

The PIONEER The BIONEERS

West Omaha Masonic Temple
2424 South 135th Street
Omaha Nebraska, 68144

The PIONEER The BIONEERS

Celebrating Our 150th Year of Masons in Nebraska!
SPRING 2005

Nebraska Lodge is proud of its long history of Masons serving our country. This Memorial Day please remember those who we have lost, thank those who still live for the service they gave and pray for those who serve and protect our freedoms today.

The WWII, and Korea Veterans numbers are dwindling, they are proud to have served. This, the Greatest Generation also saw the greatest growth in Masonry the world has ever seen, Thank You!

These men have served our country and our lodge as officers!

Brother **Mark Parmenter** Says Hello! from Flight Training . . .

2nd Lieutenant **Parmenter**, USMC, is assigned to the VT-6 Shooters of Training Wing 5, NAS Whiting Field, FL.



Brother **Parmenter's** first solo flight was on January 17th in a T-34C Turbomenter. He has studied instrument, aerobatic, and formation flying, and is scheduled to complete Primary flight training around the 26th of May.

Brother **David Bean** serves as Marshal of Nebraska Lodge #1 ~ recently promoted to Naval Captain, he is stationed at Offutt AFB. Brother Bean is a member from Alexandria-Washington Lodge #22 Alexandria, Virginia. Brother **Bean** spoke to Brother **Parmenter** recently, giving him a few pointers on how he should dream about Helicopters in flight school!



Brother Bean and his son Tucker.

It's Official, Our 150th Year of Masons in Nebraska Ceremonies begun!

Our lodge delegates traveled to the Grand Lodge of Illinois to reenact a request for dispensation as did our forefathers 150 years ago on October 9th 2004.

Brother David Miller Most Worshipful Grand Master Ancient, Free & Accepted Masons of the State of Illinois, listened as Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master Ivan A. Vrtiska, personal representative of the Grand Master of Nebraska reads our requests for dispensation written by Most Worshipful Phil A. Lorenzen

PGM and signed by Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons in Nebraska Les Seiler. Worshipful Pepper Aasgaard addressed the Grand Lodge of Illinois and reported the current standings of Nebraska Lodge #184, now Nebraska Lodge #1



Most Worshipful Grand Master David Miller of Illinois, Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master Ivan A. Vrtiska, Worshipful Pepper Aasgaard, Master of Nebraska Lodge #1, and Brother John Christopher Martin, Tyler.

"Most worshipful Grand Master Miller, members of the Grand Lodge of Illinois and visiting dignitaries, Greetings from Nebraska Lodge #1, of the Grand Jurisdiction of Nebraska, AF&AM; "Illinois first son in Nebraska". We are most proud to report that Nebraska Lodge #184, now known as Nebraska #1, has brought in over sixty members in the past 42 months. Most of these new members are professional businessmen under the age of thirty.

I am also very proud to report that many of our new members are very active in the changes that are taking place in our lodge today. We were the first to use Public Service Broadcasts to reach out to new members. Nebraska Lodge #1 was also the first lodge to make it easy to petition and pay dues online. These new innovations have made it easier for our younger membership to find out who we are, and petition on the internet for Masonry. Of the new members we have brought in, over 60% were from the internet".

Our website has a new look! New features and new ease of navigation will make your website visit more enjoyable. Many links still need to be updated and many of your old favorite files will be maintained on the website indefinitely. I hope you enjoy your visit: Check out the Past Masters!

Please visit us at: www.FirstLodge.com

Please Welcome Our Newest Members!

Congratulations Brother Jeffery Welch!

Brother Jeffery Welch was raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason on **March 28th 2005.**

Congratulations!

Brother Sean Murta and Brother Jason Callaway!

who were both raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason on **February 28th 2005**

Congratulations Brother Brad Nietfeldt!

Brother Brad Nietfeldt was raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason on **January 31st 2005**

Congratulation!

