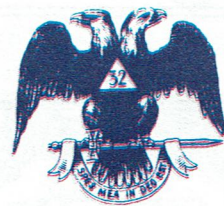




The Rite Light



Valley of Albany

Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, N.M.J., U.S.A.

Vol. XXIV

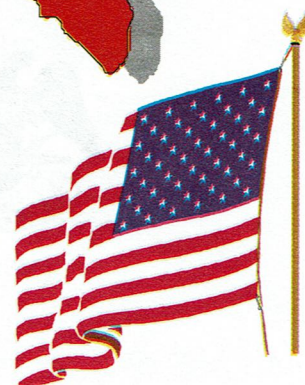
Spring, 2004

No.3

Spring Reunion - Saturday, April 24, 2004



**GOD BLESS
AMERICA**



NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL OF DELIBERATION

The bodies of the Scottish Rite, sitting in the Valley of Albany, State of New York acknowledge and yield allegiance to the Supreme Council, 33°, Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the United States of America, whose Grand East is in Lexington, Massachusetts and whose officers are:

III : Walter E. Webber, 33°
Sovereign Grand Commander

III : Lawrence D. Inglis, 33°
Grand Lieutenant Commander

III : Norman L. Christensen, 33°
Grand Minister of State

III : Harold L. Aldrich, 33°
Deputy for New York State

ACTIVE MEMBERS FOR NEW YORK

III : Gary A. Henningsen, 33°

III : Frederick D. Greene, 33°

III : David P. Spencer, 33°

III : Peter J. Samiec, 33°

ACTIVE EMERITI MEMBERS FOR NEW YORK

III : James F. Niehoff, 33°

III : Carlton A. Winchester, 33°
Past Deputy for New York

III : Bruce Widger, 33°
Past Deputy for New York

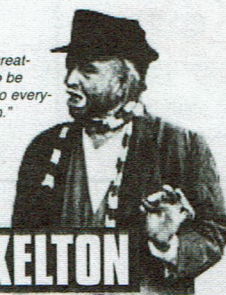
III : Richard H. Welkley, 33°

"I don't want to be called 'the greatest' or 'one of the greatest'. Let other guys claim to be the best. I just want to be known as a clown because to me, it means you can do everything -- sing, dance, and above all, make people laugh."

THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

by **RED SKELTON**

• Patriot • Painter • Author • Poet • Song Writer •
and **MASTER MASON**



"I - me, an individual, a committee of one.

Pledge - dedicate all my worldly goods to give without self pity.

Allegiance - my love and my devotion.

To the Flag - our standard, Old Glory, a symbol of freedom. Wherever she waves, there is respect because your loyalty has given her a dignity that shouts freedom is everybody's job.

Of the United - that means we have all come together.

States - individual communities that have united into 48 great states. 48 individual communities with pride and dignity and purpose, all divided with imaginary boundaries, yet united to a common purpose, and that's love for country.

Of America,

And to the Republic - a state in which sovereign power is invested in representatives chosen by the people to govern. And government is the people and it's from the people to the lenders, not from the lenders to the people.

For which it stands.

One nation - meaning so blessed by God.

Indivisible - incapable of being divided.

With liberty - which is freedom and the right of power to live one's own life without threats or fear of some sort of retaliation.

And justice - the principal or quality of dealing fairly with others.

For all - which means it's as much your country as it is mine.

"Since I was a small boy, two states have been added to our country and two words have been added to the Pledge Of Allegiance - 'under God'.

Wouldn't it be a pity if someone said, 'That's a prayer' and that would be eliminated from schools, too?"



Bro. Richard 'Red' Skelton, 33°, was raised a Master Mason in Vincennes Lodge No. 1, Vincennes, Indiana in 1939. He joined the Scottish Rite, Valley of Evansville, Indiana in 1940. In 1995, he received the Supreme Council's coveted Gorgas Medal.

His, now famous, explanation of the Pledge of Allegiance was first performed on his TV show, The Red Skelton Hour on January 14, 1969. (It won 42 awards and was twice read into the Congressional Record.)



