



Onondaga Masonic Districts
Historical Society

Constitution

and

By Laws

Founded
November 14, 1995

Moved, Seconded and Passed by the Executive Board

R.: W.: Gilbert J. Walter, Director

Bro. Gary L. Heinmiller, Secretary Pro Tem

R W William L. DuPree, Advisor

R W William G. Vassily, Trustee

W Joseph T. Kuhl, Jr., Curator



Onondaga Masonic Districts
Historical Society
Constitution

Article I. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Onondaga Masonic Districts Historical Society, located in Onondaga County, New York.

Article II. Mission

To preserve the history and traditions, to include the archives and artifacts, of the Onondaga Masonic Districts and its Concordant Bodies;

To educate the Masonic Brethren and public sector regarding our history and traditions;

To promote appreciation of our past and current Onondaga Districts environment as reflected through our history and traditions;

To serve as an historical information resource center through the Society's lectures, seminars, studies, archives, artifacts and endeavors;

To sponsor a forum for a Research Group, Philosophical Study Group and Ritual Society in the Onondaga Districts, and such other Groups and Committees as would support this Mission.

Article III. Membership

Membership shall be of three classes: annual, life and honorary.

Article IV. Elected Officials

Sec 1. The elected officials shall be: Director, Vice-Director, Secretary and Treasurer. There shall also be three trustees to be elected for a term of three years (except in the founding year of 1995 there shall be one elected for three years, one for two years and one for one year).

Sec 2. All elected members must be full-active members.

Article V. Annual Meeting

There shall be an annual meeting of the Society at the November meeting.

Article VI. Amendment

This Constitution may be amended at any duly called annual meeting by two-thirds of the members attending or a minimum of twelve members, whichever of the higher number is present. Notice shall be given in writing at least thirty days before the annual meeting. All proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the Director for review and written report of a Constitution Committee.



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Article I. Membership and Dues

Sec 1. Any current member of a just and duly constituted Masonic Lodge who applies for membership and who tenders the necessary dues shall become a Full Active member. Non-Masonic persons may become Associate Members. There shall be three membership classes: Annual, Life and Honorary.

Sec 2. A member of this Society in good standing prior to January 1, 1996, will be considered a Charter Member.

Sec 3. Changes in the Annual and Life membership dues shall be set by a two-thirds vote of the members present at an annual meeting and shall be due January 1.

Sec 4. Members in arrears past six months of the current dues year shall be dropped from membership.

Article II. Schedule and Quorum for Meetings.

Sec 1. Regular meetings of the organization shall be held three times each year except July and August.

Sec 2. Special meetings may be called by the Director.

Sec 3. A quorum at any business meeting of the Society shall be three or more elected Officers.

Sec 4. The Executive Board shall meet as required.

Article III. Duties of the Officers and Trustees.

Sec 1. The Director shall have executive supervision over the goals and activities of the Society within the scope of the Constitution and By Laws and shall preside at all Annual and Executive meetings. He shall report annually on the activities of the Society, and shall appoint all additional Officers, Chairpersons of all Committees, all Staff and Advisors, and all Representatives of the Society to non-Masonic groups.

Sec 2. The Vice-Director shall assume the duties of the Director in the event of his absence, incapacity or resignation of the Director, and such other special duties as the Director may assign.

Sec 3. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the meetings of the Society or insure the same are forwarded to him by the Executive Board, Trustees, Committees or Groups. He will receive and execute all correspondence as delegated by the Director, shall receive all monies of the Society and shall render an annual report.

Sec 4. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the safekeeping of the Society funds and for maintaining adequate financial records. He shall deposit all monies received in the name of the Onondaga Masonic Districts Historical Society (OMDHS). The Treasurer shall disperse funds as authorized by the Executive Board, shall be a member of the Finance Committee and shall render an annual report.

Sec 5. The Trustees shall be responsible for assets, holdings and facilities of the Society.

Sec 6. The chain of authority and responsibility shall be as set forth in these By-Laws, as illustrated by the attached Organizational Chart.

Article IV. Executive Board.

Sec 1. The Elected Officers, Trustees, the Immediate Past Director, Advisors, Archivist, Research Group Chairman, Philosophical Study Group Chairman, and Ritual Group Chairman, shall constitute the Executive Board. At any meeting of the Executive Board, five members shall constitute a quorum. The Director shall preside at the Executive meetings.

Sec 2. The duties of the Executive Board shall be to transact the necessary business of the Society.

Article V. Standing Committees.