Brother Bradley A. Carne and Brother Mark Penney!

who were both raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason on **December 29th, 2004.**

Congratulation Brother Charles A. Mueller!

Brother Mueller was raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason on **October 25th, 2004.**

Congratulation!

Brothers John Brommer and David Ramsay! (Real Brother in-laws!)

who were both raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason on **September 27th, 2004.**

Special Thanks to the Members of Nebraska #1

I have been very privilege and most fortunate to have the Masonic friends who have stood by me through my darkest hours. If it were not for you, my brothers who stood behind me, I would be far lesser of a man.

You gave me hope when there was none, allowed me to be comfortable with myself and though I have been caustic at times you forgave me and supported me even when it was unpopular and risk taking to do so. You allowed me to follow my heart, and diligently worked with me to rebuild our beloved lodge. No words can express my gratitude . . . you gave me the honor to be the 150th year Master; thank you!

I am most appreciative to my officers, my fellow lodge members and the numerous fine Masons who have with little notice dropped what they were doing to assist with degree work. This Masonic community dedication rebuilt Nebraska Lodge #1. This year as with last year I have been blessed with another Grand Master's Recruitment Award. This is our fourth year in row as a growing Lodge!

God Bless, with a Big Hug! . . . Thanks again!

Pepper Aasgaard, Master

Special recognition for hard working Members!

I would like to thank my officers and fellow members for the work they have done this past year. This year we see our Junior Steward **John Brommer** has learned the Questions and Answers in all degrees, further he has learned 2nd Lecture in Entered Apprentice and 2nd Lecture Master. Our Senior Deacon **Keith Neisler** has learned Questions and Answers in all degrees, first Fellowcraft and 3rd section Master Lecture. **Dathe BENISSAN-MESSAN** -Senior Steward has learned all Charges and is working on a lecture. **David Ramsay** has preformed both seafaring and wayfaring positions. Past Master **William Schwiesow** and **David Bean** our Marshal are learning the Stairs Lecture!

With dedication of this magnitude, the future of Nebraska Lodge is very bright!

Members of Nebraska Lodge take part in the Scottish Rite Reunion Hastings, Nebraska on March 19th, 2005

Nebraska Lodge had in attendance **Pepper Aasgaard**, 32° Master; **Keith Neisler**, 32° Senior Deacon; **Curt Edic**, 33° General Secretary and **Philip A Lorenzen**, 33° Past Grand Master and Chaplain for Nebraska Lodge #1. Nebraska lodge had eight candidates, however only three could make the trip. **John Brommer**, 32°; **Chris Martin**, 32° and **Patrick McCormick**, 32° all traveled to Hastings by bus provided by the Scottish Rite and enjoyed seeing wonderful work performed by the Valley of Hastings, the Valley of Omaha, and the officers of the Grand Lodge of Nebraska.

This was a very special occasion for Nebraska Lodge #1 and for Masons in Nebraska as the Illustrious **Ronald A. Seale**, 33° Grand Commander Southern Jurisdiction Scottish Rite Masons posed for a keepsake memento for our 150th Year of Masons in Nebraska!



L-R: **Curt Edic**, 33° General Secretary Valley of Omaha; Illustrious **Ronald A. Seale**, 33° Grand Commander Southern Jurisdiction Scottish Rite Masons W.M.: **Pepper Aasgaard**, 32°-Worshipful Master; **Philip A Lorenzen**, 33° Past Grand Master; M.:W.: **Ivan Vrtiska**, 33° Grand Master

Nebraska Lodge #1 A:F.: & A:M.: 2005 Officers



Back Row(s) L-R:

W.: **Cary L. Manson** -Treasurer -Recorder Tangier Shrine; **John Brommer** -Junior Steward, M.:W.: **Philip A. Lorenzen**, PGM -Chaplain; **Dathe BENISSAN-MESSAN** -Senior Steward; **Reverend Bill Martin** -Installing Chaplain; **David Bean**, Marshal; W.: **Curtis Edic**, 33° General Secretary of the Omaha Valley of the Scottish Rite -Installing Marshal; **Yoni MENSAH**, Tyler,

