

On May 26, 1906, a special dispensation was given to organize an Eastern Star chapter in Thermopolis, Wyoming. September 12, 1906, is the date Vesper Chapter No. 19 was chartered. Emma Simmons was the only member who had previously been a member of Eastern Star. She served as the first Worthy Matron with Edgar Richards.

The first year Vesper gained nine members. The By-laws were drawn up and approved by the Worthy Grand Matron. The first money making project was to rent their dishes to a church. Several card parties and box socials were held and with their first \$127.45 profit the chapter purchased a piano.

In 1912 the Chapter purchased a set of lovely slides to be used during the initiation ceremony, as the chapter didn't have a signet.

Thermopolis was chosen for the sight of the Grand Chapter in 1914. The new Chapter was very busy with preparations.

In 1918 the "good will" project was to sponsor and provide the schooling for a child from France.

A new signet was purchased in 1921 and the slides were put in storage. The Worthy Matron's project for the year was to sponsor an Armenian child's schooling. New Star point pedestals and labyrinth rug were purchased. The members now felt they were a modern chapter.

August of 1927 found the Grand Chapter of Wyoming meeting in Thermopolis. The meetings were reported to have been enjoyed by all. The total expense to Vesper was \$147.88!

Total membership in 1928 was 193! In 1929 Santa Claus made his first visit to Vesper, bearing new rituals. The officers could now become proficient in their work.

The small kitchenette and serving table were built so refreshments could be served to members and visitors. As a money making project the chapter collected tin foil for resale. They set up a contest in the schools to furnish a prize to the class collecting the most. 150 pounds were collected the first year and over 237 pounds the second year. Proceeds from the sales were given to the Shrine Hospital.

In 1932 the Masons invited Eastern Star to add their membership list to the box they placed in the cornerstone of the new Post Office.

April 27, 1935, Vesper prepared a covered dish luncheon for the officers and family members of the newly instituted Job's Daughters Bethel.

1938 found a large gathering of hungry Past Masters at a banquet served by the cooks of Vesper. The proceeds were spent for the "electric" signet.

The Past Matrons Club was formed in 1939. The club was set up to promote the good of the Order. The Past Matrons and Patrons gave the initiatory work as exemplified in 1919. Anna Peterson, Past Grand Matron of Nebraska, was the presiding Worthy Matron for the evening.

Our annual presentation of the Past Patron's pin started in 1940. Past Patron Harley Murphy received the first pin.

New dishes and silverware were purchased in expectation of a large crowd for the 35th Anniversary meeting held June 5, 1941. The flower girls for the special ceremony were included. Elizabeth Bailey, Worthy Matron, and Charles McKethen, Worthy Patron were presiding. 1941 was a busy time for Vesper as they began recruiting seamsters and knitters for their war effort. War bonds and defense stamps were purchased. Over 100 dozen cookies were baked and sent along with three guitars, to Fort Warren for "our boys". The chapter sponsored a seeing-eye dog for the son of one of the members. In 1941, due to the shortage of paper, the proceedings cost \$1.50 each. An announcement at the early October meeting read, "To prevent slackness in knitting, the ladies were assured they could bring their knitting to chapter to get it finished on time. We trust this will be an inspiration to show your true patriotic feelings."

The Grand Chapter project for the year was to raise enough money to purchase an ambulance to send to the front. At the end of the term two ambulances were sent to the front lines.

Vesper Chapter furnished a room in the new Memorial Hospital in 1945. When the Hospital Board of Trustees was chosen, Worthy Patron Wm. T. Bivin was appointed to serve on the board.

At this point, Vesper was ready for their 50th Anniversary. A large banquet preceded the meeting at the Elks Hall. Mary Vlastos, Worthy Matron, reported over 250 guests were registered. Sister Mary, James Satterfield, Worthy Patron, and officers had a beautiful "Golden" evening.

