which brought forth a variety of responses from the viewers and listeners.

But probably the most unusual feature of the convention was that there were four hour-long business sessions, primarily on the report from the Constitutional Amendment Committee. Finally, the amendments were adopted unanimously. But not before some major changes were made:

1. Opening Torch membership to women was voted down by eight votes. (On a similar referendum a number of years before, the negative vote was nearly unanimous.)
2. On another aspect of the membership question, the delegates voted to "come to grips" with the right of the clubs to determine eligibility by adding to the membership clause the words: "and other disciplines pursued by a person in a recognized professional manner."

At the closing session Leo M. Hauptman (Muncie, Indiana) was elected to the Presidency of the Association for 1970-71.

In June, Secretary Nagle found himself in an awkward predicament. There was not enough money in the checking account to meet the payroll and to make necessary convention reimbursements. So, he had to borrow money.

Since the Association had no established policy on the use of the substantial reserves which had been built up over the years, the Finance Committee, headed by Sid Timberg, was asked to suggest recommendations for the future use of the funds.

In brief, the report recommended that the reserve should be reduced over a period of time to about \$40,000--enough to match one year's operating needs. A transition period of three years should provide needed money for operating the Association program with the understanding that after that, the Association should be on a pay-as-you-go" basis. To accomplish this, the Association should enter into a strong expansion and conservation program utilizing the remainder of the reserve down to the "reasonable fluid reserve" mentioned above.

The report concluded: "The main function and objective of Torch is to preserve the continuity of its cultural and intellectual tradition by growing and recruiting more and younger members."

The report specifically recommended against the hiring of a full-time organizer. But it failed to include any other recommendations on how all of this was to be accomplished.

The report was received with thanks; but nothing more was heard about it.

[It is interesting to compare Mr. Timberg's statement of The Torch purpose with this quotation from an article in The Torch in that same year by John Vitko, President in 1969-70: "Many clubs forget that the purpose of Torch is....to develop the whole man. This includes diversity of opinion, the expression of differences, and a timely and well-developed paper which impacts the speaker's heart as well as his mind."]

The Board held its interim meeting at Nashville (site of the 1971 Convention) on September 25-26, 1970. Here are some of the highlights of that meeting:

Regional Meetings: Seven regional meetings were scheduled for the remainder of the year. The problem with the events held so far was that the smaller and more remote clubs--those most in need--were not attending.

Constitutional Changes: Approval had been received from 75 clubs; disapproval from 5. Non-responding clubs were counted as favoring, according to provisions in the Constitution and Bylaws.

Training Manuals: President Hauptman appointed W. Arlo Sylvester to head a committee to develop a manual on the training of club secretaries and Leo G. Glasser to head one on the training of club presidents.

The Women Question: The Roanoke Valley Club requested that the question of extending to the clubs the right to admit women be placed on the agenda of the 1971 Convention. Secretary Nagel urged a favorable vote on this request. He said:

"It is irrational and probably illegal to restrict our membership to males. We are going to weaken the entire organization if we cannot get the Constitution amended."

Financial Situation: Secretary Nagel forecast a substantial operating deficit by the end of the year. He said:

"We have been spending heavily on club visits, regional meetings, an expanded magazine, and increased central office expenses. All of this has been accompanied by rising inflation. I see no end to this. I feel that the Board's intent is to use the surplus to the best advantage--investing in Torch itself".

In October, Nagel asked and received permission to cash a \$10,000 Treasury Bill and to place half of it in savings account which he could draw upon for operating expenses if and when needed.

When the audit report for the end of 1970 was received, it showed a net operating loss of \$6,047.49 for the year. This loss would have been even greater if it had not been for the fact that all of the interest earned on investments--\$6,003.32--was used in operations.

The 1971 Convention was held in Nashville, Tennessee on April 28 to May 1. The total attendance at the high point—the banquet—was 260 and the number of clubs represented was 62 (slightly more than half of the number of clubs listed in the April issue of the magazine).

The host committee, headed by W. T. Hall, presented a diversified program of speakers and a choice of tours, including a visit to Harlinsdale Farm, famous for its walking horses, Fisk University, and Meharry Medical College (colleges for blacks), and the Hermitage, home of President Andrew Jackson.