Bottom Row L-R:

Not Pictured: **Thad Freeman**, Junior Deacon
R.:W.: **Ivan Vrtiska** - Deputy Grand Master of Masons in Nebraska; **Keith Neisler** -Senior Deacon; **Gregory Wells** -Senior Warden; W.: **Pepper Aasgaard** -Worshipful Master; **Sean Reed** -Junior Warden; W.: **Jack Duffield**, Secretary; W.: **Joseph M. Restivo** -Installing Secretary; **Yoni MENSAH** -Tyler.

Officers and Appointed Officers

Master (Elect)	W.: Pepper Aasgaard
Senior Warden (Elect)	Greg Wells
Junior Warden (Elect)	Sean Reed
Treasurer (Elect)	W.: Cary Mason
Secretary (Elect)	W.: Jack Duffield
Appointed	
Chaplain	Mr. W.: Philp A. Lorenzen
Senior Deacon	Keith Neisler
Junior Deacon	Thad Freeman
Senior Steward	Dathe BENISSAN-MESSAN
Junior Steward	John Brommer
Marshal	Dave Bean
Tyler	Yoni Mensah

Have News? Please notify us ~ Send us a digital picture or email it to:

webMaster@FirstLodge.com

For current updates and more Lodge information please visit our website:

wwwFirstLodge.com

150th Year of Masons in Nebraska Agenda

May 2005

Campout along the Missouri "Wilderness Days" 1854-1855 theme

Starts at 10:00am Saturday May 21st & 22nd 2005

Along the Two Rivers Camp Grounds (private camping)

June 2005

Past Master's Dinner

TBA , Invitations sent by May 15th, 2005

July 2005

50-60 Year Membership Dinner

TBA , Invitations sent by June 15th, 2005

(Proposed)

Frontier Days outside "Multiple Degrees" Ashland 1854-1855 theme

- Entered Apprentice Multiple-Degree 3:00 pm Saturday July 16th 2005
- Pig Roast Dinner 5:00 pm
- Fellow Craft "Under the Stars" 7:00 pm
- Master Mason Multiple-Degree Noon Saturday July 30th 2005

October 3rd 2005 150th Year ~ Ceremonial Lodge Opening in Bellevue.

We thank Bellevue Lodge 325 for all their support.

October 8th 2005 150th Year Chartering of Nebraska Lodge #1

- Historical Bus tour of Bellevue, the Old Court House 9:30am - Noon
- Lunch at Rick's Boatyard 12:30 pm return to SRMC at 2:00pm
- All-Nebraska Masonic Happy-Hour - Dinner and Ball, 6:00pm til 10:00pm
- Formal invitations will be sent to all sitting Masters of the Grand Lodge of Nebraska June 2005.

~Detailed Agenda Will be held at the Scottish Rite Masonic Center

8:30 am "Old" Sarpy County Court House Tour

Chartered bus will leave Scottish Rite at 9:00am. Sarpy County Historical Society will narrate tour. Symbolic opening and closing lodge at the Old Court House. Tour of the Old Court House and Museum.

12:00 Noon ~ Lunch at Rick's Boat Yard restaurant

Tour Bus will stop at the river restaurant to eat and enjoy fall colors.
Tour Bus will return visitors to the Scottish Rite by 2:00pm

6:00 pm 150 Years of Masons in Nebraska Masonic Ball

Scottish Rite Omaha: All Sitting Masters wear your Top hats! White Shirt and Ties (Formal wear Preferred).
Grand Lodge Officers and Other Grand Jurisdictions welcome to make Recognition Speeches during this night of dancing celebrations



Lyle Franklin Ward
Thanksgiving 2003

Lyle is Dancing with Yvonne!