**Do Your Part . . .
RECRUIT
A NEW MEMBER!**



COUNCIL OF DELIBERATION

State of New York
ANCIENT ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE OF FREEMASONRY
FOR THE NORTHERN MASONIC JURISDICTION
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



P. MICHAEL NIELSEN, 33°, Secretary
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Jamestown, NY 14701-9334

Phone: 716-569-3000
Fax: 716-569-3303
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March 22, 2004

Dear Brother:

Illustrious Harold L. Aldrich, 33°, Active Member of Supreme Council and Deputy for New York has directed that a special Memorial Fund be established for Brother William James. Brother James lost his life at the tragic incident in a Masonic Lodge Building on Long Island, March 8, 2004. He was a new member of the Valley of Rockville Centre.

The Memorial Fund will be handled via the Council of Deliberation Hospitaler and will be known as:

THE BROTHER WILLIAM JAMES MEMORIAL FUND

One of our duties is to assist the widow and orphans of a departed Brother. Please contribute to this fund to the best of your ability. Any amount, no matter how small, will be appreciated. The drive will terminate on July 17, 2004 during the Council of Deliberation session.

Please make checks payable to:

N.Y.S. COUNCIL OF DELIBERATION HOSPITALER FUND

Indicate: **Bro. William James Memorial Fund** on the check.

Mail your check to:

Rev. Richard C. Mills, Hospitaler
18 Retta Lane
Commack, NY 11725-4511

Fraternally,

P. Michael Nielsen, 33°, Secretary
NYS Council of Deliberation

From the Sovereign Prince

Robert H. Fickies
Sovereign Prince
Grand Council of Princes of Jerusalem

Belated Holiday greetings to all my Masonic brethren and your families! I pray for a peaceful and prosperous New Year for all. The Grand Council of Princes of Jerusalem got off to a fine start this season. The Rusty Brother Degree, presented by Schenectady Lodge members, was well done, and very entertaining. At our second meeting, I think we all learned a great deal from Quartermaster Sergeant Robert Shuey, 38th New York Volunteers, about life as a Civil War soldier.

Member attendance at both Council meetings was extremely disappointing to me. The same handful of brothers seems to be keeping the doors at all four bodies open. Given the total number of members within the Valley of Albany, this is very disheartening. As you read this, I ask that you make a note right now, to attend the Lodge meeting on February 5th, the Chapter Meeting on February 19th, or the Council meeting on March 4th. All that each of you need do is make a commitment to attend just one of these meetings, to make your officers feel that their efforts are not in vain.

I have recently taken on the task of creating a web site for the Valley of Albany. I have been designing web sites for a number of years. My design philosophy is to create a site that is quick to load, easy to navigate, and not only informs the visitor, but also educates him. I think I will achieve these goals with our site, which will not only tell the visitor about the unique history of the Valley of Albany, but also describes the history and architecture of our beautiful Albany Masonic Temple, and serves as a gateway to all of the Masonic resources available on the internet.

For our March 4th Council meeting, your Sovereign Prince will also be the featured speaker. This will be the premier presentation of "Masonry in Czarist Russia". This is a theme that has been in the back of my mind, since I was first lead, blindfolded and penniless, before the altar of King Solomon's Primitive Lodge No. 91, over 25 years ago.

As a young man in college, I had the opportunity to read Leo Tolstoy's novel, *War & Peace*. The memorable chapters in which Tolstoy describes the Masonic Fraternity as it existed in 19th century Russia was one reason I sought to become a Mason. On March 4th, I will share some of this great work with you. I do hope to see some new faces there.

Greetings from the Thrice Potent Master...

Ben F. Froggett
Thrice Potent Master
Ineffable & Sublime Grand Lodge of Perfection



As I look back at the year I must say a very large amen. The year was full of new challenges from every angle. I will not here report again about my Ladies health issues, but only say her Doctor used the word CURED on November 12, which was my 65th birthday, what a gift.

We have learned a new meaning to answered prayers at our house. I have always found it very rewarding to pray when asked at a Lodge meeting. I know of no better Mason when it comes

to saying a pray when asked at the drop of a hat then Fred B. Hill Jr. Freddie says it from his heart and it flows very beautifully. I remember a time when we traveled to New York City for a NYOSA meeting and the president asked if anyone would ask a blessing to start the meeting. One would have though you were with a group of ceiling and floor inspectors the why everyone was looking away.

