

SPRIG OF ACACIA MONROE DISTRICT NEWS

Greetings Brethren, the winter months are upon us and most have been busy in the Quarries doing the work of the Craft, making good men better. We hope that your holiday season will be safe and filled with the enjoyment of family and friends. New York State is currently back to the wearing of masks indoors at public gatherings. The District Deputy Grand Master has communicated the requirements of Grand Lodge

as it relates to COVID Protocols. It is our hope that all members stay healthy.

We encourage you to submit articles as well as suggestions and constructive feedback so that improvements can be made to this periodical. If you are interested in submitting information for inclusion in the Spring newsletter, which will come out in March, you can do so by sending an email to me at ajborrino@gmail.com.

DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTER

R.:W.: William Edwards

MASONS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

*"As Brothers we accomplish a lot,
but together we can accomplish most anything."*

M.:W.: Richard J. Kessler, Grand Master
Grand Lodge of the State of New York



The Grand Lodge Session resumed to labor in Utica, NY on Saturday October 23rd, 2021. The Most Worshipful

Richard J. Kessler was elected Grand Master, and Right Worshipful Stephen Adam Rubin was elected the Deputy Grand Master. It was an active and lively Grand Lodge session and I am happy to report that 100% of the ten lodges in the Monroe District were in attendance. The

current term for the Grand Master and the District Officers is planned to be from October 2021 to May 2024.

One of my main responsibilities I have as District Deputy is to share the Grand Master's Address with the brethren at the Official Visits around the Monroe District. The Official Visits started in November and will complete in late January. It has been a pleasure to visit the lodges in person this year and learn about the work that each lodge is doing as well enjoy the special bonds of fraternal friendship. Along with sharing the address I also complete a review of the lodge's secretarial and financial records. This review is for the benefit of the lodge members to ensure that the proper accounting of meeting, member and financial records are occurring. It is an opportunity to also discuss best practices for secretaries, treasurers and trustees and recognize the quality work that is being done. I would to personally like to thank the lodge secretaries, treasurers and trustees for all their efforts to properly manage the important business aspects of the lodge.

A print copy of the **Grand Master's Address** is presented to each lodge to include with the meeting minutes. The address was also just published in the Winter 2021 Edition of the Empire State Mason. You can access here: <https://nymasons.org/site/address-of-richard-j-kessler-grand-master-of-masons-in-the-state-of-new-york/>.

Grand Lodge is establishing the THEODORE ROOSEVELT AWARD for exemplary Police Service honoring members of the Police and Law Enforcement Departments. The award expresses gratitude

for the officers' good character and his/her long and dedicated service

The Grand Master has a number of important initiatives including continuing the progress with membership recruitment and retention, adopting the Maxwell Leadership Model for leadership development, creating programs for officer sponsorship and developing a world class Grand Lodge Website.



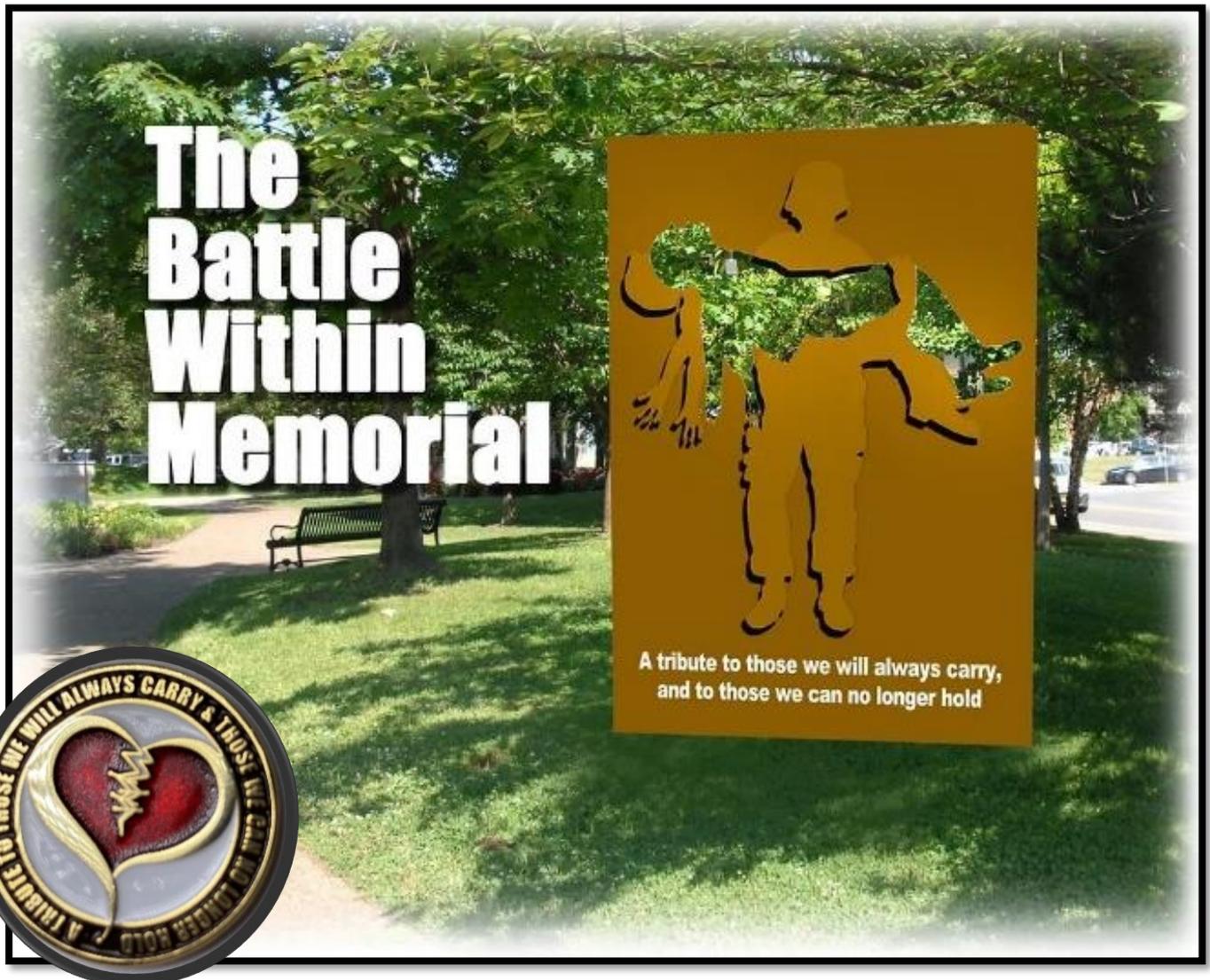
Additionally I wanted to make mention of The Masonic Brotherhood Fund, which is a 501(c)(3) Charity of the Grand Lodge of New York and supports the various service and charitable projects around the state. Grand Master Kessler's pin and cufflinks, seen here, raise donations for the Brotherhood Fund. I have both items available and will bring them with me on my travels around the district. Please consider making a donation to the Brotherhood Fund!



