

On the afternoon of December 9, 1897, Wyoming Chapter No. 7, Order of the Eastern Star, was instituted by Deputy Instituting Officer A. S. Harmon, by authority of the Most Worthy Grand Matron. Brother Harmon was assisted by Sister Harmon as Marshal and Judge Bramel as Chaplain.

The Charter was issued to Wyoming Chapter No. 7, November 19, 1897, and signed by H. H. Hinds, Most Worthy Grand Patron; Mary E. Partridge, Most Worthy Grand Matron, and Lorraine Pitkin, Right Worthy Grand Secretary. Twenty-two Sisters and eleven Brothers names are on the charter.

The first minutes kept were dated December 9, 1897. This meeting was held in the afternoon and was conducted by A. S. Harmon of Laramie. The meeting was held in an upstairs room of a building on the main street of Rawlins. No mention was made as to the reason they decided to call it Wyoming Chapter, but they must have been happy with their home state. Officers were elected at this meeting and then at 7:30 p.m. they met to install the officers. After the installation, the meeting was called to order by the newly chosen Worthy Matron, Ada Miller. Her father, Henry Kirk was the Worthy Patron. They proceeded to initiate nine members that evening.

A special meeting was held ten days later to initiate four more members and install the appointive officers. At this meeting, they allowed money for an Eastern Star carpet; appointed a committee to compile By-laws and voted to hold meetings on the second and fourth Thursday of each month. The meetings would be at 8:00 p.m. from April 1 to November 1 and at 7:30 p.m. from November 1 to March 31. Initiation fee would be \$2.00 but was soon changed to \$5.00. The janitor was to receive free dues and \$.75 per meeting; the organist also would pay no dues and receive \$.50 per meeting. The Royal Arch Masons gave the chapter \$100.00 to help it get started.

Sometimes, two or three meetings would be missed in succession; some for lack of quorum, once because court was being held in the hall and a few times because the Shrine was using the hall.

On May 4, 1898, the Most Worthy Grand Matron of the General Grand Chapter visited. She stopped between trains as she traveled to the East. She gave the chapter much encouragement and helped them with the ritual work.

That same month, a letter was received from a member of Ft. Casper Chapter No. 4 concerning the organization of a Wyoming Grand Chapter. This chapter voted in favor of such an organization and when it was formed, Sister Ada Miller was installed Grand Treasurer.

At the turn of the century, the chapter borrowed \$40.00 to buy material to make robes for the officers.

In 1902 Grand Chapter was held in Rawlins. At the banquet, only the ladies made addresses; no Brothers were to speak. The banquet was held in the beautiful Ferris Hotel, which still stands today.

Wyoming Chapter had great financial difficulties in the early years. They seemed to send flowers to every member with and ache or pain and they contributed to whatever cause seemed to come along. \$10.00 was sent to the San Francisco earthquake fund. In one report, the treasury was down to \$.65 but a dance netted \$95.00 so they could get on with their usual giving.

In 1908 the first mention of a new Temple was made and the chapter started a fund to help with the new building.

The chapter moved into the new Temple in 1910 and paid \$150.00 rent to the Masons, in advance. The Star Trustees insisted on a written contract from the Trustees of the Blue Lodge. Money was made in many ways to handle the added bills: lawn socials in summer; Halloween dance; a minstrel show was put on. The Secretary received \$25.00 and the Organist received \$15.00.

In 1913 the Grand Matron sent word that no rituals were to be used. What a blow the officers had to learn their parts. During these early years, initiation was held at practically every meeting but not many members attended and there were almost always requests for demits. At a few meetings, the minutes gave the business of the chapter; the financial report, initiated several new members, closed

the chapter in regular form "after which we repaired to the dining hall for turkey dinner and dancing". They didn't meet until 8:00 p.m.

In the January 1918 minutes, it was recorded that from then on, the Conductress, Associate Conductress and Chaplain were to present the American flag and hold it over the Altar at the Bible while the National Anthem was sung, and then present it to the Worthy Matron and she would place it in the East. This was during World War I. At the next meeting, two new members were initiated and then installed in offices at the same meeting.

In 1918 the chapter purchased a good used piano for \$200.00 on time payments. Many members immediately gave donations towards it and the chapter had another dancing party, and all-in-all, had enough money to pay for the piano and having it hauled to the Temple.

It was noticed that after the war attendance at the regular meetings really picked up. In May 1920, the Past Matrons and Past Patrons Night was held with them filling the offices. This became an annual occurrence.

In 1921 Sister Mary Turner was not only a Grand Representative but also was Grand Martha. This was also the year that a very successful dance was held, netting \$394.00. This money was used to furnish a four-bed ward in the newly constructed Carbon County Memorial Hospital.

The same year 1921, the Blue Lodge asked the Stars cooperation if they extended the invitation for the Grand Lodge and Grand Chapter to be held in Rawlins. The chapter was only too happy to go along with this fine idea. Committees were formed and ideas were being formulated when disaster struck. On January 9, 1922, there was a fire in the Temple building. No details were found that listed actual losses, except that the robes were damaged beyond repair. Meetings were then held in the I.O.O.F. Hall.

A Valentine's Day card party was held to make money to be used for Grand Chapter and each member was also assessed \$5.00 for this use. At a June meeting that year, Saratoga Chapter members were guests. Besides the officers, sixty members and thirty-eight guests were present. Wyoming Chapter continued meeting all summer because of Grand Chapter and by September 7, the move was made back into the refurbished Temple in time for the Grand Chapter Session held on September 11 and 12. Encampment and Saratoga Chapters were joint hosts for a Fish Fry at Grand Chapter.

In November 1922, the chapter celebrated its 25th anniversary. They say the first few years are the worst and maybe they were and perhaps those were the very best. Whichever, they were successful and a celebration was certainly deserved. A silver shower was held with the intent to purchase decent silver to be used in the dining room.

In 1923 the chapter purchased their electric Signet. Dues went to \$3.50 and the initiation fee to \$10.00.

In 1924 the Secretary's pay went to \$100.00 and in 1925 the Treasurer's pay went to \$25.00.

The 50th Anniversary again saw a celebration, as well as on their 75th. At the 75th celebration, our Most Worthy Grand Matron, Sister Mae Mickelson and her husband James, joined us for a wonderful evening.

Through the years, the chapter has accomplished many things. They bought War Bonds and helped with the Red Cross during both World Wars; purchased new furniture and with the help of the Daughters of the Nile purchased a grand piano. They cooked and served untold meals to Masons, Shriners and Daughters of the Nile to be able to participate in and donate to Grand Chapter projects. The chapter sponsored the Job's Daughters when they were chartered and helped institute Hanna Chapter. The chapter entertained the Grand Chapter in Rawlins seven times.

It is hoped and prayed that Wyoming Chapter will survive the slump it is now going through and can forever continue their kindness, sincerity and love for one another and as a Secretary of 1912

closed the minutes, "And at a late hour everyone repaired to their homes feeling glad that they were privileged to be members of our beautiful Order".