

NV Grand Lodge Short Lecture Series

The Nevada Grand Lodge—Brief History and Leadership Roles

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Brief History of the Origin of the Grand Lodge of Nevada

Before the State of Nevada came into existence as a governmental body, all Nevada Masonic Lodges (eight in number) were part of the Grand Lodge of California. Washoe Lodge 157, located in Washoe City, NV (halfway between present-day Carson City and Reno), at its stated communication of July 1863, appointed a committee to confer with the other lodges in the area, as to the expediency of organizing a Grand Lodge for the Territory of Nevada. For some reason, the subject was dropped at that time.

In November 1864, Virginia City Lodge 162 and Escurial Lodge 171 (located in Virginia City) appointed a joint committee to correspond with the lodges in the state as to the expediency of organizing a Grand Lodge for the State. Each of the eight lodges appointed internal committees, deliberate on the subject, the following resolutions were reported, and adopted by five lodges, there then being eight chartered lodges in the State:

WHEREAS, the subject of organizing a Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons in the State of Nevada has been agitated: RESOLVED, that it is the opinion of this Lodge that it is expedient, advisable, and desirable that a Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons be at once organized in the State of Nevada. RESOLVED, that if five chartered lodges within the State, adopt similar resolutions to the foregoing, that a convention of the lodges of Free and Accepted Masons within the State of Nevada, convene at the Masonic Hall, in Virginia [City], on Monday, the sixteenth day of January, 1865, at eleven o'clock a.m., for the purpose of organizing a Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Mason in the State of Nevada; each lodge to be represented by its Masters and Wardens, whose charter shall be their credentials. RESOLVED, that the Secretary notify each lodge in the State, of our action in this matter.

The Convention

The Convention assembled on the sixteenth day of January, 1865 at Masonic Hall, Virginia [City], NV and was called to order by W.B. Joseph De Bell, chairman of the joint committee and B.J.G. Bloomer, of the committee, acting as Secretary.

The Convention resolved to appoint a committee on credentials, which reported on the brethren present. Present were representatives from Carson Lodge 154, Carson City NV, Washoe

Lodge 157, Washoe City NV, Virginia City Lodge 162, Virginia City NV, Silver Star Lodge 165, Gold Hill NV, Esmeralda Lodge 170, Aurora NV, and Escorial Lodge 171, Virginia [City] NV, all of whose delegates were then seated in the Convention.

The committee on credentials then reported that the above-named lodges are indeed legally chartered and constituted lodges of Free and Accepted Masons, and that the officers of said lodges there present were duly authorized and qualified to organize and constitute a Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons for the State of Nevada, and further resolved that the work proceed toward that end. Various housekeeping issues were then satisfied, and the Convention appointed a committee to draft a Constitution for the Grand Lodge of Nevada, after which the convention adjourned until the next morning, January 17, 1865.

On the morning of January 17, 1865, the committee on credentials reported that they had examined the charter of Silver City Lodge 163, Silver City NV, and found it to be legally chartered and entitled to be represented in the Convention, and its delegates were seated. The committee on constitution then presented the proposed Constitution, which was discussed, amended, and adopted unanimously. On the afternoon of January 17, 1865, the convention opened, discharged the committee on constitution, and opened as a Lodge of Master Masons, presided over by W.B. Henry B. Brady, Master of the oldest lodge represented by its Master, and proceeded to the work of election of Grand Officers as follows:

Grand Master – M.W. Joseph De Bell

Deputy Grand Master – R.W. George W. Bailey

Senior Grand Warden – R.W. Henry B. Brady

Junior Grand Warden – R.W. R.T. Mullard

Grand Treasurer – V.W. Charles E. Olney

Grand Secretary – V.W. Charles H. Fish

Those elected officers, along with other appointed officers, were installed into their offices at 7:00 PM that evening, and the Master's Lodge was closed in Ample Form, after which, it was resolved that, whereas, this convention has accomplished the work for which it convened, that it be adjourned, *sine die* – the minutes for the day's sessions were read and approved, and the convention was then declared adjourned, by George Hopkins, presiding, attest Charles H. Fish, Secretary of the Convention.

