

## **PYA Hall of Fame**

### **HERB LYON**



Around 1953, Herb Lyon began nearly a 20-year run with local youth sports as he became involved with the predecessor organizations to PYA as a key associate of Elgie Johnson. As such, Herb was the first vice president of PYA, and a member of the founding group in 1963. He succeeded Elgie as the organization's second president.

As his son Gary turned 8 years old earlier that decade, and before the formal incorporation of PYA, Herb began his local youth involvement in the 1950's by coaching the renowned Bradley's little league team. As that team progressed to the Babe Ruth level, Herb and Elgie teamed up to run the baseball program. In a reflection of the times, it was an organization run with rudimentary simplicity, as there was no board of directors to provide oversight, and not much parental involvement either.

As the 1950's drew to a close, and the "Camelot" of the early 1960's took shape, it became apparent that uniting the different local Port Washington youth sports groups would streamline and ease the organizational and financial needs of the individual entities as they sought local funding. Much like the challenges of financing facing the organization today, Herb recalls that procuring sponsors and surviving on registration fees to support the numerous separate programs in town "was not easy". The solution developed by Elgie and endorsed by Herb was the merger of these sports groups into the concept of the PYA.

During his term as president, Herb brought 13-15 year old football to Port in the mid-1960's with the help of Bob Stuart. Recruiting a number of boys, Herb was the natural choice as the initial coach of that team as his qualifications included a stint as a championship (Queens/Nassau Alliance) football coach in College Point in 1947. Herb also coached CYO basketball at St. Peters.

Herb also is credited with forging the initial alliance with the local Lions Club, gaining permission to use its vast outdoor field for the bulk of PYA activities at that time (and to this day!). The rest, as they say, is history.

Another name in the chronicles of PYA lore, the legendary Vince Meier, came on board through Herb's efforts. Initially brought on to do some consulting work and procure sponsors, Herb elevated Vince to PYA's first Executive Director in the mid-1960's.

Herb's PYA legacy will note that as one who was there from the very beginning, the organizational foundation he laid of the leadership put in place, programs developed, and facilities secured included what can be termed as a "greatest generation" of PYA fathers in the 1960's, with the likes of Harvey Cohen, Ed Clark (PYA HOF '94) and Jack Eaton (PYA HOF '97), to name only a few.

Herb is now retired, and lives in Lake Wylie, SC.