THE BATTLE WITHIN

In the past 40+ years, since the end of the Vietnam War, we have lost more American heroes due to suicide than all foreign wars and conflicts in that time period combined. Approximately 20 veterans each day are lost to us due to complications from wounds and injuries we cannot see. That's 7,200 brave men and women a year! They made it through one war, only to come home to fight another. The Battle Within Project Foundation was set up to raise awareness of this unacceptable statistic.

The Battle Within magnetic tokens are available to help support this cause. The Teddy Bear token is extremely popular and I have limited supplies available. You can learn more about the Battle Within Foundation located in Buffalo at <https://www.thebattlewithinfoundation.com/> Over the coming months we will explore options to organize, plan and install "Let's Talk" benches in the Monroe County region. If you are interested in getting involved in the "Let's Talk" project, please let me know. I wish you all a happy holiday season and look forward to seeing you in the Masonic quarries in 2022!



GRAND STEWARD

R.:W.: Allyn J. Borrino



Brothers, I have to say it has been extremely gratifying to visit many of you during the Official Visits with the District Deputy Grand Master. I believe that we have completed seventy percent of the Official Visits, with just three lodges left at the turn of the new year. The lodges have been doing a great job and it is great to see all of you attending lodge and contributing to your lodge's success. As of now I believe the majority of lodges have Initiated several gentlemen into the Craft, with the follow up degrees on the horizon.

On the educational front, several of the lodge's new brothers participated, and completed the December 1st Masonic Development Course for Entered Apprentice. These brothers, as well as any brother interested, will hopefully participate in the Fellowcraft Masonic Development Course to follow after their completion of the second degree. The date for Fellowcraft course will depend on primarily on the scheduling of this degree by the lodges. That training date will be shared with your lodge Master and Secretary.

The **Road to the East** program will take place this season on Saturday, February 12, 2022 at Webster Lodge. While this training is required of Wardens prior to ascending to the East, I would encourage Deacons, especially the Senior Deacon, to attend the Road to the East training. Remember that all members are welcome to attend this training, not only if you hope to sit in the East one day, but to have a better knowledge of the workings of your lodge, responsibilities of the Master, learn leadership skills and a host

of additional interesting information. If you do plan on moving to the East one day, this training will assist you in planning your time in the East as well as offer the time to prepare properly for a successful year as Master. As a matter of fact, the Senior Deacon, Junior Warden and Senior Warden will be receiving invitations to this training as the date gets closer. We should always seek more light in Masonry, so please take advantage of this opportunity.

Included in this newsletter you will find dates of Masonic educational interest being shared by lodges in the district. Take a look, find a program of interest and make a date to attend a neighboring lodge for more Light in Masonry. We are also encouraging Brothers to get their Masonic Passports at the Service Bureau. Use them while visiting other lodges, not only



W.:Guy Morse-Inspiration

W.:Paul Dill - Webster

throughout the area, but throughout the world. As a “Traveling Man” you will now be able to keep a permanent record of your travels.