The New Grand Lodge, The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons was then opened at 9:00 PM on January 17, and resolved that each lodge represented in the Convention have endorsed on the back of its charter:

This Charter having been submitted to the Grand Lodge of the State of Nevada, it is hereby ordered that the Lodge be recognized as a legally constituted Lodge under the jurisdiction of this Grand Lodge, by the name of _____ Lodge, Number___; and that this order be signed by the M.W. Grand Master and countersigned by the V.W. Grand Secretary.

And thus began the official history of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Nevada – and a long and proud tradition which continues today.

Roles & Responsibilities of the Officers of the MW Grand Lodge of Nevada

(Per Article 3 of the Nevada Masonic Code)

ELECTED OFFICERS

MW Grand Master: During the interval between the communications of the Grand Lodge, the Grand Master may exercise all its executive powers of the Grand Lodge. Some his powers include but not limited to:

- Granting dispensations for new lodges, elections of officers outside of regular periods, and confer of candidate degrees without investigation.
- Convene the Grand Lodge.
- Arrest a charter or dispensation for good cause. Restore a revoked charter.
- Suspend a master of a lodge.
- Require attendance of assigned duties of a Grand Lodge Officer.
- Transfer, upon the request of a Master to whom charges of un-Masonic conduct against a Mason have been presented, the trial of the accused from the Lodge having jurisdiction by reason of his membership or residence to some other Lodge to be named in his order whenever, for the convenience of witnesses, when a commission cannot be obtained, or for other good cause, such transfer is in his judgement necessary or expedient.
- Preside in the Grand Lodge at all its communications.
- Present at each Annual Communication a written message, setting forth therein all his official acts during the year, exhibiting the general condition of Masonry within the jurisdiction and recommending such legislation as he may deem necessary or expedient for the welfare of the Fraternity.

- Constitute all chartered Lodges, either in person or by an Authorized representative, in accordance with the ancient usages and regulations.
- Exercise a general and careful supervision over the Craft, and see that the Constitution and regulations of the Grand Lodge are strictly maintained, supported and obeyed.
- Discharge all the necessary executive functions of the Grand Lodge when that body is not in session.

RW Deputy Grand Master: Some of his responsibilities are but not limited to:

- Assisting the Grand Master in the discharge of his duties at all communications of the Grand Lodge, and in his absence preside therein.
- Upon the inability of the Grand Master to perform the functions of his office for any reason other than his death, the Deputy Grand Master shall:
 - Succeed to all the duties, powers and prerogatives of the Grand Master during such period; and
 - Assume the title of Acting Grand Master during that time.

RW Senior and Junior Grand Wardens: Their responsibilities include:

- Assist the Grand Master at all communications of the Grand Lodge, and, in his absence, and that of the Deputy Grand Master, preside therein in the order of their rank.
- In case of the death, absence from the state, or inability of both their superiors, the Grand Wardens shall, in the order of their rank, succeed to and be charged with all the powers and duties of the Grand Master.

VW Grand Treasurer: His responsibilities are but not limited to:

- Receive all monies from the Grand Secretary belonging to the Grand Lodge and give him duplicate receipts therefor; keep, in proper books, a proper account thereof.
- Take charge of all other property of the Grand Lodge
- Pay all orders drawn upon such funds and monies under this Constitution and such regulations as may be provided by the Grand Lodge to the extent that such orders do not exceed the monies appropriated for expenditure by the Grand Lodge.

- Report at each Annual Communication a detailed account of his receipts and disbursements, with proper vouchers for the latter; and present a statement of the existing conditions of the property and finances of the Grand Lodge.

VW Grand Secretary: His responsibilities are but not limited to:

- Record all the transactions of the Grand Lodge which are proper to be written and superintend the publication thereof immediately after the close of each communication, under such instructions as are given by the Grand Lodge.
- Receive, file and safely keep all papers and documents addressed or belonging to the Grand Lodge.
- Keep the seal of the Grand lodge, and affix the same , with his attestation, to all instruments issuing from that body and to all the written official acts of the Grand Master.
- Collect all monies due the Grand Lodge, keep a correct account thereof in proper books and pay the same quarterly to the Grand Treasurer.
- Conduct the correspondence of the Grand Lodge and submit copies thereof, at each Annual Communication, for its inspection.
- Keep his office, with all the books, papers and archives of the Grand Lodge, in the permanent home of the Grand Lodge.
- Transmit to each Lodge within the jurisdiction, once in every three months, a list of all rejections, expulsions, suspensions, demits and restorations of which he has been notified by the several Lodges.
- Present the proposed budget for the following year at the Annual Communication.
- Issue special communications by the Grand Master.
- Transmit to any Lodge which sends him a certificate of membership and good standing of a deceased Brother, stating that he leaves a wife, child or children, a Grand Lodge diploma for her, his or their benefit, when so requested by such Lodge.
- Take charge of the jewels, furniture, clothing and paraphernalia of the Grand Lodge during its vacations.