Those who remained after the adjournment of the convention had a reserved section of seats on Saturday night at "The Grand Ole Opry," the famous and long-running radio show.

In his Secretary's Report to the Convention, Bob Nagel said that the total membership stood at 5,218, a net loss of about 100 from the prior year. The average number of members per club was 45.4.

President Leo Hauptman gave a progress report on accomplishments of the past year.

1. A new Constitution and Bylaws had been adopted and distributed,
2. There had been 10 regional council meetings,
3. The Crayton Lecture Series had been continued,
4. Regional breakfast meetings at the 1971 Convention had been added, and
5. Eric Pope, Chairman of the Workshops for the Convention, had completed a factual study of the state of the clubs which would be used as the basis for discussions.

The key point brought out in Pope's findings was that 60% of the clubs had suffered a decline in membership in the past 2½ years.

In reporting on the Workshop discussions in the July issue of The Torch the editor wrote: "Delegates explored with much vigor the reasons behind a static or falling membership and suggestions for hastening improvements."

Although it was pointed out that these were the "drop-out" years in service clubs, fraternal societies, and social organizations in general, the consensus was that Torch should be capable of resisting this trend.

Geoffrey A. MacGibbon, Director of Public Relations at the University of Windsor, had this to say:

"Torch is attempting to isolate and define its weaknesses. This proves that it is a dynamic and alive institution.

"There is emphasis on two ways in which we can solve our problem. The first is to bring in younger members in our clubs; and the second is to upgrade the quality of our programs.

"Clubs with an average membership age of 60 should be searching for younger members. This doesn't need to confine itself to men who have already achieved distinction in their professions. It should include those who show the promise of distinction. And it doesn't mean that we should confine ourselves to "youngsters." Men in their forties would represent a younger generation of professional persons. So we should encourage clubs to put younger members on their recruiting committee as well as on their list of nominees for offices.

"As for the programs, we need to encourage more issue-oriented papers with major subjects of current interest."

Hilmar C. Krueger of Cincinnati was elected President of the Association at the closing session of the convention.

During the summer months of that year there was an exchange of correspondence between Sherman Crayton and Bob Nagel on the subject of a history of the Association. Both men indicated their awareness of the need for such an understanding and Sherman wrote of his efforts in that direction. He said:

"I hope that the story of what has been done in the past would suggest to future boards what is worth trying and what is not."

There was an interim meeting of the Board at Cincinnati on September 24 and 25, 1971.

One of the most interesting items on the agenda was a review of results from a questionnaire which had been distributed to the delegates at the Nashville Convention. It was reported that 85% of the responders said they were introduced to the "many Torch problems and proven solutions for the first time."

[This is difficult to understand. Either there were many who had never attended a Torch Convention before or the workshops at this convention had a greater impact upon the delegates present than had been true in the past. It could well be that the revelations in Eric Pope's exposition on the

realities of the current decline in club memberships brought about a more penetrating analysis of the situation than had been accomplished in the past.]

Once again the question of the surplus received considerable attention. U.S. Treasury Bills in the amount of \$80,000 were to mature at the end of the year. The decision was to reinvest \$60,000 and to place \$20,000 in a bank savings account as a "liquidity fund."

[The idea of utilizing reserve funds to stem the tide of decline was beginning to be heard again. One of the principal voices was that of Norris Paxton who wrote: "It is nice to dream of a larger Torch, created through the voluntary efforts of a few interested souls. But empires are not built that way. So, I entertain little hope for that growth unless Torch returns to the thing that created it. I refer to paid field workers."

Toward the end of the year Bob Nagel again raised the question of the growing support for amendment of the Constitution to permit local option on the admission of women. President-elect Nelson Torbet suggested that Bob alert the clubs to the probability that the question would be raised again at the 1972 Convention and that each club would do well to instruct its delegates on the matter to avoid allowing the delegates to vote their personal feelings rather than the will of the club's members.

At the close of the year, Secretary Nagel prepared his usual thorough and informative review for the Board of the year's activities. Some of the key points were:

Membership. 5,162 (down slightly from the prior year).

Residual Equity. \$93,501.49.

Excess of Income Over Disbursements. \$5,257 (primarily as a result of the increase in dues and decrease in extension and club welfare expenditures.)

