

The Grand Lodge of the State of New York A Brief History

The Grand Lodge of New York was organized on December 15, 1782 under a Provincial Grand Warrant dated September 5, 1781 from the “Athol” or modern Grand Lodge of England. Our Grand Lodge declared its independence on June 6, 1787 and assumed the title “Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of New York.”



As early as the mid 1730's Freemasonry was present in the American colony of New York. Daniel Coxe was appointed by the Duke of Norfolk as Provincial Grand Master for the provinces of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. As no authenticated records exist of his tenure as Provincial Grand Master it seems doubtful that he exercised any authority in Masonic endeavors.

The last of the Provincial Grand Masters was Sir John Johnson who assumed office in 1771. The new Grand Lodge of New York elected Reverend William Walter as the first Grand Master. He served for almost three years.

In 1784 Robert R. Livingston was appointed Grand Master and was elected to the office for the next sixteen years. He presided at the swearing in ceremony of the only President of the United States to take the oath of office in New York City. The Bible (published in 1767) that was used at the swearing in ceremony of Brother George Washington as the first President of the United States, is owned by St. John's Lodge No. 1 and is still in use today at the swearing in of the Grand Master and, by request, at the swearing in of the President of the United States.

Throughout the history of the Grand Lodge of New York, New York Masons have contributed to the welfare of both Masons and people of the State of New York and the United States of America through their service as Governors, Senators, Representatives, Judges, Doctors, Lawyers, Teachers and everyday people through their many philanthropic endeavors.

Where and when did Freemasonry start?

Because Freemasonry is centuries old, scholars cannot agree about precisely when and where it began. An accepted theory is that it reaches back to medieval Europe when the great cathedrals were built. The stonemasons who built these awe-inspiring structures formed guilds to help one another and pass their skills to worthy apprentices. In 17th century England, these guilds began accepting men of learning and position. These new members were not stonemasons or even associated with building. As “accepted Masons,” they grew into a separate organization called Free and Accepted Masons, or Freemasonry.

Today, men of every walk of life belong to the Masons or “Freemasons.” Both names are used interchangeably. The Fraternity's membership in the United States numbers 2.5 million in 14,000 Lodges where Masons meet. New York State has nearly 60,000 members in close to 700 Lodges.

New York State Freemasons established and support the world-renowned Masonic Medical Research Laboratory at Utica, support a Child ID program, educate children in schools about drugs and alcohol abuse, distribute college scholarships, and send children to our Camp Turk a camp on Round Lake

THE REAL SECRET OF
FREEMASONRY
MAKING GOOD MEN BETTER



Guttenberg Lodge No. 737, F. & A.M. Albany, New York

*Chartered by
Grand Lodge of the State of New York
June 20, 1873*

**Guttenberg Lodge No. 737
Albany Masonic Temple
67 Corning Place
Albany, New York 12207**

Stated Communications
First and Third Thursdays

What is Freemasonry?

Freemasonry, the oldest and most prestigious fraternity in the world, is open to all men of good will who believe in a supreme being of their choice; in upholding the laws of the land; in helping each other; in improving their communities; and in the brotherhood of man. We're kind of like a civic club, a charitable institution and a fraternity - all rolled into one. We're like a civic club in that we do a lot of community and statewide projects. We are like a major charity in that we give almost \$1.5 million away every day. But, most importantly, we are a fraternity for doing good things for each other and trying to bring men of good morals and ethics together in our community.

What is the Mission of Freemasonry?

To promote a way of life that binds like-minded men in a worldwide brotherhood that transcends all religious, ethnic, cultural, social and educational differences; by teaching the great principles of brotherly love, relief and truth; and by the outward expression of these thoughts through its fellowship, its compassion and its concern, to find ways in which to serve God, family, country, neighbors and self.



What do Masons do?

The most important thing we do is take care of each other and our families. We are a fraternity. That means we help other Masons and support them no matter where they live. And we build friendships all over the world. Not very many organizations do that today. We also teach leadership skills and help men lead an ethics based life. We promote good relationships and strong family values.

What Do You Get Out of It?

A lot of pride and a sense of belonging to an organization that exists all over the world. Being part of a great heritage. Sharing an identity with great men of the past and present. Sharing a special bond with men from all walks of life and creating lifelong friendships with them.



Guttenberg Lodge No. 737 began its history in January of 1873, when a group of Master Masons met for the purpose of founding a German Lodge where the German Language could be used. In February of that same year, the Lodge was constituted and on June 20th a charter was drawn up by Grand Master Christopher G. Fox empowering the Lodge to do regular Masonic Work.

The early meetings of Guttenberg Lodge were held in the WM Whitney building on the NW corner of State and Chapel Streets. In 1896 after the completion of the Albany Masonic Temple Guttenberg moved to this site where it has been ever since.

One of the most important decisions in Guttenberg's history was made in 1900. In the 1890s Guttenberg's growth was slow due to the western migration of the German element coming into this country. Also, the sons of the members, desiring an English education to meet the business demands of the time, were reluctant to join a Lodge in which the work was done in the German language. So in order to save the Lodge from sure death, the officers and members petitioned the Grand Lodge to change the Lodge to an English speaking one. That request was granted on May 3rd, 1900.

In its long history hundreds of men have passed through the Lodge's doors on their way to becoming better men and Masons. "It is the portion of Masons to 'try to be a friend, not just make friends.'" That is the Guttenberg motto.

Some years ago a compliment was paid to Guttenberg Lodge which is as true today as it was then: "Guttenberg's steadfastness IS Masonic history. It is a well known fact this Lodge is the first to support any progressive movement. Their record under the leadership of some of the finest men in Masonry cannot be excelled by any Lodge in the country. With no bickering or dissension, the lodge goes on holding fast to the landmarks of Freemasonry and doing its share to uphold the honor and glory of the institution."

Guttenberg's past is illustrious and its future even brighter.

How Do I Become A Mason?

One of Freemasonry's customs is not to solicit members. However, anyone should feel free to approach any Mason to seek further information about the Craft.

Membership is for men, 21 years of age or older, who are of good moral character and reputation and who believe in the existence of a supreme being.

A man who wants to join a lodge must be recommended for by a member of that lodge. He must understand that his character will be investigated. After approval by the members of that lodge, he will be accepted as an applicant for membership in Freemasonry.

The doors of Freemasonry are open to men who seek harmony with their fellow man, feel the need for self-improvement and wish to participate in making this world a better place to live.

Any man who becomes a Mason is taught a pattern for living - reverence, morality, kindness, honesty, dependability and compassion. He must be prepared to honor his country, uphold its laws and respect those in authority. He must be prepared to maintain honorable relations with others and be willing to share in Masonic activities.

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If you would like more information on Guttenberg Lodge or if you would like to join, you can email us at:

info@guttenberg737.org