Just this last March our Niece got married and the lady minister said a prayer that was so very special and I want to share it with you. It wasn't the whole prayer but these few though that left its mark on me.

- When I see a person without a home I thank the Lord for mine.
- When I see a person who is sick I thank the Lord for good health
- When I get ready to eat a great meal I ask the Lord provide for those in need
- When I look around at all I have I pray for those who have so little.

And when all is said and done I thank the Lord for everything under His sun.

I wish each of you peace, hope and above all LOVE.

Fraternal Greetings from the Most Wise Master



William M. Korn, 33°
Most Wise Master
Albany Sovereign Chapter
of Rose Croix



Dear Perfect Knights:

I thank the Officers and Brethren for your attendance (2 Chapter meetings) thus far this year. I believe that the programs provided at Scottish Rite meetings are improving and I encourage all our Brethren to attend. I especially thank the other Albany Valley Presiding Officers (Thrice Potent Master Ben Froggett, Sovereign Prince Robert Fickies, and the Commander-in-Chief Jerry Irwin) for their support of the other bodies.

Our next Conclave is February 19 and John Paterson will treat us to a presentation on the Champlain Canal System. I am sure the Knights will enjoy this talk. A presentation of a special degree - "A Rose upon the Altar" is scheduled for April 22.

Please make note of these dates and plan on attending.

Palm Sunday is April 4 this year and again we will observe the Feast of the Paschal Lamb. All Perfect Knights are encouraged to attend as we perform this symbolic observance in memory of our departed Brethren. I am encouraging the Cast to learn much of the Ceremony and some small changes observed from watching the Schenectady Valley will be instituted. The Ceremony will commence at 3:30 PM at the Albany Masonic Temple and a dinner will follow. Please plan on attending.

Our fall Scottish Rite REUNION was cancelled for October 18. It was cancelled due in part of my accident of which I am disappointed. The Spring REUNION WILL TAKE PLACE. It is scheduled for April 24, 2004. The Degrees that were to be performed last fall will be done this spring. Please get those petitions in.

Finally, I look forward to seeing and greeting each of you this winter.

Further Ramblings from the Commander-in-Chief

Gerald F. Irwin
Commander-in-Chief
Albany Sovereign Consistory



The fall season slipped by so quickly that I barely noticed.... I guess these things happen as we get older. Many times it's been said that time waits for no man, but especially not for your Commander-in-Chief.

Our fall season in the Valley of Albany has been one of informative and inspirational Masonic programs. The presiding officers have done a superb job in planning and executing their programs. We have seen marvelous DeMolay ceremonies, degree read-throughs and exemplifications, and presentations of general Masonic and Scottish Rite interest. Our spring season will prove to be no less interesting.

On the administrative front, our Valley's computer system has settled into its new home after a period of balkiness. Our Valley Secretary, Brother Mike Derry, 32' has worked thru the difficulties and has completed updating our dues collections with the Supreme Council. It is our belief that the extra billings for dues that were received by many Brothers are now a thing of the past.

An exciting development is the existence of the first Internet Web site for our Valley. Brother Bob Fickies, our Sovereign Prince, has been the creative force behind this new offering and is serving as its Webmaster. I am sure he will tell you more about it in his article.

Always on the unpredictable side, our schedule of events outside of our regular meetings went into upheaval mode. Ill. Brother Bill Korn, 33', our Most Wise Master and the Valley's director of degrees, had a serious motorcycle accident and was out of commission for an extended period. His slow recuperation from the accident and a lack of sufficient candidates forced us to cancel our Fall Reunion, which was originally scheduled for October 18.

The Spring Reunion will be held on Saturday, April 24, 2004. The schedule of Degrees will be the same as were planned for the Fall. For those who do not remember, these degrees are the 10th, 14th, 15th, 18th, 24th, and 32nd. Degree Directors please be prepared, and Brothers please say yes if you are asked to participate. Enthusiastic participation is a key ingredient to a

successful program. And for Reunions, another needed ingredient is a class of candidates. Please be on the lookout for brothers who would make good Scottish Rite members!