Speaking of traveling, the Traveling Gavel is headed around the district. I know that on December 2, 2021 Inspiration Lodge #109 showed up at the Webster Lodge #538 meeting with a contingent of eleven brothers and finally removed the Traveling Gavel from Webster Lodge, where it has been collecting dust since 2018. The brothers of Inspiration Lodge were

greeted with open arms, and Past Master Guy Morse was presented with the fruit of their labor by Webster Lodge Worshipful Master Paul Dill.

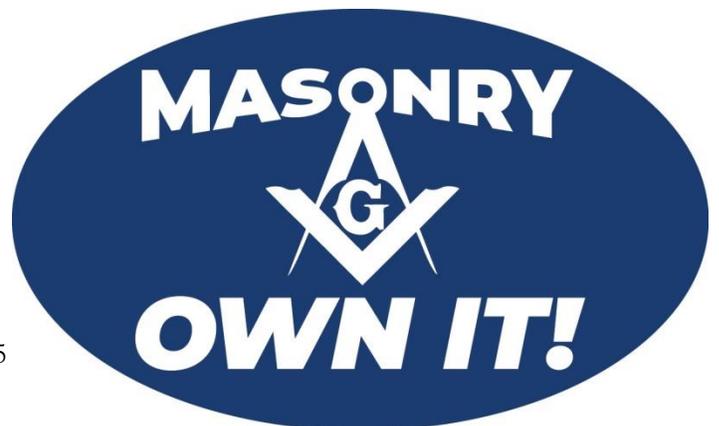
I have also had the pleasure of making some overdue presentation to brothers who have completed their Road to the East and Master’s Chair training during the past year or so. These are some photos of the Official Visits completed thus far.



Union Star Lodge #320
December 13, 2021



Bro. Shawn Booth & W.:Larry Vaccarelli
Clio Lodge #779 December 7, 2021



ASSISTANT GRAND LECTURER

V.:W.:James MacDuff

Brethren: We're in the thick of the holiday season, and the Degree Season!! While I haven't been able to visit with all of you during your Degrees, I've noticed them on the Calendar. I myself have been acting as Ritual Director for my own Worshipful Master of ERAC.

I don't have the nerves that I used to as a younger Mason, with butterflies before the start of the Degree. I don't know if you call me an oldster yet at this point, but I've seen my share of Degrees through the years. Last night at ERAC for our FellowCraft Degree I was wistfully thinking about my Big Brothers that mentored me as I came up through the ranks.

Some of us (and you know who you are) have been doing Degrees for some time. What I think we often forget is that Degrees are not an onerous activity that must be endured. And we never expect that it'll ever be perfect, because while some of us have been around, there are new and newer Brothers who do not yet have the experience. The nature of Lodge growth (and unfortunately turnover) is a fact of life in Masonic dealings.

A few tips that may aid you and all the Brothers of your Lodge on Degree Night:

1. Remember, you were a youngster once too!
2. Remember the preverbal "arm around the shoulder"... teach, guide, do not "talk at" your Brothers.
3. Be sure the Junior Deacon knows beforehand

how the light switches affects the lights, and if there is a light directly above the Altar, it is to be left off for the duration of degree work.



4. Remind your Masters of Ceremonies of their "check list". Such as, what foot the slipper goes on. Being sure where and how the cabletow is used. Make sure jewelry is covered by band-aids, opaque tape or removed. Being sure the candidate or brother remembers the "hollow" of their feet. And, importantly in the case of the 2nd or 3rd Degree, be sure they've got their aprons on.

5. Be sure the Wardens know what exactly they should be looking for during the perambulation.

6. Establish who the Prompter for the evening will be ... if you don't, you'll find there are many, which makes for a confusing degree for participants.

7. **REMEMBER:** Those Gentlemen or Brothers that you are doing the Degree for do not know if your ritual work is correct or not. Avoid the urge to make faces at yourself, or utter apologies. Get over any mistake and move on.

Lastly ... we're in this together! Have fun! We're doing important work. There are no perfect ashlar among us ... enjoy the journey as we walk our Lodges forward arm in arm.

THE VALLEY OF ROCHESTER SCOTTISH RITE PRESENTS



Masonic Family Bowling Night
Lodge vs Lodge bowling challenge at Empire Lanes
2400 Empire Blvd., Webster NY
Saturday, January 15, 2022
Bowling begins at 12:30 pm

Get your Brothers together for some casual fun and fellowship. Get a four man team together and represent your lodge for some exciting, but friendly, competition. You do not have to be a Scottish Rite member or regular bowler to participate. No team, No worries, we'll set you up.

\$20.00 per person includes two hours of bowling, shoes, pizza and soda.

Reservations and payment deadline is Friday, January 7, 2022.

Call the Valley Secretary, Gary Burke with any questions, at 585-425-0033

The Valley of Rochester . 811 Ayrault Road . Suite 3 . Fairport NY 14450

secretary@valleyofrochester.org

Brotherhood Fund - R.:W.: Derek VanHouten
Derekhouten1@mac.com 585-278-3876

My Brothers, I send fraternal Greetings to all of you this Holiday Season. I was asked by R.W. Bill Edwards to take over the Brotherhood Fund Campaign for 2021-2022 for the Monroe District. I informed him that I would, and asked if I could follow him around on his Official Visits, which he agreed to. So far I have had the privilege to attend five of the Lodges. I have met with your individual Lodge BHF (Brotherhood Fund) Chairmen and talked to the Brothers about what the BHF does and who they support. I look forward to visiting the rest of the Lodges later this season.