Cost of Magazine. \$16,240.2 (4/7 of all active member dues received).

Regional Meetings. Decreased to only four in the year.

Crayton Lectures. five.

Although there had been several convention sites in recent years which had been attractive to Torch members and guests because of their historical significance and physical beauty, it was not until 1972 that the Association finally ventured to a resort location. It was Sebasco Estates, on the coast of Maine.

There was some anxiety about this decision. But that was soon dispelled as reservations filled the Sebasco Lodge and overflowed into nearby motel accommodations.

The host club was Western Maine (Portland) Club with Carleton G. Lane as General Chairman. Pre-convention promotion emphasized the attractions of the area to family groups planning to combine the convention with vacation possibilities. It was promised that environmental and ecological matters would receive special attention and that one of the highlights of the entertainment would be an old-fashioned lobster bake. The locale was so rich in scenic attractions that no organized tours were planned so that those in attendance could conduct their own explorations.

The product of all this was a record attendance of 267 from 63 clubs, plus the presence of an additional number from the host club to bring the banquet turnout to 330! (It was said that at least another 100 delegates and guests would have registered if they could have been housed at the lodge).

Unfortunately, the fringe effects of a hurricane brought clouds and sporadic rain from June 21 to 24, the dates of the convention. (It was said, however, that this meant higher attendance at the business sessions than might otherwise have been possible.)

The keynote speaker on the opening night was Joseph Leese of the State University of New York at Albany. He spoke on the challenge to Torch in the current socio-economic situation as it affected professional life. He pointed to the rapid emergence of new professions, the increasing pressures of specialization, and the tendencies of both business and government to employ professional persons.

Other speakers fulfilled the promise to give the listeners a broad background of information on the history and current problems of the region.

The banquet speaker was the President of the Association, Hilmar C. Krueger, whose topic was "The Passing of Renaissance Man and Torch" in which he attacked the same set of problems as the keynote speaker and reached approximately the same conclusions.

Secretary Nagel in his report said that one new club had been organized during the past year, but four had been lost "with more on the horizon because of shrinking membership owing to weak leadership."

The principal item of business was the "Women Question". The Roanoke Valley Club, under the leadership of John A. Sabean, Secretary-Treasurer, had received support from the required number of ten clubs to place the issue on the agenda for action.

[For some inexplicable reason, the Board had declined to do so. This reversed its position of two years before. The only possible conclusion is that changes in the membership of the Board and its officers had brought this about.]

Opponents won by a vote of 55 to 31. Their argument was that passage of the amendment to permit local option would force clubs wishing to remain all-male in membership to accept women transferring from a club which accepted women. Proponents tried to point out that this would not be possible, but they were unable to prevail.

[Later in the year Mr. Sabean was able to hold the Roanoke Valley Club in the Association by a single vote margin with the promise that he would continue to work for passage of the amendment at the next convention.]

In his closing remarks to the 1972 Convention, President Krueger announced that he had appointed a special committee to begin planning for the celebration of the Golden Anniversary of the Association at the 1974 Convention in St. Paul. He also assured the delegates that the Board was fully conscious of its responsibility to meet the needs of Torch in the challenging times which had been forcefully portrayed by the speakers at the convention now ending.

R. Nelson Torbet, who had already served the Association with great distinction in the Constitutional revision action, was elected President for 1972-73. At this time, it was announced that his

club--Toledo Torch—had presented a \$500 check to the Association to be used by Nelson Torbet "in any activity of his choice."

[In 1981, it was this fund which made possible the publication of Evolution of a Social Compact—Essays on the Torch Experience by this writer during the period in which he first served as Archivist for the Association.]

There was one sad event at the Sebasco Convention. This was the death at the Convention of Dr. Russell Stevens of the Wyoming Valley, Pennsylvania Club.

The remainder of the year was devoted to a vigorous search for answers by Torch leaders to the questions raised at the Sebasco Convention. Primarily this was a debate between the exponents of regionalism and volunteerism on the one hand and proponents of paid field workers on the other. The most vocal of the former group was Norm Crawford of the Jacksonville, Florida, Club.

[The peripatetic Crawford spent most of his summers as a traveling evangelist for Torch, always followed by euphoric letters of future possibilities. He described himself as "a partisan for the worthy cause of regionalism."]

