

On January 28, 1901, a dispensation was granted to twenty-seven petitioners by Henry Bunger, Worthy Grand Patron, to organize a chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star. Brother Bunger personally organized the chapter. .

The chapter was instituted February 20, 1901, under dispensation, and the charter was granted on September 9, 1901. Sister Anna M. Johnston and Brother O.E. Tisch were the first Matron and Patron, respectively with Sister Josephine K. Scovell being the first Associate Matron.

On September 3, 1901, the Fourth Annual Session of the Grand Chapter of Wyoming was held in the Masonic Temple in Wheatland. The following quotation is taken from Worthy Grand Matron Ada Miller's closing speech, as recorded in the 1901 Grand Chapter Proceedings: "On Monday evening preceding the session, Wheatland Chapter exemplified the Ritualistic Work, initiating a candidate in a very creditable manner. Too much cannot be said in praise of this little chapter, which has worked under dispensation with only thirty-two members, many of whom live a considerable distance from town. They have labored untiringly for the upbuilding of their chapter."

Records for 1902-1907 were virtually not available except for presiding officers.

In 1908 Wheatland Chapter had three Grand Officers installed at Grand Chapter.

In 1914 Brother William Sloan began his seventh term as Worthy Patron. The chapter voted to discontinue refreshments after initiation, to hold only one meeting during July, August, and September, and to meet the fourth Thursday each month. The chapter also voted to pay the Treasurer \$5.00 per year and forgive her dues. The Secretary's salary was \$15.00 per year.

In 1915, during the Worthy Grand Matron's visit, "the balloting was exemplified and found not clear".

In 1916 the May 10th minutes read "no quorum, 8th grade graduation, only the Worthy Matron appeared". The minutes of September 14, 28 and October 12, also read "no quorum". It appears Sister Addie Hemmant may have weathered some rough seas.

In 1917 Worthy Matron Millie G. Johnson reports that Sister Carrie Fisher McLaughlin, Worthy Grand Matron, was to arrive from Torrington for a five o'clock dinner. Getting a late start and no paved roads, her car had problems. She had flat tires and engine troubles. She didn't arrive until 8 o'clock, the time to start the meeting, which resulted in considerable hub-bub both at the house and chapter room. When they arrived at the chapter room, two of her officers were absent, yet-the evening went on, and on, and on.

In 1918 every member of the Eastern Star able to work became very active in the war effort.

In 1919 the initiation fee was raised to \$5.00 and for affiliation to \$2.00. A piano fund was started and one was purchased in time for the April 24, 1919, meeting.

In 1920 forty members of Wheatland Chapter journeyed to Chugwater and were guests of Laurel Leaf Chapter for a 6:30 dinner and at the initiation ceremony.

In 1922, the chapter and Masons bought five dozen folding chairs and the chapter purchased a rug for the Temple. It was voted to increase the Secretary's salary from \$25.00 to \$50.00.

In 1924 Wheatland Chapter had its first summer recess for the months of July and August.

In 1927 the chapter moved from the old building with its cramped quarters and faded red carpet to the spacious new and beautiful Masonic Temple. The chapter provided the blue velvet drapes for the windows.

1935 was the beginning of the covered dish dinners for Wheatland Chapter. Unfortunately, they had no tables so Brother Russell Fisk, Master of the Lodge volunteered to have tables there and they had the combined lodges to dinner. Through their frugal efforts, they were able to acquire three large tables and a tea cart. The chapter purchased the materials and the boys in High School made the tables.

In 1936, with the aid of the Eastern Stars, the local Jobs Daughters and DeMolay organizations were established.

In 1947 the first Friendship Night was held and "Ruth's" fund was started for beneficent purposes. They also made every attempt to have covered dish suppers at every other meeting and the Worthy Matron felt that they improved attendance at the meetings.

In 1948 dues were raised to \$3.50 and, with the results of funds earned from serving dinners, the chapter purchased two gas stoves for the kitchen. It was during this year, that the Grand Chapter changed the star year and officers were to be installed in June.

In 1952, on the eve of the Official Visit, a robbery of the store under the Temple occurred. After the meeting the members watched the police capture the robber who had been hiding in the basement of the building.

On December 23, 1954, the chapter held their first meeting in the new Masonic Temple.

In 1955-56 the first programs for the year were planned and printed. During the year, monies were raised to purchase star point chairs appropriate to their colors.

In 1958-59 a little Spinnet piano was purchased by the chapter to replace the old faithful upright piano.

In 1959-60 the "Pancake Supper" originated and was held at the outdoor Masonic Grounds and became an annual event. We had a beautiful candle light ceremony for Obligation Night. We also had a Platte Country night, with Chugwater and Guernsey Chapters as honored guests.

In 1961 our own Brother Jack Nixson was installed Worthy Grand Patron.

In 1965-66 Wheatland Chapter No. 11 celebrated their 65th Anniversary. This same year, the dues were raised from \$3.50 to \$5.00.

In 1968-69 gold skirts and white tops were worn for special meetings. Worthy Patron Dave Noyce built and presented a large wooden name plaque which was hung in the temple. The names of all Past Matrons and Past Patrons from 1901 to the present were inscribed on it.

In 1969-70 Worthy Matron Ellen Marie Burnett reports: "My year started quietly enough, then Adah's sword was purloined." This led to a new sword, a new crown and scepter, a new Altar rug and a new Altar cloth, which was made by Sister Goldie Bollin. The Worthy Patron missed the visit of Worthy Grand Matron Elsie Henn due to developing a case of ulcers.

