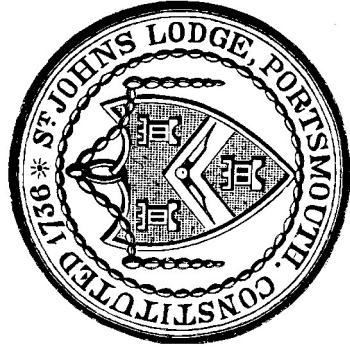
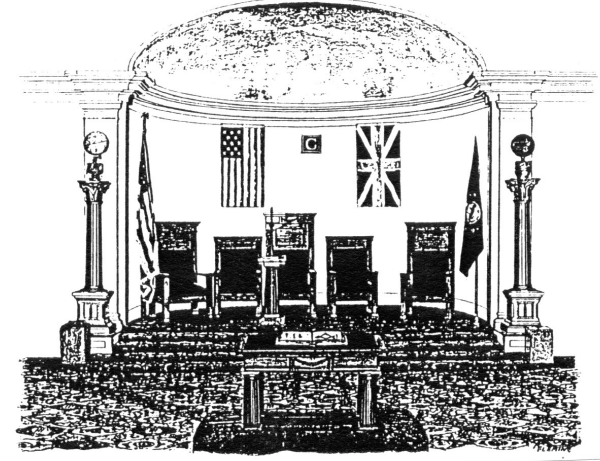


St. John's Lodge, No. 1, F&AM
351 Middle St
Portsmouth, NH 03801



Stamp

February 2024



February 2024 Trestle Board

St. John's Lodge No. 1
Portsmouth, NH

The Master's Message

Well my first Stated Communication as Worshipful Master of St. John's Lodge #1 is in the books! I enjoyed it very much, and I thank all of the Past Masters, Officers and Brethren who made its success possible.

Sitting in the East is a heady experience. As Worshipful Master I get to govern the Lodge from an elevated throne with the Volume of the Sacred Law open and illuminated before me — an arrangement that represents, in an echo of the divine anointing of kings, a communion with the grace and wisdom of Deity so important that nothing may interrupt this mystical connection even for the brief instant it takes a Brother to pass between the altar and the East.

On a more mundane level, the Brethren, including those with long and impressive Masonic resumes, mastery of ritual, or years of service to the business and property needs of the Lodge, cheerfully defer to my judgements. They address me with an honorific that, in our Lodge, carries the weight of nearly three hundred years of distinguished service. And even the dinner menu is mine to choose.

With all this elevated status, it's easy to see the risk of a Worshipful Master becoming overbearing or not letting go at the end of his term and continuing to expect the Lodge to run as he once directed. So why adhere to all the courtly etiquette and protocol when in truth the Worshipful Master's role is largely to speak ritual lines that anyone so inclined could memorize, and the Lodge, with an able Secretary and a few committees, could do just fine with a Worshipful Master functioning as an ordinary chairman?

The simple answer is because we take turns being in that lofty station. And the turn is short. It offers the opportunity for any of us, whatever our status in the world, to be briefly at the helm of an ancient undertaking and embody its aspirations. For those of us fortunate enough to do so, it teaches us about ourselves and compels us to rise to the occasion.

But most importantly, it teaches us to let go. With all the salutes and niceties, honors previously reserved for another just a short time ago, the Brethren, and the Past Masters in particular, teach the Worshipful Master by example how to honor, support and be of service to his successor when the time comes. And although I probably deserve some ribbing for contemplating the end of my turn so early in it, my aspiration in the years to follow is to achieve the wisdom, courtesy and helpfulness of our Past Masters and quietly emulate them. So mote it be.

Fraternally,

Worshipful Alan D. Ammann

Masonic Travels



The Worshipful Master was delighted to welcome first time visitor to St. John's Lodge, Brother Emerson Garcia of Humanidade e Concordia Lodge #110 of the Grand Orient of Brazil, and his son Igor Garcia. While Igor is not yet a Mason, he is a fellow alumnus of the Worshipful Master's chapter of Sigma Nu fraternity, which is how they connected for his father's visit.

Game Night



Game Night at the Lodge was a complete success! We started with pizza and refreshments downstairs in the pub room and then moved to the third floor for pool and a classic movie on the TV—Antonio Banderas in *Desperado*

Master Masons Lodge re-opened. With no further business to come before the brethren, the Lodge was closed in due form and harmony.