For the "senior" members of the Lodges, we have had the BHF for many years, I like to say it's the engine that drives the programs of Grand

Lodge. It is a 501(C)3 charitable organization, so any funds that you donate to a BHF charity, whether its \$1.00 or much more, it is a donation and therefore tax deductible. Within the frame work of the Brotherhood Fund are ten designations to which you can donate. Or if you can't decide on an allocation, perhaps assigning your donation to the Grand Master's allocation would be best. This allows the Grand Master to allocate the monies where he sees a need.

In no particular order, here are some choices as to where your donation could be placed;

- The Masonic Care Community
- The Masonic Benevolence Fund
- Military Outreach Program
- Robert R. Livingston Library

- Camp Turk
- Disaster Relief
- Masonic Medical Research Institute
- Safety ID (*formally Child ID*)
- The Masonic Youth Foundation.

I have taken the liberty of ordering enough BHF material to support each lodge's chairman. So when we meet I can supply your lodge Chairman and explain to him how each item will help him as chairman as well as his lodge. I would also suggest that the appointment as a Brotherhood Fund Lodge Chairman be for more than a single year, as it takes time to get to know you're the BHF, it's "customer base" and your

lodge members. Even after the Official Visits if any chairman needs hands on help I would be most happy to assist. My contact information is: derekhouten1@mac.com 585-278-3876. I look forward to spreading the important material about the opportunities of the BHF to all Lodges.

At one time the Monroe District was among the top ten Districts in the State, so I challenge you to strive to accomplish this again. I believe that last year's total contributions for the State was around \$1.2 million dollars. I look forward to working with you in the quarries on this very important opportunity to maintain and build the Brotherhood Fund.

NorthStar Program - W.: Michael Pettinato
mpettina@reslife.rochester.edu 718-928-8117

Greetings, I thought I would give a short update on how Northstar has been doing.

As you may know, as part of the Northstar program our Grand Lodge sends leads to the district. These are individuals who have responded to either a Grand Lodge or Scottish Rite webpage expressing an interest in Masonry. They have seen one of the advertisements being done, come to the webpage out of their own curiosity, or been referred by a friend. Once they come to the webpage they fill out an online form indicating they would like to learn more about Masonry.

This is in turn sent to me as the District Northstar manager. I in turn will make two attempts to connect to the potential candidate via e-mail or phone (depending on the contact information they left). If I do not hear back after the second attempt, they are removed from

our pool. If we do connect, I talk with them on why they are interested in Freemasonry and then eventually forward them on to a specific lodge to talk directly to that lodge.

To date in this new Masonic year (since august), we have had 25 candidate names forwarded to us via Grand Lodge. Of these 10 appropriately responded to inquiries and were forwarded to lodges. Interestingly, I can say there is a clear and noticeable difference in the response rates of candidates who provide a phone number versus those who provide only an e-mail. When we receive a candidate with a phone number, the response rate of whether they follow up is about 50/50. When we receive one with only an email only roughly 15% follow up to our reach out. This is a pretty start difference, and some feedback our district has passed on to Grand Lodge.

As mentioned, those candidates who do respond to me are connected to Lodges that make the most sense for them (geographically, day they meet, or interest in their programs). Usually by the time they are forwarded to the lodge, they are more likely to stick around as they have already responded to us a few times. I am aware of several lodges for instance who have had these Northstar candidates become brothers in the past year.

For those wondering how to get more of these candidates to come to your lodge, my best

advice is if you have not already done so to send me a copy of your 9 Trestleboard! The candidates often ask what sort of events or programs a lodge puts on, and if I can share a little information it can often excite them a great deal about the process of becoming a mason.

Thank you for reading this update on the Northstar program, and if you have any questions or wish to help with managing the Northstar for the district do not hesitate to reach out to me at mpettina@reslife.rochester.edu

**Have-A-Heart 2022 - R.:W.: William Edwards
billeds585@gmail.com 585-472-2229**

The 34th annual Have-A-Heart fundraiser in support of the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Rochester is coming to you again this year! In collaboration with the Masters and Wardens Association it has been decided that we will not staff booths in the mall again this year due to ongoing concerns with Covid-19 safety protocols and the uncertainty mall donor patronage.



