



Chapter Notes

Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas



Fall 2023

Michael N. Terry, MEGHP 2023-2024



Summer Activities

Well, another summer has come and gone. I hope you and your families had an enjoyable summer. This summer I attended several Annual meetings. The Rainbow Girls' Grand Assembly and the Kansas DeMolay State Conference were well attended by the young women and young men along with their sponsors and both organizations look to have a bright future.

The 27th Annual Great Plains Rendezvous was well attended. There were Companions from Kansas, Wyoming, Colorado, Oklahoma, and Texas participating in the Rendezvous. It was a great turn out and fun was had by all.

We completed the Grand Master's Classes for new Chapter Companions this summer. There were 109 men registered to attend. The degrees were conferred on 84 new Mark Masters and Past Masters. There were 47 masons who were exalted to the Holy Royal Arch Mason degree. This is a huge influx of new Companions in the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas. This brings our current membership to 773 Companions with 15 active Chapters within the State of Kansas.

An example of what these new Companions mean to our Chapters happened at my last local Chapter meeting. We usually have 9-10 Companions attending our monthly meetings. During our last meeting we had 15 Companions attend the meeting and 7 of these Companions were from the Grand Master's Class. They were eager to fill chairs and learn.

I am looking forward to attending the South Central Conference and know it will be a good time. I hope to see some of you there.

Lastly, when I look back at the article I am writing, I remember why all this happened. The Ladies and Men who support the Masonic Youth Organizations. The Companions who drove from Texas and Oklahoma each time there was degree work for the Grand Master's Class. The countless hours spent by several Kansas Companions who made sure the degree work was done to the best of everyone's ability. These Ladies and Men give tirelessly of themselves to make sure that the Kansas Masons and the Subordinate organizations have a solid future.

Michael N. Terry
M.:E.: Grand High Priest 2023-2024



Triennial Update

The General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons International held their 72nd Triennial convocation in Branson, Missouri on August 15, 2023, at Chateau On The Lake. The Grand Chapter of Kansas was well represented at the meetings. Those in attendance included Most Excellent Companions Wayne Rolf, Wayne Price, and Mike Bennett, all Past Grand High Priests, with Excellent Companions, John Staton, Grand King, Patrick Carr, Grand Principal Sojourner, and Companions L. Kent Needham, and Wayne Drake.



Most Excellent Companion Price was reappointed as the Representative for Kansas. Michael Watts of Louisiana was appointed as the District Deputy General Grand High Priest for the South Central Region.

The elections for the General Grand Officers for the ensuing year were cast and those elected were Teko Foley, General Grand High Priest, Chadwick Burks, General Grand King, Reed Fanning of Utah, General

Scribe, Dick Browning, General Grand Recorder, and Bobby Kitchens, General Grand Treasurer.

The meetings were both fun and educational. While this is an event which is only held every three years, it is important for our membership to attend the next triennial, which will be held in 2026. It is a great time of fellowship and fun at these meetings.





Degree Work



There have been several Master Masons who took the first two degrees of Capitular Masonry who were unable to attend the degree completion day at Emporia, Kansas. Because of this, several constituent Chapters of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas have been working together to assist those who desire to complete their Chapter degrees and move forward. Be sure to watch the Grand York Rite

website for more information on these dates and locations.

Local Chapter Degree Work

On Tuesday, August 8, 2023, the Junction City York Rite had a meeting and opened Junction City Chapter No. 7 for degree work. The Companions of Junction City Chapter conferred the Mark Master degree on Brother Dakota Crider and Brother Jeff Black. Congratulations to the Chapter for their degree work and to the new Mark Masters!



Grand Chapter History

The archives of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas bring us much insight into the history of Capitular Masonry in Kansas. The Grand High Priest of 1885, M.E. Companion George S. Green, of Manhattan Chapter No. 14, in his address to the Grand Chapter on its 20th Annual Convocation made some interesting comments.

The Grand Chapter had a little more than 50 chapter in Kansas with only 39 present at the meeting. There were 2,500 members of Capitular Masonry listed on the rolls for the year. This was good news for a young and fledgling Grand Chapter.

The Grand High Priest was a little upset by the state of some of the work being done. He commented on the degree conferrals having a "disposition to regard the time as an opportunity for fun, rather than for the inculcation of the true spirit of Royal Arch Masonry." It would appear, on the surface, our fellow Companions desired to have a little too much fun when working the beautiful degrees and lacked the necessary and proper focus to make the ceremonies of the degrees the solemn, yet beautiful, part of the work we have all come to love.

