

## **Pat Kelly**

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### **The Congressional Staff Club**

Personal memories of the Congressional Staff Club and being awarded "Staffer of the Year."

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When I first came down here as a matter of fact, when I went to work for the committee, I was given the papers to sign up for the retirement, sign a, and I was also given a card for the Congressional Secretaries Club, it was called at that time, to join. "It's a very good group," they told me, and they were passing these things around, so. Anyway, I went home that night to tell my mother and I said, "What about this Congressional Secretaries Club?" And she said, "It's a very good unit, Pat, and you'll get to know a lot of people." And I did. I really did over the years and we were a nice, nice group of people. I mean maybe we had, at most we probably had 9,000-10,000 membership but don't forget that they didn't have everybody, a lot of secretaries and so forth during those days, the beginning anyway. And we would have parties and we would have people, the Members would come. They were honorary members of the club. They didn't pay any fee or anything and they came. And, of course, one of the ones who came a lot, Bob Michel if you remember him, he's a good friend of a lot of us and, and he had a beautiful singing voice and he would charm us with that voice of his. But—and I see him a lot too around at different functions and he's doing quite well.

So no, it was a great group but things change over the years and I think it, we celebrated, it came into existence 1935 and its 50th anniversary was 1985 and we celebrated that but it was in the 90s that it began to go down. In fact, my very good friend Jean Gilligan was president two times but one time we went to a meeting to announce candidates or something like that, we had meetings all the time, and I think about five of us showed up and I thought, "Uh-oh, this is the end of this," you know? And that's what happened.

But in the meantime we did a lot of good work for people, a lot of charitable work, and seeing that people, you know, if they were having trouble in their job or something like that if they wanted to talk about it, talk about it to us. But I went on as a, let's see, regular person in, in the main part of it, then I went up to the first vice president, second vice president, first vice president, president, and I was president of the Staff Club in 1976. And at the same time Sid Yudain gave me an award for the staffer of the year in 1976. I did not expect, I didn't have any idea about it at all and that really was very, my mother was there, my brother and some of the children had been down in Sea Island, where Bill used to go with his wife and kids and they were there, and I was shocked but I was very pleased about it and I think my mother was too. That was quite a, Staffer of the Year. I still recall that.