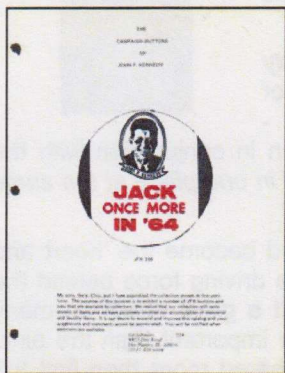


# The Kennedy Political Items Collectors

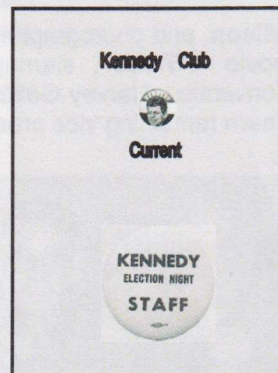


History is one of the reasons behind our efforts to collect memorabilia. So we thought it would be appropriate to include a history of the Kennedy Political Items Collectors in this project. KPIC, of course, is a special interest chapter of the American Political Items Collectors (APIC) which was itself founded in 1945. The **Kennedy Brothers Chapter** [original name] was founded by its first president, Christopher Hearn (then a college student in Geneva, NY) when "specialty chapters" became popular in the hobby in the mid 1970's. The chapter had begun forming late in 1974 and it was chartered and officially recognized by the APIC on April 30, 1975, growing very quickly from 10 Charter Members to more than 30 members by the end of that year.

The first newsletters included commentary, book reviews, brief articles or stories, and a few Xerox photocopies of buttons as illustrations. Chris even included information on "non-Kennedy" pins, fakes, and reproductions. There were also collecting stories by the members.



In addition, Chris called upon the members for an official name for the chapter. Suggestions included "*The Camelot Chapter*", "*The Kennedy Collectors*", and "*Kennedy Brothers Collectors*". They settled upon "**The Kennedy Club**" with the newsletter called "**The Kennedy Club Current**" - after RFK's 1968 campaign newsletter (right).



The group held their first elections in 1976 with Chris Hearn continuing as president, Ed Sohmers (Des Plaines, IL) as vice president, and Bonnie Gardner as secretary/treasurer. That year the first chapter meeting was held at the APIC National Convention in Hartford, Connecticut. Chris was looking toward graduating college and was seeking someone to take over the reins of the group. Thomas and Pat Pahs (LaCrosse, WI) stepped forward as president and secretary/treasurer respectively in 1978. Ed Sohmers produced an 18-page JFK catalog in semi-color (left).

The chapter was renamed the "**Kennedy Political Items Collectors**" and the newsletter renamed "**The Hyannisporter**" (a blending of Hyannis and Reporter) and began publishing bi-monthly instead of quarterly. Another election was held in 1982 with Bonnie Gardner (Mentone, CA) becoming president, John Henigan (Racine WI) treasurer, and Harvey Goldberg (Clark, NJ) the newsletter editor. In 1986 these officers were re-elected with Chris Hearn becoming the vice president. The newsletter continued to progress and was expanded - to 12 pages per issue. By this time the chapter had nearly 100 members & continued to grow. In 19883 -the 20th anniversary of JFK's death - membership reached 486.



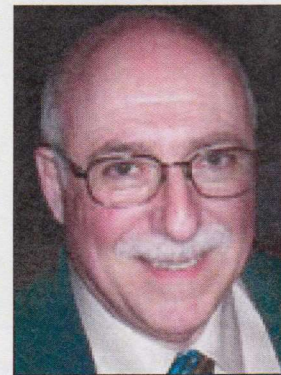
Bonnie Gardner



John Henigan



Chris Hearn



Harvey Goldberg

The chapter offered its first Kennedy auction to members in 1979. The following year the auctions continued, Spring and Fall -through 2010- when competition with eBay and other Internet auction sites became too difficult. The auctions were replaced by sales lists for a time, but those too were ended for the same reasons. Altogether through 36 auction catalogs, the chapter offered some 8,500 items for its members to bid upon.

The next several years saw publication of the first Kennedy Books: *The Campaign Items of John F. Kennedy* (1980) and *The Campaign Items of Robert F. Kennedy* (1981), eventually followed by a third reference - *Kennedy Campaign Ribbons* (1988). These books, co-authored by Bonnie Gardner, Harvey Goldberg, and John Henigan, (picturing all items full size in black and white) were the Kennedy reference standards of the hobby for many years.