The online campaign will occur during the month of February and the updated website at www.haveaheartrochester.org will be available in January. The Have-A-Heart fund raiser was established by the Rochester area Masons in February of 1988 and to date with the support of the community, has raised over \$440,000 for the local Ronald McDonald House Charities. **We need assistance with helping to promote the fundraiser – get involved and make a difference!**



**Ronald McDonald
House Charities®**
Rochester, NY

Keeping families close™

SAVE THE DATE

MONROE DISTRICT TABLE LODGE

MASONIC SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENT
R. W. RICHARD FRIEDMAN
GRAND LECTURER

Special Guest – Most Worshipful Richard J. Kessler
Grand Master of Masons in the State of New York

PLEASE JOIN US AT THIS RARE FESTIVE BOARD
SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 2022
Damascus Shrine Center

979 Bay Road, Webster NY

5:00 – 6:00 Cocktail hour

6:00 pm - Festive Board Table Lodge



**Further details to
be communicated
after the
New Year**

Fidelity Triangle #4 – Masonic Youth Organization for Girls
Erika R. Hansen – Junior Deputy – Junior Deputy – nycmshansen@gmail.com
Eliza Burley – Beloved Queen – www.fidelitytriangle.weebly.com

Fidelity Triangle #4, which typically meets at CLIO Lodge on the 2nd or 4th Saturdays of every month for regular meetings or social events, has had a productive 2021 as we work to get back into a normal routine. Our summer was filled with plans and preparation for our State Convention which took place in Albany in October.



Beloved Queen Eliza, Jr. Lady Haleigh and Sr. Lady Riley as the Lasagna Dinner take out runners

The members got all dressed up for our Halloween Party and also helping Etoleah Holmes OES serve their Lasagna Dinner. If you are looking for some able hands to help with your dinners or events, please let us know.

With the New Year ahead, these young ladies are eager to stay active and involved. They're

also looking to expand their ranks. If you have a daughter, granddaughter, niece or family friend who could use such an organization as a means to grow and use her talents, please let us know. We'd love to invite her to our events and get to know her. The Beloved Queen and Jr. Deputy are also available to attend your lodge meetings or events to give a presentation about the order if you need more information about its history and purpose.

Triangle has changed quite a bit since it first began in 1926 but it still adheres to three important concepts – a duty to god, a duty to others, and a duty to oneself. Modern Triangle Girls are forward thinking and adaptable leaders, spiritually grounded, empathetic and compassionate towards others as shown in their service work, and young adults who strive to keep themselves mentally and physically well through varied and noble pursuits. They may join our organization as shy, young followers but by the time they become Beloved Queen, they are leaders and mentors for other members in the organization and in their communities. I think we can all agree that more of this is needed in our society and for our youth.

TO SUBMIT INFORMATION TO THIS NEWSLETTER SIMPLY CONTACT THE DISTRICT TEAM AT

ajborrhino@gmail.com

YOUR THOUGHTS AND IDEA ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

MONROE DISTRICT CALENDAR

Fidelity Triangle #4	<p>Winter Break Bowling 6:00 pm Pleasure Lanes, 144 South Avenue Hilton, NY. Open to friends, family and prospects</p> <p>Presentation/Degree for Lift Bridge Chapter OES</p> <p>Regular Meeting (plan, ritual, etc)</p> <p>Ice Skating get together. Location TBD</p>	<p>December 30, 2021</p> <p>January 4, 2022</p> <p>January 8, 2022</p> <p>January 22, 2022</p>
Scottish Rite	<p>Masonic Bowling Night -Empire Lanes, 12:30 pm start</p> <p>Full Reunion – Renovation Lodge #97 39 Platt Street, Albion NY</p> <p>9:30 am coffee, 10:00 am program- Degrees: 4° video, 12° video, 22° video, 32° video</p>	<p>January 15, 2022</p> <p>February 19, 2022</p>
Fairport-Flower City	<p>Daniel Carter Beard Scouter Award Meeting – 7:30 pm at FFC lodge</p>	<p>February 28, 2022</p>
Scottish Rite	<p>Brother-bring-a-Brother 9:30 am coffee, 10:00 am program “Scottish Rite in a Nutshell”, video-“Seeking Further Light” Presentation-“The Last Full Measure” Phoenix Lodge #115, 68 Elizabeth Street, Dansville NY</p>	<p>March 5, 2022</p>
Scottish Rite	<p>Brother-bring-a-Brother 9:30 am coffee, 10:00 am program “Scottish Rite in a Nutshell”, video-“Seeking Further Light” Presentation-“The Last Full Measure” Wayne Lodge #416, 1932 Ridge Road, Ontario NY</p>	<p>March 12, 2022</p>
Monroe District	<p>Monroe District Table Lodge Damascus Shrine Center, 979 Bay Road, Webster NY Monroe District Masonic Service Award recipient R·W· Rich Friedman Special guest, Grand Master of Masons, State of New York M·W· Richard J. Kessler Monroe District Masonic Service Award recipient R·W· Rich Friedman</p>	<p>April 16, 2022</p>
Scottish Rite	<p>Full Reunion Corning Painted Post Lodge #168 122 Reynolds Street, Corning NY 9:00 am coffee, 9:30 am program, Degree TBD</p>	<p>April 23, 2022</p>

Ecclesia Lodge #1189 OM F&AM

A Different Masonic Experience

W* Michael Nohle - Master
Bro. Kristian Reninger – Senior Warden

Ecclesia Lodge #1189 is a Traditional Observance Lodge in the Monroe District and is



open to any Master Mason who seeks this type of Masonic experience. Although our charter empowers us to make Masons, all Ecclesia members are also members of

other Monroe District lodges. For Ecclesia members, continued active membership in one's mother lodge is considered synergistic to our observant experience and growth as Masons.

