

# News of the Ark

A Monthly Publication of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas



## From the Grand Scribe

Right Excellent Companion Andrew G. Mosley, Grand Scribe

*The Most Excellent Grand High Priest has asked the current Grand Chapter Officers to write articles each month for this supplement.*



We have all been at a meeting or at a new lodge and spent a little time perusing the photos on the walls, looking back at masonry of the past and thinking, gosh - wish it was still like that. All those members at a meeting or event, what happened? Spending time trying to decipher the secret to bring us back to the heyday of freemasonry. Wish I had the answer for you, but maybe we can start to look to our future rather than our past.

Here in Kansas we have three tremendous youth organizations: Job's Daughters, Rainbow Girls, and DeMolay. Just like us, they to are struggling with rising costs, dwindling membership, and not enough time in the day. These groups do make up a substantial pathway to our future. Demolay introduces a wide range of young men to our fraternity. I personally have had several Job's Daughters say to me, "The man I marry has to be a Mason."

The last two years at our Grand Session, we have included some of our youth leaders. The response from those kids has been truly heartwarming. Many have said how honored they were to participate, and it meant so much that we as Masons thought to include them. The purpose of this article is to plead with each of you to think about including our youth and bringing the unity that is such a hot topic here in Kansas, thanks to our Most Worshipful Grand Master. There are many ways that we can positively interact with our youth: have them serve a meal at your Blue Lodge or York Rite meetings, ask them to come speak for your education, invite them to team up with you in a fundraiser or other activity sponsored by your group, or reach out and ask how you or your brothers can help.

We are a brotherhood but also a masonic family. Our Kansas Grand York Rite strategic plan is aptly entitled "Securing Our Future", and including our youth and fostering relationships with our youth orders will help to do just that. We as companions have a wealth of knowledge and experience to share, not just with our new members, but with our future ones as well. Sharing our time and our lodge halls costs us nothing, but gains us everything.

*Andrew Mosley*

July, 2026

Gary B. Strout,  
Most Excellent  
Grand High Priest

2026-2027

# The Formation of the Grand Chapter

When Masons gather together, their need to continue their search for knowledge and masonic light is at a heightened sense. This was found to be as true in the newly formed state of Kansas as it was elsewhere in the United States. The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Kansas, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, formed in 1856, was the first Grand Lodge located within what was previously the Kansas Territory. There were freemasons who attended lodges and lived within the territory prior to the formation of the Grand Lodge of Kansas in 1856. As early as 1854, there was masonic activity already starting to officially appear within the territory. Once the Grand Lodge of Kansas was formed, the first Grand Master, Richard R. Rees, was installed and the work of the Grand Lodge of Kansas began in earnest.



With the Grand Lodge of Kansas firmly in place, there was no doubt the degrees of Royal Arch Masonry would soon make their way into Kansas. The Holy Royal Arch degree was considered to be an impressive honor within the Craft. Only those who were Past Masters of their lodge could be considered for membership in the Holy Royal Arch. This was an English tradition, and by the time of the Grand Lodge of Kansas' formation, it was only a custom. The Holy Royal Arch degree was open to all Master Masons who desired to take the degrees and join a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons. With this in mind, Royal Arch Masonry arrived in Kansas shortly after the formation of the Grand Lodge in 1856.

The first Chapter of Royal Arch Masons was granted a dispensation to form and begin work in Leavenworth, Kansas. Their dispensation was granted on January 24, 1857, by the General Grand High Priest, Most Excellent Companion Charles Gilman. While this was the first dispensation granted to a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, the Leavenworth Chapter was not the first to receive a charter. On May 18, 1859, Washington Chapter No. 1 of Atchison, Kansas was given a dispensation to form. After several years of success, Washington Chapter No. 1 was issued the first charter to perform work as Royal Arch Masons on September 14, 1859. Leavenworth Chapter received their charter on September 8, 1865, and Fort Scott Chapter No. 3 received their charter in September 1865. With three Royal Arch Chapters operating, the time was right to form a Grand Chapter for the State of Kansas.

A convention was called and the three Chapters gathered in Leavenworth for the purpose of taking the necessary measures and steps to organize the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas. It was decided the officers for the Grand Chapter would be Richard R. Rees (Leavenworth Chapter), Grand High Priest, Jacob Saqui (Washington Chapter), Deputy Grand High Priest, Z. Rosenfield (Fort Scott Chapter), Grand King, S.T. Walters (Washington Chapter), Grand Scribe, Moses S. Adams (Leavenworth Chapter), Grand Treasurer, and Erasmus T. Carr (Leavenworth Chapter), Grand Secretary.

The Chapters held a second convention on February 26, 1855, and a communication from the Deputy General Grand High Priest, Ira A.W. Buck, was read. The communication affirmed the earlier actions from the delegation in January and created and constituted the Grand Chapter of Kansas. After the formation of the Grand Chapter of Kansas, the By-Laws for the Grand Chapter were presented, ratified, and adopted.

By the First Grand Annual Convocation of the Most Excellent Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the State of Kansas, which was held in Topeka at the Masonic Hall on October 18, 1866, the growth within the state was starting to become evident. There were now six subordinate Chapters operating under the auspices of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter. Three of the Chapters were the ones present at the formation of the Grand Chapter, while Lawrence Chapter No. 4, Topeka Chapter No. 5, and Wyandotte Chapter No. 6. were Chapters under dispensation at the beginning of the Convocation. By the closing of the convocation, they were given their charters and numbers. There were 226 Royal Arch Masons in Kansas by this first Grand Convocation.

Most Excellent Companion R. R. Rees, the first Grand High Priest, gave an outstanding annual address to the gathered delegates at the convocation. Rees told the congregates of the desire of the Chapters to improve upon their ritual work, and to attempt to create a unified ritual for the Grand Chapter of Kansas to work with. Rees spoke of those members who had passed to the great beyond during the last year and offered condolences for the honored dead. Rees spoke about the universality of freemasonry and Royal Arch Masonry. He stated mentioned his desire for all to be bound together in the sacred tie and to freely grasp the hands of "Christian, Mohammedan, of Jew" and all who would cross the threshold of masonry.<sup>5</sup> He encouraged the members to embrace the four cardinal virtues and raise a helping hand to the orphan. He closed with the words, "Then will our fraternity live imperishable, and stand a beacon-light to all good men for ages upon ages yet to come; and that it may be so, may the God of our fathers in His infinite mercy decree. Amen."<sup>6</sup> Wise and wondrous words of both caution and inspiration were set on that first convocation by the Grand High Priest.