

On January 24, 1880, twenty-three ladies and gentlemen met in the Masonic Hall, Albany County, Wyoming Territory, for the purpose of organizing a Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star. Each had received the "Rite of Adopted Masonry" known as the Eastern Star.

A charter was presented, duly issued by the Grand Chapter of New York, authorizing the following named individuals "to organize a chapter to be known as Alpha Chapter No. 1 of Wyoming Territory":

Sister Nancy M. Gavitt Worthy Matron  
Sister Sally E. Jolly Worthy Associate Matron  
Brother William Rigg\* Worthy Patron

On assuming their stations, the Worthy Matron appointed:

Brother N. T. Webber Worthy Patron Protem  
Sister Belle Picket Conductress  
Sister M. Bramel "Assistant" Conductress

A Chapter of the Eastern Star was then opened in due form with Sister Nancy M. Gavitt and Sister Sally E. Jolly being installed as Worthy Matron and "Assistant" Matron by Sister Helen Kidd, P.W.M., of Lincoln Chapter No. 8 of Nebraska.

The chapter then proceeded to the election of officers with the following result:

Sister Margaret Reid Treasurer  
Sister M. E. Bramel Secretary  
Sister Annie Robinson Conductress  
Sister Belle Picket Assistant Conductress

A committee of Sisters E. R. Scott, J. G. Hayford, and B. Picket were appointed to prepare a Constitution and By-laws for the chapter.

In succeeding meetings, there quickly developed the necessity for further organization and participation in all the active duties of the chapter.

On January 31, 1880, the petition of Mrs. M. E. Webber was presented and referred to a committee of three sisters. On their next meeting, February 7, 1880, the committee report being favorable, "the ballot was spread, found clear and she was declared duly elected", their first new member. Also, a Warder was listed for the first time as an officer present.

The February 14, 1880, minutes included five star points with the officers present, making thirteen in all. At this meeting, Mrs. M. E. Webber was prepared, introduced and initiated.

In July 1880, on receipt of a letter from the General Grand Chapter to the Grand Master of Wyoming, the chapter surrendered their Grand Chapter of New York Charter to the General Grand Chapter and requested a NEW charter from the General Grand Chapter. The new charter, dated August 5, 1880, was read August 14, 1880, authorizing Sister Gavitt to be Worthy Matron, Brother J. Robinson as Worthy Patron and Sister Sally Jolly as Worthy Associate Matron. Election of officers was held at the second meeting in December for Worthy Matron, Worthy Patron, Associate Matron, Secretary, Treasurer, Conductress, and Associate Conductress.

So concluded the first year of Alpha's existence. Dues were \$2.00 per year, payable quarterly, semi-annually or annually and \$2.00 was to accompany Applications for membership.

During this first year, meetings were held on Saturday nights but soon changed to the first and third Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m.

The chapter initially met in the Durlacher Building, 203 S. 2nd Street (there were four other locations of the Masonic Hall before the new Masonic Temple was built).

Sister Martha E. Bramel, a charter member and first Secretary of Alpha Chapter, became Worthy Grand Matron in 1885 and was Laramie's first Worthy Grand Matron and presided at the 1905 Grand Chapter Session held in Laramie, and at that time had become Martha Stickney.

Due to the discovery, some time between 1880 and 1896, that the second charter had not been signed by the Most Worthy Grand Matron, Alpha Chapter was issued a properly signed third charter.

The minutes of many meetings of 1880 through 1898 were mostly brief and there were no minutes at all from July 3, 1888, to August 5, 1896. Seems, so the story goes, that the secretary was riding home in after a meeting slid off the Laramie Bridge when her horse shied and plunged the Secretary with her minutes into the river. The Secretary got out of the river all right but the minutes, when recovered, were found to be illegible.

December 4, 1894, was the first time there was a complete set of officers.

On May 18, 1897, a team of officers and members traveled to Cheyenne to assist Sister Mary Partridge, the Most Worthy Grand Matron of the General Grand Chapter, institute Oak Leaf Chapter No. 6.

April 18, 1898, Sarah Haskins was initiated. She became Matron in 1903 and Worthy Grand Matron for the 1920 Grand Session.