Ecclesia Lodge offers an exceptional experience. Our mission is to provide a spiritual atmosphere that enables members to harmoniously debate and discuss philosophical concepts that underpin both our fraternity and our society. By doing this, members of Ecclesia learn not only from the great thinkers of our world, but also from each other. Further, Ecclesia Lodge provides a unique experience by elevating

ritualistic and ceremonious methodology relevant to the practice of Observant Masonry. Our wide range of reading inspired topics include both Masonic and general authors. Meeting discussions are led by members on a rotating basis and are based upon books recommended by those Brethren.

Our style and culture at Ecclesia focus on a serene and meditative atmosphere which promotes deep thought and reflection, soothing music, excellent and proficient ritual, and advancement of light in Masonry, followed by a quality meal in a festive setting along with good fellowship.

If you seek a different and elevated Masonic experience, we invite you to be our guest at one or more of our meetings. We meet at Webster Lodge, 30 Orchard Street, Webster, NY, and our next regular communication will be held on Saturday, March 5th beginning at 3:30 PM. We will also be meeting in June. For more information or to let us know you're attending, please contact one of our officers.



MONROE DISTRICT HISTORY
One Hundred Years A Temple: From Tavern To Hotel To Temple
– A Story of Pioneering Fellowship
Bro. Christopher Carosa

During the month of November 2020, Union Star Lodge #320 F&AM intended to throw an elaborate party for the entire community to celebrate the 100th anniversary of its Temple Building. Covid threw a wrench in those plans.

While the brothers of the lodge could not share their enthusiasm for their Temple's history in person, they were able to offer a short post describing the history of the land and the building that has now housed Union Star Lodge #320 for more than a century ([you can see that post here](#)). In addition, the Honeoye Falls/Mendon Historical Society hosted a virtual presentation that featured a more in-depth retelling of that history ([you can watch that presentation here starting at the 5:55 mark](#)).

The following is a condensed version of that presentation.

We begin where all things essential begin: *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. In the finest tradition of building castles only to see them fall down, then rebuilt, then burn down, then rebuilt, then sink into the swamp, then rebuilt, then, . . . well, you get the picture.

The very first building that occupied what is now 3 North Main Street in the Village of the Honeoye Falls within the Town of Mendon, a part of Monroe County, was a tavern. It was built before the War of 1812. Before there was a Village of Honeoye Falls (estd. 1838), before there was a Town of Mendon (estd. 1813), and even before there was a County of Monroe (estd. 1821). At the time, the location below the falls of Honeoye Creek was in the Town of Bloomfield in the once expansive but ever-shrinking Ontario County. It was locally known as "Norton's Mills" in deference to its first settlor Zebulon Norton, who built several mills above those same falls.

Perhaps of more interest is the fellow who built what was the burgeoning settlement's first tavern. His name was Abraham Parrish. Abraham was a man of many talents. As an entrepreneur, he had a keen sense of the coming thing. His tavern was strategically located on what was to become the main road between Honeoye Falls (and points south) and Rochester (then a village on the cusp of transforming into a city). Yes, a tavern made business sense. But, as the hub of a growing community, it also made social sense. In the sense of fine fellowship.

Where might Abraham have learned this? From his brother Jasper, of course.

Readers, especially those who travel through Canandaigua, will no doubt recognize the name of Jasper Parrish, Abraham's older brother. During the Revolutionary War, the Delaware tribe captured then 11-year-old Jasper and his father. His father was quickly released. Jasper wasn't so lucky. He spent the next six years moving from one Iroquois tribe to another, picking up many languages of the Tory allies along the way.

This came in handy after his release when George Washington needed someone to act as an interpreter during the negotiations with the Iroquois. The Father of Our County appointed Jasper "Chief Interpreter" and the Parrish family, including Abraham, set up home in Canandaigua.

This home, given the frequency of visitors, seemed more like a tavern. One could easily see how Abraham learned the art of acting as the humble host. One could also easily see how he learned to pick up on things that would later help him in business.

So, Abraham builds a tavern in “Norton’s Mills” and sells it around 1818, when the area was known as “West Mendon.” Abraham himself resides “near Lima” (as that was a much more bustling town). Coincidentally, Union Lodge, No. 261 was formed in Lima at around the same time in 1816. It moved to West Mendon in 1825 and held its meetings at “Old Sines Tavern” until 1831.

Why didn’t it move to the tavern formerly owned by Parrish? Well, a look at the map shows you it was on the wrong side of Honeoye Creek. There was no bridge back then. Coming from Lima, you didn’t need a bridge to cross the roaring waterway, so Sines Tavern was a better destination.