Worshipful Brother Lyle F. Ward

Lyle will be missed by all those who ever had the opportunity or good fortune to meet him. Lyle was a very giving person, not only helping those less fortunate, but giving special guidance or a special surprise or unannounced visit, or just a kind word to make one's day.

A

Memorial Service was

held in Greenup, IL

July 31st 2004

Worshipful

Pepper Aasgaard

brought Lyle's ashes
back to his home town
along with the remaining

ashes of Lyle's beloved
wife Yvonne and were
spread over the graves

of Lyle's parents and
departed siblings

~ Promise Kept ~



Our Departed and Beloved

Donald M. Byington Deceased: 01/28/2005

Age 79 Departed January 28, 2005 ~ 46 year Master Mason

Robert B. Gates Deceased: 12/12/2004

Age 81 Departed December 12, 2004 ~ 51 year Master Mason

Hosman, Dale Deceased: 07/31/2004

Age 81 Departed July 31, 2004 ~ 55 year Master Mason

Lyle Franklin Ward Deceased: 06/21/2004

Age 87 Departed June 21, 2004 ~ 53 year Master Mason

Worshipful Brother Lyle Franklin Ward was Master of Nebraska Lodge #1
in 1990 and served many stations thereafter.

Caricatures of Characters



It has been a tradition for a Master of Nebraska Lodge #1 to receive a Caricature at the end of his term as Master; above are a few examples of such. We will be displaying as many Caricatures as we can during Our 150th Year Ceremonies. We ask you help us in locating missing **Caricatures** especially of our departed Past Masters, Thank you.

Up Coming Events!

We are busy with candidates most weeks ~ *Please visit us!*

First Monday:	<i>Business Meeting 7:30 pm</i>
Second Monday:	Entered Apprentice Degree(s)
Third Monday:	Fellow Craft Degree(s)
Fourth Monday:	Master Mason Degree(s)

... Other Fun Masonic Area Events

MAY 18 Scottish Rite Spring Outing at Papillion Gun Club
 MAY 20 Membership and Friendship Dinner Tangier Shrine
 MAY 22 Family Masonic Day at the ballpark and Zoo
 MAY 23 Scottish Rite Golf Outing Lake Shore CC Council Bluffs 12:30pm
 JUNE 6 Tangier's Potentate's Golf place TBA
 JUNE 11 Shrine Soccer Classic in Hastings
 JULY 23 Shrine Bowl Game—Lincoln

Past Meeting Highlight & Activities!

All Months had active degreework. . . No rest in sight!

Regular Communications Monday April 4th 2005

150th Year plan approved~ 60-50 Year Recognition Dinner motioned by W.:B.:Joseph Restivo, and extended to all members obtaining 50 years by W.:M.:Pepper Aasgaard are invited to the dinner [TBA June] by May 15th 2005

Regular Communications Monday March 7th 2005

School of Instruction month and practice for lodge proficiency.

Regular Communications Monday February 3rd 2005

Patrick McCormick was appointed legal Council for the Lodge

Regular Communications Monday January 3rd 2005

Michael Singleton, Rockford Lodge #469 in Rockford, TN visitor.

January 22nd 7:00pm West Omaha Masonic Center

Public Installation for 2005 Deputy Grand Master Ivan A. Vrtiska Presiding

Regular Communications Monday December 1st 2004

Special Election of Junior Warden for 2005

Annual Christmas Party for Officers

Regular Communications Monday November 1st 2004 ~ Election 2005

November business meeting featured our traditional Chili Feed along with our historically served New England style clam chowder. Pepper was most humbled to be re-elected Master for the 150th Year of Nebraska Lodge #1!

Regular Communications Monday October 4th 2004

Worshipful Master Pepper Aasgaard presided.

150th Year of Masons in Nebraska was formally kicked off with a reenactment of the 1854 request for special dispensation on October 9th, 2004. A delegation from Nebraska Lodge attended the Grand Lodge of Illinois.