In 1971-72 we began to redecorate the Masonic Hall, starting in the Library, which was used by the High School after the school burned down. The project had to be done again after they left.

In 1972-73 the chapter served the Job's Daughters Banquet and welcomed the Worthy Grand Matron's entourage.

In 1973-74 five temple chairs were recovered by Sister Vi Goodrich and her Conductress. The kitchen cupboards were cleaned and varnished. A table top stove and double oven was donated for the kitchen by the Past Matron's Club. The pedestals were repainted and paid for by the Past Matron's Club.

In 1974-75 plans were made to remodel the kitchen and when they were implemented it made the kitchen much more convenient.

In 1975-76, Homecoming for our own Worthy Grand Matron Louise Soward was held in the Wheatland Gymnasium.

In 1976-77 we celebrated our 75th Birthday and the Bi-Centennial of our country. It was a time for old memories, but also a time for new beginnings.

In 1977-78, from the Dorothy Kennedy Memorial Fund, a new veil, sheath, and crown were ordered. Sister Elsie Ryan was presented a plate and a corsage for ten years as Secretary.

In 1978-79 Sister Louise Soward revised the By-laws. Initiation fee was raised to \$10.00; the affiliation fee, \$5.00; dues to \$10.00 and Temple Fund to \$1.00. New chairs and pedestals were purchased from the Dorothy Kennedy Memorial Fund. The Past Matron's Club presented the chapter with a star of silk flowers to be used for funerals and was to be stored at the Funeral Home.

In 1978-80 seventeen new members were initiated and five new affiliates. The Secretary's salary was raised to \$100.00. New star stands, to be placed in back of star point chairs, were painted by Sisters Flora Kennedy and Velma Short. A foodless bake sale became a fund raiser.

In 1981-82 Brother Bob Hyer presented Worthy Matron Wanda Weber with a hand-made gavel. Due to the cost of living, the chapter's Dime-a-Dip Dinner became a Quarter-a-Dip Dinner. The rent was raised from \$175.00 to \$250.00 in 1982 and \$350.00 for 1983.

The Masons bricked up the north windows of the Masonic Temple and put in thermal pane windows. They asked Eastern Star to buy new curtains for the hall. Brother Bob Hyer presented the chapter with a latch hook rug with the star emblem on it. Life Line became the chapter's charity.

In 1983-84 records were updated again by putting them on microfilm, and it was voted to do this every five years. Worthy Patron George Branscom installed new lights in the pedestals.

In 1984-85, Sister Joan Branscom purchased a new lamp for the piano in memory of her mother Ethel D. Wellman. A silver tea and coffee service was purchased from the Dorothy Kennedy Memorial. The family requested it be engraved in her memory. The rent is now \$400.00

In 1986-87, Gene and Laurell Marker, John and Irene Jobe, and Charlyn Lewis, star members, were instrumental in removing file cabinets, charter and paraphernalia from the Masonic Hall when a fire in downtown Wheatland threatened the Masonic Temple.

In 1989-90 Kick-off for Worthy Grand Patron George Branscom was held in the 4-H Building in Wheatland. The fund-raiser was a Tax Notice sent to all members taxing us on all sorts of nonsense and went over very well. Members were asked to bring towels and pot holders to replenish the kitchen.

In 1990-91 Sister Maude Bellis was 100 years young. Valentine baskets were filled with Kleenex, lotion, crackers, etc., to be delivered to members in the Nursing Wing. A \$125.00 donation was made to the Jobies.

In 1991-1992 the chapter charity remained the Life Line. Money collected from the coin marches will be given to the charity. The chapter chose two single parent families to provide food baskets and coats and stockings for the children. The mother received cologne and a wool scarf.

In 1992-1993 the chapter corresponded with a sister chapter in New Mexico. We exchanged ideas and other items. The chapter served the Outdoor Lodge meeting at the Kennedy Ranch to help the lodge with their roof expenses. This was the first year the chapter participated in the Adopt-A-Highway program. The chapter gave three scholarships this year.

In 1993-1994 a 1900's initiation was put on by Guernsey Chapter with rocking chairs, bonnets, and kerosene lamps. The chapter again served the meal at the Masonic Outdoor Lodge.

In 1994-1995 a bakeless bake sale was held. The chapter made quilt blocks for the Worthy Grand Matron's and Worthy Grand Patron's Quilt. A Christmas food basket was delivered to a single parent family, plus clothes and toys for the children and a sweat outfit for the mother. Valentine baskets and Easter baskets were packed with essentials and delivered to chapter members in the Nursing wing and those who were homebound.

In 1995-1996 the chapter assisted the Masons in serving a chili and pie supper following the Lighting Ceremony at the Court House on the day after Thanksgiving. An Income Tax fund-raiser was sent to all members. The ladies room was remodeled with new stalls, two full length mirrors, a new vanity, new toilets, hooks for garments, new tissue holders, new carpet and a paper towel dispenser. The chapter gave two scholarships this year.

In 1996-1997 the Adopt-A-Highway was still one of the chapter's main projects and we again helped the Masons with their chili and pie supper following the court House Lighting Ceremony. During the year, a new microwave oven, a 14-40 cup coffee pot and a new refrigerator were purchased, while the Past Matrons presented the chapter with a new roaster oven and a carving set.