December 5, 1899, the chapter voted to pay the secretary \$10.00 per year.

March 7, 1905, Mrs. Mary DeForest was initiated. She became Worthy Matron in 1921 and served as Worthy Grand Matron in 1926-1927.

October 3, 1905, the initiation fee was raised to \$5.00 and the secretary was to receive \$1.00 for each meeting attended.

January 17, 1911, the Secretary was instructed to have a tin box made to hold papers, etc., the mice having taken possession of other filing places.

May 16, 1911, a "Mrs. Blank" was reported as candidate, the first time an actual petition was not balloted on during an Official Visit.

In 1912 the chapter moved into the New Masonic Temple. Rent was \$9.00 per month.

On April 1, 1913, the first Grand Representative appointment for Alpha Chapter went to Sister Lillian Condit for Alberta in Wyoming.

May 28, 1913, Sister Nancy Gavitt, Alpha Chapter's first Worthy Matron who served in that chair seven of the first twelve years, died and the O.E.S. burial rites were given at graveside.

On June 7, 1913, meeting dates were changed to the first and third Thursdays.

May 7, 1914, the chapter approved the payment of \$.50 for the Musician.

March 4, 1915, Sister Mary Snyder, Worthy Grand Matron, missed her train at Walcott and so there was no Official Visit that night.

January 18, 1917, the chapter voted to pay the Treasurer \$.25 for each meeting night.

January 20, 1921, the initiation fee was raised to \$ 10.00.

January 2, 1930, the office of Associate Patron was added.

On May 2, 1957, guest Officers from Wheatland, Mizpah, Oak Leaf, Pine Bluffs, Rawlins, Snowy Range, Encampment, Burns, Chugwater, Hanna and Ft. Collins sat in the chairs for part of the meeting.

On August 24, 1960, Sister Lorena Condit was installed Worthy Grand Matron of the Grand Chapter of Wyoming, the first Alpha Chapter member in thirty-four years to be so honored and the fifth in its eighty years of existence.

On May 13, 1961, 350 members and visitors attended Sister Condit's Homecoming. She was presented a "Life Membership" from the chapter; the first one to be given by Alpha Chapter.

September 3, 1964, the Worthy Grand Patron, Raymond Morgan, was in attendance at Alpha Chapter's first meeting of the new term. He was Alpha Chapter's first Grand Patron in eighteen years.

May 15, 1969, the meeting date was changed to the third Thursday of the month.

On September 16, 1971, the meeting date was changed to the first Thursday of the month.

On November 9, 1979, Colorado in Wyoming night was held. Eighteen Wyoming and twelve Colorado Grand Chapter Officers were in attendance with a total of 164 members and visitors present. On November 10, a bus containing seventeen of eighteen Wyoming Grand Officers plus twenty-seven members traveled to Estes Park to attend the Wyoming in Colorado night.

On April 19, 1980, Alpha Chapter No. 1 celebrated its 100th anniversary. All the offices were filled by Past Matrons and Past Patrons, and the 1893 Ritual opening was exemplified. The 1890's version of introductions was exemplified, as well. At that time, people who were to be introduced, waited outside the chapter room and were then admitted, escorted and introduced.

In August 1985, Sister Dorothy Dietz was elected Worthy Grand Matron of the Grand Chapter of Wyoming.

May 1986, Sister Dorothy Dietz's Homecoming was a great success with around 350 members and visitors in attendance.

October 31, 1987, after a trip to Colorado on the 30th the Colorado/Wyoming Exchange visit brought about 150 people together for initiation and ritual exemplification in the afternoon, and a banquet and introductions at a special meeting in the evening.

On February 2, 1989, the first time in many, many years, Alpha Chapter was unable to hold one of its scheduled meetings due to a blizzard.

In August 1996, Alpha Chapter No. 1 was again honored when Sister Betty Long was elected Associate Grand Conductress of the Grand Chapter of Wyoming.

On February 14-15, 1997, the Colorado/Wyoming Exchange Visit sent two bus loads (one from Laramie and one from Cheyenne) of officers and members to Estes Park on the 14th and gathered over 200 people in Laramie on the 15th.