

This Knight's armor has been sparkling since 1922

K of C recognizes longtime member

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

GREECE — For Arthur Fraser, the gathering was a bit too big the day he took his third degree with the Knights of Columbus some 71 years ago in Rumford, Maine.

"We had 125 members in our class, but I always thought they admitted too many people that didn't stay," Fraser recalled.

Fraser certainly has gone a long way toward compensating for those early dropouts.

Recently, Father Barry Council No. 2091 discovered that Fraser, 95, is its oldest living member. To celebrate Fraser's years of service, the Rumford-based chapter decided to honor Fraser — with a little help from a Rochester-area K of C chapter.

Fraser, who now resides in Greece, was honored June 23 by the Greece Knights of Columbus, Our Lady of the Cenacle No. 3892, at that group's annual Clergy Appreciation and Recognition Dinner. The event was held at Holy Name of Jesus Church, St. Martin's Way.

Both Fraser and his wife of 68 years, Louise, were in attendance. Arthur was presented with a certificate of appreciation from Council No. 2091 in Rumford, as well as a Certificate of Accommodation signed by Supreme Knight Virgil Dechant from the K of C's national headquarters in New Haven, Conn.

In addition, Louise, 90, received a dozen red roses.

"I thought they were very nice, very cordial. They did everything to make it nice," said Fraser.

The longtime Knight of Columbus was born in Franklin, N.H., and spent most of his life in Rumford. He and Louise raised seven children, and now



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

Arthur Fraser stands on the front patio of his son's home in Greece.

have 27 grandchildren and 38 great-grandchildren.

A devout Roman Catholic all his life, Fraser began volunteering his services to the church at a very early age.

"I was an altar boy for 20 years — from when I was five years old until I got married," Fraser said.

He eventually joined the Catholic Order of Foresters in 1918 before commencing his longtime membership with the Knights of Columbus in 1922. He became involved with the K of C through his now-deceased brother, Emil, who once served as a grand knight.

Fraser's working life was mostly spent as a quality-control specialist for the Rumford-based Oxford Paper Company. He also was also a talented baseball player — competing as a semipro outfielder in the 1920s — and he still roots avidly for the Boston Red Sox.

Upon his retirement from the paper company in 1963, Fraser stayed active as a grounds keeper and handyman for a motel owned by a daughter and son-in-law.

Arthur and Louise moved to Greece five years ago to live with their son, Arthur, and daughter-in-law, Jen.

Fraser remains quite mobile, doing various types of yard work at their residence on El Mar Drive.


He emphasized that no matter what the activity may be, it's that much nicer when he can do it with Louise.

"You might put down that the best years of my life have been living with her," Fraser suggested with a big smile.

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