Hubert Scott Bickford was born on May 8, 1885 in Portsmouth, the older of two sons of Walter M. and Etta C. (White) Bickford of New Castle. Hubert and his brother Melvin lived with their parents on Islington Street in downtown Portsmouth and graduated from Portsmouth High School. For more than 25 years Hubert was employed as a clerk at Wendells Hardware Store located at 2 Market Square in Portsmouth and later retired from the Walter S. Jackson Hardware Store located at 111 Market Street in Portsmouth (later to move to the Route 1 Bypass in Kittery). He attended the North Church of Portsmouth and married Bertha Hunt on September 15, 1925. Bertha was born in Trowbridge, England, and moved to Portsmouth in 1903. Hubert and Bertha lived at 503 State Street in Portsmouth for many years. He died at his home on February 1, 1963 of a heart attack; he was 77 years old. Bertha died on March 11, 1966 at the age of 80 years; she and Hubert are buried in the South Cemetery in Portsmouth. Brother Hubert was a good man, a hard-working and well-liked citizen of the seacoast, and an active member of the Masonic fraternity. He was Raised a Master Mason in St. John's Lodge on March 5, 1924. Bertha was also an active member of the Masonic family and was a longtime member of Rivermouth Chapter, Order of Eastern Star.

**Alan M. Robinson, PM
Historian**

February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

Stated Communication

Wednesday, February 7, 2024

(Dinner 6:00, Meeting 7:00)

Dinner—Beef Stew

Officer dress—white tie and tails

Collation to follow

EA Rehearsal

Date TBA

Special Communication

Entered Apprentice Degree

Wednesday, February 28, 2024

(Dinner 6:00, Meeting 7:00)

Dinner—Meatloaf

Officer dress—white tie and tails

**Contact
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St. John's Lodge

Historical Sketch

Hubert Scott Bickford

One hundred years ago this month, Wor. Chauncey Cheever Hodgdon was fully engaged in serving as the 77th master of St. John's Lodge, No. 1, in Portsmouth. Known to everyone as "Chan," he was Wor. Clifton L. Hodgdon's grandfather and my great uncle.

On February 6, 1924, Wor. Chan opened the 3,429th, a stated communication of the Lodge, at the usual time of 7:00 pm at Freemasons Hall on Congress Street in downtown Portsmouth. As was customary for a stated meeting, he opened the Lodge in the Third Degree of Masonry in due form. Following the regular business of the Lodge, he read petitions for membership from Arthur Hilton Vennard (age 47), Norman Rollins Beane (age 24) and George Henry Manley (age 42) and referred them to an investigating committee.

The treasurer, Wor. Fred C. Tucker, submitted his tenth annual report of the fund for the care of the Root children. It showed receipts for the year of just over \$1,989 and expenditures of just under \$1,802. He reported that he had recently received two donations to the fund for 1924, the first from Bektash Temple Shrine for \$300, and the second from DeWitt Clinton Commandery, Knights Templar, for \$175. The Commandery's donation represented the proceeds from their annual Christmas observance. The Lodge then voted to make their annual contribution of \$200 to this important fund from the income of its charity funds.

The Master presented his plans for the Lodge to honor the memory of Brother George Washington. As you may recall, Brother Washington received his Masonic degrees over a nine-month period in Fredericksburg Lodge, No. 4 in Fredericksburg, Virginia, and was raised a Master Mason on August 4, 1753. One of the ways St. John's Lodge intended to honor our distinguished brother and first president was to host a traveling Bible from Equity Lodge, No. 878, in Chicago. The so-called Equity Traveling Bible was making its way around the country visiting two lodges in each state with plans to eventually arrive at, and be a

presented to, the George Washington Masonic Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia, which was then under construction. The Equity Traveling Bible had visited 80 lodges so far and the Master announced that it would be received in St. John's Lodge on May 7, 1924 when a special program in honor of Brother Washington would be presented.

The Master further announced plans for a special observance of Brother Washington's birthday to be held on February 21, 1924 at the Masonic Home located at 351 Middle Street in Portsmouth. Members and their ladies were invited to assemble at the Home for a reception in honor of the ladies of the lodge, and in celebration of the anniversary of the birth of Brother Washington.

Jumping ahead to February 21... The Masonic Home was beautifully decorated for the very large gathering that attended. The Masonic orchestra played throughout the evening. The Aeolian Male Quartette of Boston and Portsmouth, assisted by Miss Frances Johnson of Boston as reader, provided exceptional entertainment under the direction of Brother Leon A. Robinson. Delicious cakes and ices specially prepared for the celebration and decorated with small silk American flags were enjoyed by all. The entertainment included: orchestral selections including "Onward March;" selected readings by Miss Johnson; and several songs by the Quartette including, "When the Corn is Waving" accompanied by Brother Robinson. The reception was a huge success and there was even an article about it in the Portsmouth Herald on February 23, 1924, where it was noted that "proposed plans for three new lodge rooms and an entertainment hall in the rear of the present Home have already been approved and construction will commence in the near future."

Now back to the Stated Communication on February 6.... When the business meeting completed, the Lodge of Master Masons was closed and a Lodge of Entered Apprentices opened instead thereof. Brother Hubert Scott Bickford was introduced and examined as to his proficiency in this degree, which proved very satisfactory. He then retired and the Lodge of Entered Apprentices was closed, and a Lodge of Fellow Crafts opened instead thereof. Brother Bickford was admitted and Passed to the Degree of Fellow Craft in typically excellent form. Brother Bickford retired, the Lodge of Fellow Crafts was closed and a