Regular Communications Monday September 13th 2004

Worshipful Master Pepper Aasgaard motioned for the \$25,000.00 gifted to Nebraska Lodge by Lyle Ward to be put in a perpetual Memorial Fund established and named in honor of W.:Lyle F. Ward Past Master 1990, And that only 60% of the prior year's fund earnings could be used for the relief of those who need assistance, or for the good of Masonry. The motion was seconded, reviewed and passed unanimously.



Peter Sarpy's Trading Post ~ Bellevue, Nebraska Territory 1855

It was here at Bellevue in 1855, in the two story "Trading Post", made of logs and operated by Peter A. Sarpy, that the first meetings of a Masonic Lodge were held in Nebraska Territory.

In the spring of 1854, it was established that among these settlers there were several members of our Ancient Craft. Included were seven persons who, after some consultation resolved together to petition the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Illinois for a dispensation that would give them authority to establish a Masonic Lodge in the community of Bellevue.

The seven known persons were Brother Addison R. Gillmore, Lathrop B. Kinney, Leavitt L. Bowen, Patrick J. McMahon, George Hepner, Abner W. Holister and Almarin Lockwood.

According to Brother A.R. Gillmore the first formal action taken to introduce organized Masonry into Nebraska Territory took place in November, 1854. The occasion was a preliminary meeting of Craftsmen for the purpose of taking initial steps necessary to procure a dispensation and the consequent authority to establish a "Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, at Bellevue, then in Douglas, but now (1854) in Sarpy County". Present at this meeting which was convened in Green, Kinney and Co's log store located in St. Marys, Mills County, Iowa, directly across the Missouri River from Bellevue, were Brothers Lathrop B. Kinney; Ex-governor Ansel Briggs, (probably of Iowa) but then a resident of Florence, Douglas County; Patrick J. McMahon, resident of Council Bluffs, Iowa; Almarin W. Lockwood, Trader's Point, Iowa; J.M. Gatewood, retired agent of the U.S. Indian Agency of the Omaha, Pawnee, and Otoe Tribes of Indians; George Hepner, U.S. Indian Agent; A.W. Holister, of Bellevue and Brother A. R. Gillmore, who referred to himself as "your humble servant".



The upper floor of the Old Sarpy County Court House Served as our Lodge for many years. The Lodge Members and guests Masons will tour this building on October 8th 2005



These brethren, after due and sufficient deliberation, drew up in "due form" a petition praying the Grand Lodge of Illinois to grant the petitioners a dispensation. It should be noted at this point a discrepancy in the names of the petitioners. In the account of Brother C.D. Keller, Committee member for the Nebraska Lodge No. 1, it was reported that a Brother A.H. Burtch had appended his signature. This petition was ordered to be sent to the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Illinois. Brother Gillmore visited in Chicago in December of 1854, and found that the petition had been received and was then in the hands of the Deputy Grand Master.

He thereupon arranged for the payment of the usual fees. After some little delay the dispensation was issued and the name of L. B. Kinney was inserted as the first Master of the Nebraska Lodge No. 184, Bellevue, Nebraska Territory. Brother Gillmore stated further in his report that on his return to Bellevue in April, 1855, he found the Lodge duly organized and holding its regular meetings the second and fourth Tuesday evenings of each month. Meetings were generally held in the second story of the Trading Post of General Sarpy, near the steamboat landing for the town of Bellevue.



The jewels were of tin and were made by Brother John A. Nye, the second Master of the lodge, and they are still preserved in the lodge's possession. In a letter written to Past Master Brother W.S. Heller on Dec. 22, 1899, and read at the anniversary of the first meeting of Nebraska Lodge Past Masters, Brother Nye says:

"The tin jewels I made seem to have carried as much glory in succession as though made from the gold of Ophir, like the Master Workman of the Temple. My clumsy hands fashioned the same tools for Denver, for Helena, and Deadwood, at their earliest meeting to organize a lodge. I was a pioneer at their staking and starting, so I recall the small incidents, though these more than forty years in the wilderness have been crowded full of events".