- May issue certificates of good standing, when such are proper, to members of extinct Lodges. Such a certificate shall serve as a demit when a brother applies for membership in a Lodge.
- Perform such other duties, pertaining to his office, as the Grand Lodge, may direct.

VW Grand Lecturer: His responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Instruct one or more members from each constituent Lodge under this jurisdiction in the standard Nevada work, when requested by such constituent Lodge, or when directed by the Grand Master; provided that:
 - Such member or members present themselves at some appointed time in the city in which the Grand Lecturer resides.
 - Upon the request of any Lodge or when directed by the Grand Master, the Grand Lecturer may, at his option and convenience, travel to and visit such Lodge and instruct its members in such standard Nevada work.
 - Any constituent Lodge receiving instruction may meet any or all portions of such expenses as such Lodge sees fit to assume.
- Furnish all necessary instruction to each constituent Lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge to the end that the work may be made standard throughout the jurisdiction.

APPOINTED OFFICERS

W Grand Deacons: Their responsibilities are:

- Shall assist the Grand Master and Grand Wardens in such manner as the ancient usages of the Craft prescribe.

V Reverent Grand Chaplain: His responsibilities are:

- Shall, during each communication of the Grand Lodge perform such services pertaining to his office as are required of him by the Grand Master.

W Grand Orator: His responsibilities are:

- During the Annual Communication, deliver an address to the Grand Lodge upon matters pertaining to the Craft.

W Grand Marshall: His responsibilities are:

- Proclaim the Grand Officers at their installation and make such other proclamations as are directed the Grand Master.
- Introduce the representative of other Grand Lodges and all visiting brothers of distinction.
- Conduct all processions of the Grand Lodge, under the direction of the Grand Master, and perform such other duties proper to his office as are required.

W Grand Standard Bearer: His duty is:

- Bear the banner of the Grand Lodge in all processions and at all public ceremonies.

W Grand Sword Bearer: His duty is:

- Attend upon the Grand Master and bear the sword of the Grand Lodge in all processions and at all public ceremonies.

W Grand Bible Bearer: His duty is:

- Bear the Holy Writings in all processions and at all public ceremonies.

W Grand Stewarts: Their duties are to:

- Superintend the preparations for all festive occasions directed by the Grand Lodge.

W Grand Organist: His duty is to:

- Preside at the organ at the opening and closing of the Grand Lodge, and when required, conduct its music upon all occasions of ceremony.

W Grand Pursuivant: His duty is to:

- Guard the inner door of the Grand Lodge and communicate with the Grand Tyler.
- Announce all applicants for admission by their names and proper Masonic titles and see that all who enter wear the jewel and clothing proper to their rank.
- Allow none to withdraw who have not obtained permission to do so from the Grand Master.

W Grand Historian: His duty is:

- Compile a history of Masonry in Nevada and make an annual report thereon to the Grand Lodge.

- Receive from the secretaries of the constituent Lodges annual historical narrative reports at the time of the annual returns to the Grand Lodge to provide the basis for an annual summary report of the constituent Lodges during the Annual Communication.

W Grand Tyler: His duties are:

- Guard the outer door of the Grand Lodge and communicate with the Grand Pursuivant.
- Report all applicants for admission to the Grand Pursuivant and see that all who enter are duly authorized and properly clothed.
- Make suitable preparations for the accommodation of the Grand Lodge at all its communications and see that its hall is kept in proper condition during their continuance.
- Take charge of and safely keep the jewels, furniture, clothing and paraphernalia of the Grand Lodge during its communications.
- Carry all notices and summonses and perform such other duties as are required of him by the Grand Lodge or Grand Master.
- The Grand Tyler for attendance at a special or regular communication of the Grand Lodge.

W Grand Trustees (5): Their duties include, but are not limited to:

- Perform the duties required by the Constitution, the regulations and the provisions of The Nevada Revised Statutes.

References

Nevada Masonic Code. (2012). Retrieved from www.nvmasons.org.