In 1958 an official Memorial Fund was started and new star point pedestals were purchased. Sister Alice Flockhart, Worthy Matron, was chosen as chairperson.

Lupine Chapter No. 52 was instituted in 1959 at Dubois, Wyoming. Vesper donated our old labyrinth rug to help get the new chapter started. Sister Jessie Short was Grand Warder at the time and was asked by the Worthy Grand Patron to fill the station of Warder for the ceremony of instituting the chapter.

The By-laws of the Chapter were completely revised in 1959. The changes included: time change of the meeting to 8:00 p.m.; the dues were increased to \$3.50; and initiation fees were raised to \$16.00. A new satin Altar cloth was made and presented to the chapter by Sister Jeralyn Brown.

On June 20, 1963, Sister Media Wykoff was introduced and honored with the title of Secretary Emeritus after 52 years of faithful service to Vesper Chapter. Sister Media took very efficient minutes, without which our chapter history would be lost. Such dedication is so rare.

Harold Johnson was elected Worthy Patron for the first time in 1965. This was the beginning of another partnership between chapter and member. Brother Harold soon took over the job of "seeing that things got done", not only in the meetings but also in taking care of the properties of the chapter. There were many times when sidewalks were cleared, the furnace fired and coffee made before anyone else could get the job done.

By 1965 our membership was up to 244 and again we honored two special ladies. Sister Edith Wright was the oldest member and Esther Virgin was the oldest Past Matron present. The officers dressed in old fashion dresses and presented a special program for our Sisters.

Vesper Chapter's own Betty Patterson was installed as Wyoming's Worthy Grand Matron for the year 1966-67. She was Vesper's first Worthy Grand Matron.

In 1968 Worthy Matron Alice Toth's project remodeled our chapter room. Pledges were given to the Memorial Fund and new sideline chairs were purchased in memory of our loved ones. Forty-two chairs were purchased with over \$1,100 raised. Gold nameplates and wall plaques were placed in the chapter room.

1969 was a prosperous year for us and a bleak year for Adah Chapter No. 48. We gained fourteen new members from Adah Chapter including Associate Grand Patron Frank Shultz. In 1970 Brother Frank was installed as Worthy Grand Patron for Wyoming.

The Masons finished our new kitchen and dining room and a special Opening Party was held in early October, 1971. Now all the dinners and refreshments could be served in our own building.

Our Brother Gerald Cook was installed as Worthy Grand Patron in August of 1971. Two large display cases were donated to the chapter for the display of our old paraphernalia. Brother Frank Shultz built and donated a wall case for the smaller articles.

Vesper purchased a beautiful Masonic and Eastern Star light to be hung above the outside entry. This light was dedicated in memory of Harold and Margaret Johnson in 1978. An Edith Wright memorial bulletin board was also dedicated the same night. There were two By-law changes in 1978; dues were raised to \$5.00 and the time was changed to 7:30 p.m.

1980 brought a lovely lighted signet for the East, with our emblematic star on one side. The signet was made by Charles "Bud" Smith, Worthy Patron, and son Tom. The chairs in the East, West and South were re-upholstered. Margaret Mecca, Worthy Matron, dedicated the 50 Year Member Plaques.

In 1988 our Sister Margaret Mecca served as Worthy Grand Matron, with Brother Vern Gersmehl as her Worthy Grand Patron.

Again in 1995 our chapter was honored when our Brother Morris Odde served the Grand Chapter as Worthy Grand Patron with Sister Jo Myers as Worthy Grand Matron.

The following quote was taken from the program for our 35th Anniversary. "The Navajo Indians meeting in a tribal council, it is said, spread a blanket with the symbolic diamond design on it - - whole diamonds in the center - half diamonds on the sides - and quarter diamonds on the corners. These spread side to side and corner to corner, form a perfect whole." So it has been through the years with the loyal service of the past officers and members of Vesper Chapter. Each member by themselves is incomplete, it takes the whole membership, past and present to create a perfect organization.