Past-President Krueger supported Crawford and together they succeeded in restoring budgetary provisions for regional activity which had been removed at the interim Board meeting in the fall of 1971.

It was Past-President and Editor Norris Paxton who spoke out most emphatically on the need, as he saw it, for return to reliance upon paid field service workers. He said:

"By and large, volunteers always mean well. But very few of them have the spark of ingenuity, resourcefulness and enthusiasm that works well. We cannot hope for real success through voluntary efforts."

Bob Nagel saw values on both sides of the debate. He said:

"I do not like the general idea of paid field workers. Torch ought to be self-perpetuating, even self-extending. But it is not. Volunteers simply cannot give Torch more than they are now giving to it. I have to agree that the better way to get a new club organized is for someone to go into the community and to stay there long enough to sign up the necessary number of new members."

President Torbet raised some question about the worth of the regional meetings from the standpoint of their cost to the Association. He said:

"I believe that we must seriously consider whether regional meetings should be continued in their present form at this time in light of our budget. Has anyone made a study to measure the value of these meetings in relation to benefit? Am I wrong in suggesting that the regional meetings should take second place to the conventions?"

To confuse the situation even more there was some thought given to having the conventions and the regional meetings in alternating years.

President Torbet once again demonstrated the wisdom of his leadership when he announced in the October 1972 issue of The Torch that he had created a Long-Range Planning Committee to bring the Association back to a sense of unity in its efforts to meet the needs of the situation in which it found

itself. This "blue ribbon" task force was headed by Past-President Hilmar Krueger and included another Past-President, Dr. Edgar Peer of St. Catherines, Canada; plus Dr. Forrest Smith of San Antonio, Texas; Harry Krusz of Laguna Hills, California; and Jesse Long of Toledo, Ohio.

Other positive developments in the later part of the year were these:

Editor Paxton agreed to write a series of historical articles on the Association to be Published in the magazines leading up to the Golden Anniversary Convention in 1974,

A. A. Dietz of the Chicago Club wrote a new Administrative Procedures handbook for club use,

Secretary Nagel reported that the accounts receivable of the Association "had been reduced to the lowest level in a quarter of a century."

But the number of active clubs continued to decline during the year and no new clubs were organized. As a result, the total number of active members dropped below 5,000 for the first time in many years.

In the January 1973 issue of The Torch the Editor wrote:

"Members of the spritely San Antonio Torch Club have been selecting speakers and preparing hospitality for three years for the Convention to be held there on April 11 to 14. It will be the best opportunity most Torchmen ever are likely to have to taste Texas hospitality in that state's most interesting Spanish oriented city."

If there was any concern about holding the event in a city so far removed from the population center of the Torch world, it was without foundation as 53 clubs were represented and the total attendance at the banquet came to nearly 300.

Under the chairmanship of Donald E. Everett, the Convention had every element it needed for its success. As reported later in the magazine, "It was a nicely diversified program conducted in relaxed atmosphere. The addresses were informative and conducive to discussion."

For entertainment there were bus trips to the Alamo and two of the area's most interesting old missions, plus a barge trip on the San Antonio River winding through downtown San Antonio. There were visits to the Institute of Texan Culture, a luncheon at the restored Buck Horn Saloon, as well as the famous Gallagher Ranch at San Geronimo. Then, to top it all, there was a "Torch Fiesta" at the Juarez Plaza.

It is little wonder that when it came time to depart, people were heard to say, "What a great convention--how could anyone top this?"

The principal item of business on the agenda was the report of the Long-Range Planning Committee. The key point in the report was the recommendation that the Association employ a professional field services representative for the revitalization of weak clubs and assistance in the organization of new ones. This venture was to be financed up to \$30,000 for the period ending at the next convention through a dues increase of \$3.00, plus withdrawals from reserve funds as necessary.

Although the action did not require favorable response of the clubs, the Board a vote of the delegate asked the President for a "show of hands" on the question. There were 63 in favor and 11 opposed to the employment of the new staff member and none against the increase in the dues.

Then the "Women Question" came before the body again as it had at the 1972 Convention. But this time, there was added a proviso that the admission of women was not to be required of any club. By secret ballot the vote was 40 to 30 to permit local option in respect to acceptance of women into membership. Thus, the most divisive issue in the Association in a number of years was finally resolved.