We have learned much from this lesson and we confer the degrees in the modern era with the decorum and honor required. This could be, in part, thanks to our M.E. Companion of almost 150 years prior. We do learn and we make changes and adjustments accordingly.



A Brief History of the Holy Royal Arch Degree

The history of the Holy Royal Arch Degree, like many other degrees, has several versions and dates of its origin being recorded and witnessed in various parts of the world.

The first written history we see of the conferral of the Holy Royal Arch Degree comes to us from Ireland. The January 14, 1744 edition of Faulkner's Dublin Journal stated during the St. John's Day Masonic Parade of December 27, 1743, two "Excellent Masons" marched through the streets carrying a "Royal Arch."

The oldest chapter known to exist is Stirling Rock Royal Arch Chapter No. 2 located in Bridge of Allan, Scotland. This chapter traces its earliest documented meetings to July 30, 1743. This leads one to believe there must be an earlier date for the conferral of the degree before the 1743 date given in both Ireland and Scotland.

There is no mention or appearance of the degree in England until the schism between the Ancients and the Moderns in 1738. Since there was no organized body of masons conferring the degree who were past masters, it had been decided by the Ancients, only those who passed the chair were eligible to learn the secrets of the degree. Because of this, the creation of the Virtual Past Master Degree was created and put into use.

In 1744, Fifield D'assigny wrote a book concerning how far freemasonry had fallen during his time within the Craft. He wrote about a new mason who had visited Dublin and claimed to be a Master of the Royal Arch and brought the degree to Dublin from York. In 1740, D'assigny wrote this mason had even managed to start a spurious capitular rite which appeared legitimate, until another brother who had actually taken the Holy Royal Arch Degree appeared and managed to set the spurious mason to task. The local masons, who were not amused at having an illegitimate rite's degree conferred on them, subsequently expelled the mason.

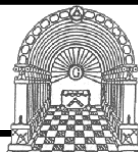
In 1792, the Premier Grand Lodge of London was noted as stating, "that the Grand Lodge of England has nothing to do with the proceedings of the Society of Royal Arch Masons." By 1813, the reconciliation of the two old Grand Lodges, that of the Ancients and the Moderns, was had and the United Grand Lodge of England was formed. In 1813, two bodies of Royal Arch Masons were in existence and they formally united together in 1817 as the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of England.

It would appear there is no generally agreed upon date for the first conferral of the degree, because of the passage of so much time. This should not deter our interest in this beautiful degree which completes the journey of the Master Mason in the third degree.



Council Cliff Notes

Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of Kansas



Fall 2023

Gary A. Mason., MIGM 2023-2024



From the Illustrious Grand Master

By now we would have held all of the Grand Master classes for the three York Rite Bodies. The Grand Council degrees were held in Hays, Kansas this year where Cryptic Masons from Kansas, Colorado and Wyoming gather together to perform the Royal, Select and Super Excellent Master Degrees on new Companions and some who were waiting to receive the Super Excellent Master Degree only. By the time the day was over and after much fellowship between everyone in attendance, 44 new members were

greeted as Cryptic Masons from the jurisdictions of Kansas, Colorado and Wyoming. Congratulations to all of the new members for continuing their journey.

The next event that is planned is a trip to a place referenced on-line as Masonic Mountain. Everyone will know this as Pike's Peak named after the man who documented the mountain during his exploration of the Louisiana Purchase territory. That man was Zebulon Pike who is a Brother Mason from Lodge #3 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

On September 10th, Masons from Kansas, and their Ladies, will make the trip to Pike's Peak to hold the Annual Pike's Peak Time Capsule Inspection. The original time capsule was placed on the summit in 1899 and was opened in 1999. If you have never been before, try to make it at least once. The view from top of the mountain is a breathtaking experience and it has been said that when the air is clear you can see five different states at on time.

For now be safe and try to stay cool from this extended heat wave we are having so that we can get back to doing Masonic work and having great fellowship with one another. On a side note, since schools have started up be, careful around buses when kids are getting on and off.