Which is just as well, because within a year or two, the old Parrish Tavern burned to the ground. Daniel Gibson, then proprietor of the tavern, must have channeled his inner Monty Python because in 1827 he rebuilt the tavern, this time out of brick. Gibson’s new tavern was christened the “Falls Hotel” (see picture)

[Picture Caption: The only known photograph of the Falls Hotel ca 1850. Photo courtesy of the Honeoye Falls Mendon Historical Society]



It was a two-story building and one of several hotels in the blossoming population center of West Mendon (which still wasn’t a village yet).

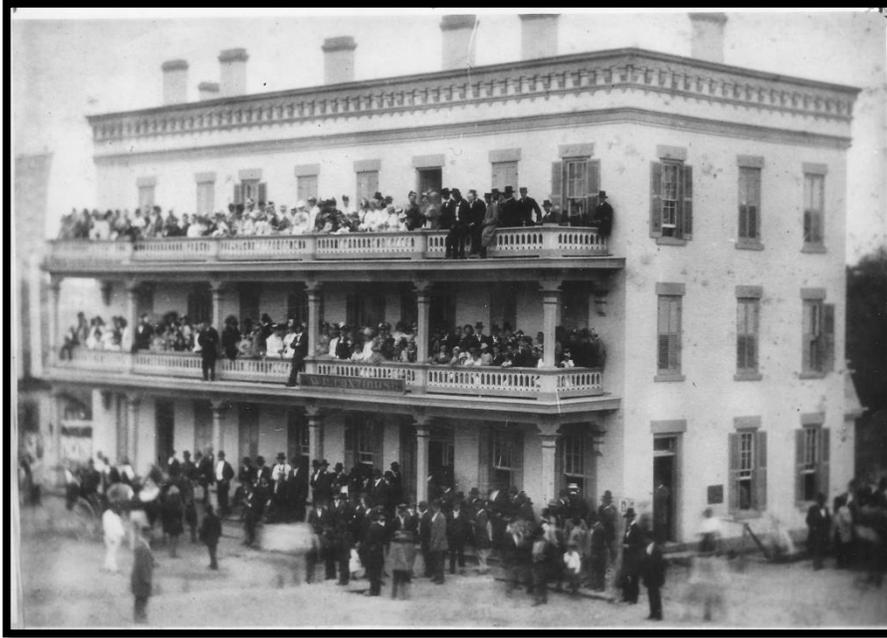
Gibson sold the property to Dr. Harry Allen in 1828 and, by 1829, we see the name of Daniel Gibson on the nomination slate as a candidate at the Anti-Masonic County Convention. Maybe that’s another good reason for Union Lodge No. 261 to choose another site for their West Mendon meeting.

Unfortunately, Lima’s lodge did not escape the ravages of conflagration. They moved back to Lima in 1831. In 1849, by then renumbered Union Lodge No. 45 (which has existed continuously to this day), its lodge building was consumed by flames and all its minutes were lost in the blaze. Fire and nineteenth century masons just didn’t mix, as we shall soon learn.

The Falls Hotel changed hands several times. With the coming of the railroad in 1853 to what was then the Village of Honeoye Falls, the Falls Hotel was a hopping place. No doubt this is what attracted John Stone to purchase it from Henry Hamlin and his wife in 1856.

The railroad wasn’t the only thing to come to Honeoye Falls in 1853. Changes in leadership at Union Lodge No. 45 allowed the formal process for creating Union Star Lodge No. 320 to begin. The first meeting of the new lodge in Honeoye Falls occurred in September of 1853.

Like Abraham Parrish, Sylvester Wilcox was very successful in a variety of businesses. Born in Mendon in 1833, his father ran a Tavern on the much travelled road that today we know as Route 64. In 1861, he purchased the Falls Hotel and promptly closed it for renovations. Upon re-opening, the newly named “Wilcox Hotel” (a.k.a. “Wilcox House”) sported a third story and two balconies, making it the centerpiece of the Village (see photo).



[Picture Caption: Local citizens around and atop the balconies of the Wilcox Hotel during the July 4th parade of 1878. Photo courtesy of the Honeoye Falls Mendon Historical Society]

Wilcox was a member of Union Star Lodge No. 320.

For years, Union Star Lodge held its meetings on the second floor of what is known as the “Stone Block” (yes, it was made of stone), which is across from its current Temple on the corner of Monroe Street and North Main Street. In or around 1860,

the lodge meeting place was moved to the “Pierce & Briggs” block, roughly six buildings upon West Main Street on the other side of Monroe Street. The bottom of the building housed a store with the Masons meeting on the second floor.

You’d have thought this would have been a fortuitous move since, in the early morning hours of March 2, 1866, the Stone Block was destroyed by fire. You would have thought wrong.

On the evening of December 11 of that same year, the Pierce & Briggs building caught fire. The store clerk and his friend were in the building at the time when they heard a strange crackling noise. Upon discovering the fire, they sped out of the room to call for help. There was a dance going on at the Wilcox Hotel.

But there was no fire department. While the kind citizens were able to protect the neighboring buildings, much was lost in the Pierce & Briggs building, including all that Union Star Lodge No. 320 had. Luckily, the lodge had \$400 worth of insurance.