A planned testimonial for our newest MSA, James M Fuller, was also scrapped when Jim was seriously injured in a boating accident. He underwent many hours of surgery and has only recently returned to work full time at his print shop. Plans are currently in the making for rescheduling this event and will be forthcoming shortly.

The Consistory's spring schedule is as follows:

April 1, 2004 – we will attempt to read through the new 22', which is a degree presented entirely musically.

May 6, 2004 – I will present a follow-on program to the Lodge program on December 4, which will be a discussion of the writings of our Brother Albert Pike. A fall program on General Pike consisted of a very informative video that described in detail the personal and Masonic philosophies of this preeminent Mason. But there may just be more to this man than meets the eye....

As always your personal enthusiastic participation in our Valley's program is desired and appreciated.

That's all for now. See you at one of our programs.

From the Secretary's Desk...

My Brothers,

The past four months have been a time of learning experiences. Although I was Secretary of my lodge for ten years, that was fifteen years ago and the task of being Valley Secretary is more complex than the former responsibility. The good news is that it is making sense. The bad news is that I still have much to learn, so please bear with me as I continue to progress in my understanding of the working of our Scottish Rite bodies.

A guest speaker at Chapter recently spoke of the need for us to become well informed as Masons. It occurred to me that we owe it to our fraternity to search for knowledge so that we may present our fraternity to uninformed non-members effectively. We all have varying degrees of knowledge, but sadly, too often it is relatively superficial. We know that we belong to a great fraternity that helps to make good men better, that we are benevolent and charitable, and that we enjoy good fellowship. But what do we know beyond that which sets us apart from social organizations? Perhaps those among us who are best informed could present us with deeper meaning during the program portion of our meetings or instructional sessions at a special meeting. It might encourage greater attendance if the membership knew that they would achieve a more complete understanding of their beloved craft. Another option might be for those who are most informed to provide our Editor with articles for inclusion in the Rite Light, thereby reaching all members. Whatever the means, we should strive to increase our understanding of Masonry.

The heads of the coordinate bodies have been working diligently to provide programs that are informative or entertaining. There seems to be an emphasis on program content and

Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite, N.M.J., U.S.A.
VALLEY OF ALBANY
Michael D. Derry, Secretary
67 Corning Place
Albany, New York 12207-1999

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members are finding greater value than they would from simply a business meeting. I encourage every member who is physically able, to attend and share in the light and fellowship that exists.

Sincerely and Fraternally,
Michael D. Derry, Secretary



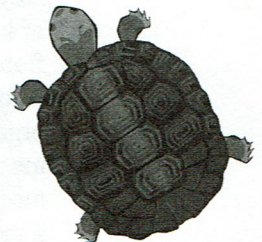
And From the Administrative Side...

Sublime Princes,

Notices will soon be sent to members who have not yet paid their 2004 dues. This will be a third reminder and hopefully, will prompt payments by all who are in arrears.

It is unfortunate that we need to incur the cost of first class postage two and three times. We are trying to control expenses as much as possible and payment of dues "bills" within 30 days of receipt would certainly help.

If a member wishes to be removed from our membership rolls, we would appreciate receiving a request to do so. Certainly, we hope this doesn't happen, but if it is desired, we will honor that request without a hassle. When a member does not pay dues, we must still pay his fees and assessments to the Northern Jurisdiction of our Grand Council. We would much prefer issuing a demit than suspending a member for non-payment after we have paid his fees to Lexington for two years and sending multiple dues reminders.



At last...Our Testimonial Dinner...

Make plans now to attend the Testimonial Dinner for the Valley's newest MSA, Jim Fuller. The Dinner will be on May 22, 2004 at the Masonic Temple in East Greenbush. There will be hot and cold hors d'ouvres with the entrée stuffed breast of chicken. All for \$18. Please mail reservations to the Valley of Albany at:

P.O. Box 263 Central Bridge, NY 12035. Reservations must be accompanied by a check and there will be no "walk-ins". Phone number or e-mail address should accompany reservations.