In response to these actions Editor Paxton wrote in the July issue of The Torch:

"This was Torch at its best. Action had followed all that talk...Somehow a near miracle had occurred and Torch had set sail into promising but uncharted waters."

Norman Crawford (Jacksonville, Florida) was elected to serve as President in the Golden Anniversary Year ahead.

After the Convention, a Selection Committee was appointed to search for a person to fill the new position authorized on recommendation of the Long-Range Planning Committee at the San Antonio Convention. Finally, it was determined that the position be offered to A. Vernon Davis, the Immediate Past-President of the Hagerstown, Maryland, Torch Club. He was Director of Development and Public Relations at Mount St. Mary's College in Emmitsburg, Maryland. He had a long and successful background in journalism and fundraising and was a public speaker with a varied career in communications, both oral and written.

His employment was arranged and scheduled to begin February 1, 1974.

As the year 1973 came to a close, Secretary Nagel made his usual informative report on the past year.

Financially the situation was brightened by an excess of income over expense of over \$6,400. This brought the surplus to an all-time high of \$104,077.45. But he cautioned everyone to understand that the heavy financial commitment to the new field services program would be felt for the first time in 1974 and would inevitably mean some invasion of the surplus before the year was out.

Statistically the report was one of continuing losses in both clubs and membership. In addition to the five clubs lost in 1973 (offset by only one new charter) there were eight clubs so near the edge of dissolution that it was difficult to say just how many could be considered "active". The number of active members had now declined to 4,781.

There were five regional and sub-regional meetings in the year.

[The problem here, as it had been in the past, was that less than half of the clubs in these areas attended; and the non-attenders were the clubs most in need of the participation.]

Meanwhile the Crayton Lectures had finally been discontinued because of lack of interest.

On the positive side, there were three progressive developments:

1. A new "Introducing Torch" folder for use in extension was edited by L. G. Glasser,

2. A new Torch Director's Handbook was produced by Eric Pope and Bob Nagel for distribution to all officers and directors, and
3. A Survey of Club Standards was conducted to identify important characteristics of membership, programming, and operations. A report on this survey was made to the Board.

Now the time had come to put the full focus on the eventful Golden Anniversary Year just ahead.

In February of 1974, the Executive Committee met at the site of the upcoming convention--the Raddison South hotel in Bloomington, Minnesota. Although the primary purpose was to confer with the Convention Committee, the focus of attention quickly passed to the new Field Services Representative, Vernon Davis, who presented his "Torch Advancement Program 1974." The theme of his program was to be "Share the Light of Torch." In addition to monthly progress reports to the Board, he said that he would publish a monthly newsletter and promotional piece titled "Torch Briefing" to be sent to the officers of all the clubs in the Association. He concluded by saying that his goal was to double Torch membership by the end of 1978.

All of those present (including myself) were captured by his confident profession of faith in what might be accomplished.

[As it turned out, it was an impossible dream. Four years later there had been no gain in member clubs and the number of active members in the clubs had actually declined. No one should put any blame on Vernon Davis. He made a valiant effort. No amount of communication or occasional visitations could save clubs with lethargic leadership and moribund memberships. And no one could afford the expenditure of time and money to move into prospective Torch sites and stay there long enough to persuade quality professionals to add another activity to their already increasing complex of responsibilities. If blame is to be placed anywhere, it should be on those of us who allowed ourselves to believe that we could move forward by turning back to the procedures of days long gone in Torch history.]

On the constructive side, there were developments at that meeting which were worthy of mention. Don Everett, who had performed brilliantly as chairman of the San Antonio Convention the year before, had consented to draft a document titled "Guidelines for Torch Conventions" and a new "President's Award" was adopted to be given each year to the club which achieved the highest score in an objective set of performance criteria. The purpose was to focus attention upon the importance of good club-Association relationships.

Attendance at the Golden Anniversary Convention on June 26-29, 1974 was disappointing. The number of represented clubs dropped to 51 and the total registration was only 175, including local club members from St. Paul and Minneapolis. The reasons given for this were fuel shortages, increasing inflation, and location.