Again, echoing Monty Python, the Pierce & Briggs block was quickly rebuilt and Union Star Lodge returned to its previous environs. The building was almost lost yet again in January of 1885 were it not for “the prompt action of those who arrived first sav[ing] the building from destruction and beat[ing] us out of a longer article on the subject,” in the words of the local newspaper.

Incidentally, a year later in 1886, following a devastating fire that burned down the Village Hall, Sylvester Wilcox was instrumental in establishing the Honeoye Falls Fire Department.

Through the rest of the nineteenth century, Union Star Lodge continued to meet regularly on the first Wednesday of every month at their rooms on the second floor of the Pierce & Briggs block. This was a time of renewed interest in Freemasonry. It soon became apparent that the lodge would need a bigger meeting place.

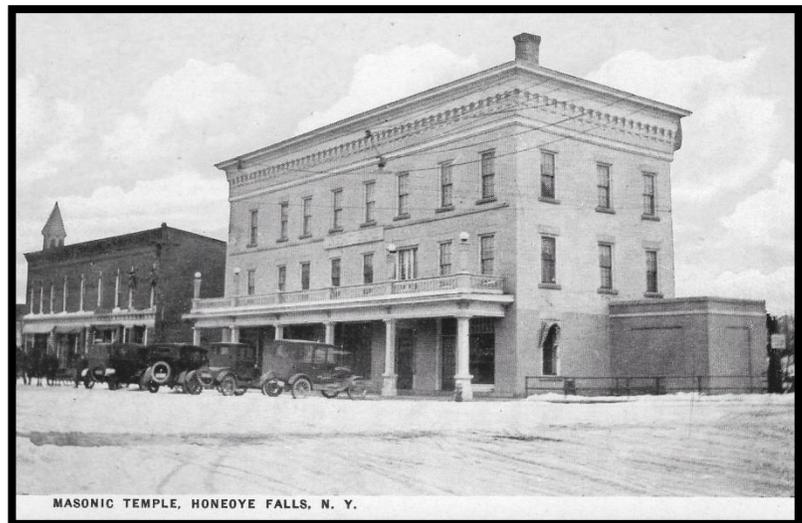
In 1906, Union Star Lodge decided it didn't want to rent anymore. It wanted a home it could call its own. A committee was formed to explore possibilities. It secured an option to purchase the Wilcox and Works block on the corner of West Main Street and Monroe Street (kitty-corner from its present location). This was a building built by Sylvester Wilcox in the 1880s. The lodge then embarked on a series of events, including a Masonic Fair and Carnival featuring an opportunity to win a piano to raise funds to buy the building.

For some reason, despite the success the lodge had in raising (and continuing to raise) funds, the deal for the building did not go through. Maybe it was because Sylvester Wilcox laid down the working tools in 1907. This likely placed all property related transactions on hold. Indeed, the Wilcox Hotel itself remained in family hands until 1915, when Sylvester's wife Marion, the Executor of the estate, sold it to George P. Lawton, Daniel F. Courtney, and Anne L. Courtney.

In 1920, things began to move in earnest. In February, the Union Star Temple Association was incorporated with a capital of \$30,000. Stock was sold to members for \$10 per share. On April 1, the formal deed conveyed the Wilcox Hotel from Lawton, Courtney, and Courtney to the Union Star Temple Association. James Tyler, a well-known Rochester architect, drew up plans for the remodeling. The lodge room would take up the entire third floor, the second floor used for reception/committee/club rooms as well as a kitchen and dining area, and the first floor would be rented to businesses.

Renovations began immediately and were completed in time to open the building to the public with an open house on November 15th. (See Photo)

[Picture Caption: The new Union Star Lodge No. 320 F&AM Temple shortly after it opened in 1920. Courtesy of the Honeoye Falls Mendon Historical Society postcard collection.]



The ground-floor businesses opened first. The initial tenants were the Temple Restaurant; W.E. Durrant, clothier; Oscar Lee's barber shop; and, representing a bit of a coup and with renovations made especially for it, the Honeoye Falls post office. (A year later, in another coup, the Temple Association landed State Bank as tenant with addition renovations made to accommodate the financial institution.)

Oh, yeah. They also put two bowling lanes in the basement (which are still operational today). League bowling commenced even before the first formal lodge meeting.

Through the depression and beyond, the Temple building remained a center for community fellowship, not only for lodge sponsored events, but also for activities sponsored by other civic associations. To this

day, (or at least until Covid), the building, which continues to house several professional and retail offices, has be host to various local organizations from the business groups to student clubs.

The spirit and vision of the Abraham Parrish’s original tavern lives on, thanks to the continuing efforts of Union Star Lodge No. 320.

Grand Lodge of New York Masonic Care Community Campus – Utica, NY



Grand Lodge Officers of the Western Region of New York October 24, 2021

TO SUBMIT INFORMATION TO THIS NEWSLETTER SIMPLY CONTACT THE
DISTRICT TEAM AT

ajborrino@gmail.com

YOUR THOUGHTS AND IDEA ARE ALWAYS WELCOME