Gary Mason
M.:I.: Grand Master 2023-2024



Council Triennial Update



The General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons International held their 42nd Triennial convocation in Branson, Missouri on August 14, 2023, at Chateau On The Lake. The Grand Council of Kansas had several members in attendance and was well represented at the meetings. Those in attendance included Most Illustrious Companions Wayne Rolf, Past Illustrious Grand Master and John Staton, Past Illustrious Grand Master, with Right Illustrious Companion L. Kent

Needham, Deputy Grand Master, Wayne Drake, Grand Conductor of the Council, and Patrick Carr, Grand Marshall.

Most Illustrious Companion Wayne Rolf was appointed to continue as the Representative from Kansas.

The elections were held and the following Companions were elected to serve the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons International for the following Triennial session:

Most Puissant Grand Master William Snyder, Right Illustrious Companions G. Thomas Taylor, Deputy General Grand Master, Right Illustrious Companion Keith Powell of Louisiana, General Grand Principal Conductor of the Work, Right Illustrious Companion Mark Irwin, General Grand Recorder, and Right Illustrious Companion Chuck McCollum, General Grand Treasurer. Buddy Guidry of Louisiana will serve as the Regional District General Grand Master for the South Central Region.





Great Plains Rendezvous

The Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of Kansas, together with the Grand Councils of Colorado and Wyoming, held their annual Great Plains Rendezvous meeting in Hays, Kansas at the Masonic Temple. The three degrees of Royal



Master, Select Master, and Super Excellent Master were all conferred in full form upon those candidates who had attended the Grand Master's Royal Arch Mason class a few weeks earlier in Emporia, Kansas. There were 47 members who attended the Rendezvous and who were now ready and qualified to receive the Orders of Christian Knighthood.

Others who attended and received the Super Excellent Master degree included many Cryptic Masons who had not received this beautiful and honorary degree. This degree is a pageant which is conferred in a public setting and tells an important story of the Babylonian captivity of the Jewish people and the importance of prophesy.

From the Grand Council Archives

The proceedings from the 1885 Annual Assembly of the Most Illustrious Grand Council of Kansas, which was held in Emporia, has some interesting information within its pages.

There were only 10 councils within the jurisdiction at this time, and all were present at the 2:00 PM convening of the Grand Council. The Most Illustrious Grand Master, Companion Jacob DeWitt of Newton Council No. 9, stated the future was bright for Cryptic Masonry within the jurisdiction. He noted in his address to the Cryptic Masons gathered, "the reports of our Subordinate Councils show marked accessions to our numbers, yet it is worthy of notice that these accessions are mainly in our younger councils; and the question arises, why is this so?" The M.I. Grand Master noted the older Councils had seemed to tire of the diligent labors required in the Secret Vault, while the younger Councils showed much zeal and fervency for their degrees and institution. He was buoyed by his belief the Councils would be strengthened in numbers and inspired with new zeal for the work.

After witnessing the last year in Cryptic Masonry in Kansas, we can see the zeal for which this jurisdiction has come together to confer the Grand Master's classes and the degrees of Cryptic Masonry on the newly made Companions of the Secret Vault.



The History of the Super Excellent Master Degree

The Super Excellent Master Degree is a beautiful and moving degree which is held and conferred under the Cryptic Degrees of the York Rite. In some jurisdictions, it is entirely a degree, while in others, it is allowed as a pageant where those who are not masons may attend and witness a part of the beauty and history of the degree. Regardless of the jurisdiction, there is a history associated with the first use of the Super Excellent Master Degree.

The earliest conferrals of this degree can be found in Charleston, South Carolina, and in use by the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. It was conferred by the Inspector Generals as a side degree and not a formal degree of the Scottish Rite. Later the degree was moved and conferred by the American York Rite of Freemasonry. The degree is not a mandatory degree within the Cryptic Rite. Rather it is a degree which is conferred on occasion and not as a mandatory degree required for advancement within the York Rite.

At the June, 1873 Convention of Royal and Select Masters, held in New York, it was decided the degree would be an honorary degree which could be conferred by a Council if they so desired.

Thus the Super Excellent Master Degree became a part of the Cryptic Rite of Masonry. Because of this degree being held as a part of the Cryptic Degrees, the Scottish Rite gave up their conferral of the degree as a part of their ceremonies. It is now a part of the Cryptic Rite and is conferred on many occasions throughout the world.

It continues to be a beautiful degree which tells a timeless story. If you have never had the opportunity to take the degree, please be sure to attend one of the annual conferrals of the degree here in Kansas. It is conferred every year at the Great Plains Rendezvous where the Grand Councils of Kansas, Wyoming, and Colorado gather to work the degrees of Cryptic Masonry.