There were co-chairmen for the event: E. E. Mattox and John P. Vitko. In addition to a number of speakers on subjects of interest, there was a special treat in having Norris Paxton, Past-President and Editor of The Torch, as banquet speaker. His title was "Tomorrow and the Good Old Days."

It was on this occasion that the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Club became the first winner of The President's Award.

The entertainment schedule was highlighted by an evening at the Chanhassen Dinner Theater for a presentation of the musical "Oklahoma." There also were tours to Fort Snelling and a bus trip along the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River.

There were five regional breakfasts--workshop sessions. In his Secretary's Report, Bob Nagel reviewed the state of the Association, including the news of the first women members reported by the clubs. (The first woman delegate was Sophia Hodges of the Richmond, Virginia, Club, who was individually recognized.) He also reported that for the first time since 1948 the Craytons, Sherman and Lois, were unable to be present.

An amendment to the Bylaws to eliminate the provision that first-year dues for charter members of new clubs be waived was adopted without a negative vote, subject to the usual ratification later by the clubs.

As the meetings came to an end, L. G. (Bud) Glasser was elected President for 1974-75. (Eric Pope had asked not to be nominated for reasons of ill health.)

President Glasser called for "a program of change to accommodate to changes in our environment."

At a post-convention Board meeting Glasser suggested that in view of increased costs the practice of reimbursements of expenses to local organizers should be eliminated, the interim Board meetings should be passed over, and the number of committees should be reduced. He did say, however, that regional activities should continue.

It was at this meeting that Vernon Davis first mentioned the possibility of creating a Torch Foundation and also proposed the establishment of a "Members-at-Large" category for Torch.

Later, in an issue of the magazine, Editor Paxton paid tribute to Davis for his presentation at the Convention on the program for extension and club development. He wrote, "Excitement was in the air as delegates appeared united in support of the effort to build a bigger and better Torch."

[The attendance pattern was anything but encouraging. It was a convention of senior citizens in the Torch world. Most of them (as indicated in a survey conducted at the time) were members who no longer held positions of active leadership in the clubs they represented. And, even more distressing, a few of them were from clubs most in need of whatever values were to be gained from the workshops.]

As the year ended, Secretary Nagel reported that a net loss of \$18,571.05 had brought the equity of the Association down to \$84,945.11. The number of clubs was down to 108 "with several clubs seriously delinquent in payment of dues and some likely to expire before the next convention."

[There were two immediate products of this situation: One was that it was decided to reduce the number of pages in The Torch to 48 (at least temporarily) and the other was that Davis told the Executive Committee that he would have to concentrate his development work near his home area because of increasing travel costs.]

In an open letter to readers of The Torch, President Glasser wrote:

"We have two choices open to us: 1) Increase dues, and 2) increase membership. We have elected this year to increase membership. We elected this route because we believe that the Torch idea,

understanding and communication among professionals, is more viable in the world today than ever before."

* * * * *

Epilogue

It is our hope that those who read this story of the first 50 years of Torch will understand that Torch has been blessed with a succession of leaders whose commitment to the ideals and principles of the Association has been its special strength. Nelson Torbet once wrote:

"Being a director of Torch is a very honored position as well as an exceptionally enjoyable experience. Take my word as a Past-President that the Association with friendly and distinguished men from wide areas of the United States and Ontario has been an experience of singular delight and self-improvement."

All of us were subject to human frailties--some more than others. But we all had a sense of dedication to Torch. We did our best to serve the Association's highest interests.

Sometimes we made mistakes. (Example: We continued to believe in regionalism as a means of strengthening weak clubs long after the evidence clearly showed that this was not substantiated by experience.)

In planning for the future, we had a tendency to substitute wishful thinking for realistic analysis. (Example: We thought we could solve new-age problems with old-age procedures.)

We must remember that in the latter years of this period revolutionary changes were taking place in social attitudes. We were not immune to their effects. The economic climate was also undergoing radical changes, particularly from the negative forces of inflation. It was a long road from the traditional professions of 1924 to the proliferating emergence of new professional pursuits in 1974. But we traveled it without loss of vision of the true meaning of Torch.

We kept alive that "Light of Torch" for those who were to follow after us.

We remembered what Leonard Kercher wrote in his stirring credo written in 1955 when he said: "The First Value of Torch is the free and responsible mind."