Sec 1. Membership Committee: Shall be responsible for the membership drive, orientation of new members, member services, a current members roster, and the timely submitting of dues to the Secretary.

Sec 2. Hospitality Committee: Shall be responsible for the registration of members and visitors, and for hosting Society events to include refreshments and entertainment.

Sec 3. Finance Committee: Shall be composed of the Director, Treasurer, Chair of the Ways and Means Committee and the Senior Trustee. This committee shall be responsible for the Annual Budget, recommending the handling of funds, examining and auditing of the financial records and preparation of a report of their findings for submitting at the annual meeting.

Sec 4. Way and Means Committee: Shall be responsible for planning and conducting fund raising, endowment, gift, bequests and life membership activities, and for working with temporary or special committees relative to the same.

Sec 5. Archives and Artifacts Committee: Shall be responsible for acquisitions of historical items or collections and for the conservation and exhibiting of such items. The Historian and Archivist will be a member of this committee.

Sec 6. Program Committee: Shall be responsible for arranging appropriate programs for the meetings of the Society.

Sec 7. Publicity Committee: Shall be responsible for publicizing the goals and activities of the Society.

Sec 8. Library Committee: Shall be responsible for the accession, cataloging, conservation, display and lending of the books, pamphlets and periodicals of the Society, and for staffing the Library at appropriate hours for the use of the subscribers of the services of the Society.

Sec 9. Historian and Archivist: Shall be responsible for oversight of the collection and conservation, storage, display and usage of the accessions of the Society; also, to assist and advise appropriate District and Lodge Officers and Brethren on matters pertaining to the generation, retention, transfer and/or destruction of District artifacts and archives. To prepare such reports of District Historical activities or to conduct lectures pertaining to the same as appropriate.

Sec 10. Ars Collegium: Shall be responsible for proving a forum for Masonic research, writing and discussion and for developing a lecture outreach program within the Onondaga Masonic Districts.

Sec 11. Fratres Lux: Shall be responsible for providing a forum for the study and contemplation of Masonic philosophy and symbolism and for such writing, discussion and lecturing as would be appropriate.

Sec 12. Harodim Society: Shall be responsible for providing a forum for Masonic Ritual, its learning, presentation and instruction; also, shall be dedicated to the study of rituals: past and present from the New York and other jurisdictions.

Article VI. Election of Officers and Trustees.

Sec 1. All Officers and Trustees shall be elected at the Annual Meeting by simple majority.

Sec 2. Honorary Members, Emeriti and Ad Vitam Chairmen or Board Members may be elected, by recommendation of the Executive Board to any stated general meeting, by two-thirds vote of the active full members present.

Sec. 3. A Nominating Committee shall be appointed in September to present a slate of Officers for the ensuing year, one month prior to the Annual Meeting.

Sec. 4. Newly elected Officers and Trustees shall assume office on January 1st.

Sec. 5. The Executive Board shall be empowered, by two-thirds vote, to fill vacancies by appointment as they occur.

Article VII. Amendment.

These By Laws, except Article VIII, which may not be amended or revoked, may be amended at any duly called annual meeting by two-thirds vote of the active full members attending. Notice shall be given in writing at least thirty days before the annual meeting. All proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the Director for consideration and a written report of a By Laws Committee.

Article VIII. Dissolution of the Organization.

Injunction: The Craft has been operative in Onondaga County for nearly 200 years, beginning with Village Lodge No. 80 in Marcellus, warranted January 8th, 1799. At the Annual Communication of Grand Lodge on June 5th, 1855, then Grand Master MW Joseph D. Evans stated,

"I scarcely know an active worker who is not a reading Mason, seizing every opportunity to add to his stock of Masonic knowledge. It is in this manner men become Bright Masons Every subordinate lodge should possess a library, not encased for the Books to lie moldering on the shelves, but a circulating library, that every member may reap its benefits" (Report of the Committee of Libraries - 1856)

The Onondaga Districts at one time were privileged to house the RW Herbert W. Greenland Collection and "The Supreme Council Sovereign Grand Inspector General Thirty-Third and Last Degree A.A.S.R. of F.M., N.M.J., U.S.A., Illustrious William L. Cummings, 33°, Library" (of over 6,100 items).

These two great collections, though still intact, are at Utica and Lexington, Mass, respectively, beyond the day-to-day reach of the Brethren of the Onondaga Masonic Districts.

Let it therefore be resolved that one of our number from among the Society be appointed Custodian Ad Vitam, with the charge, in the event of the dissolution of the Society, to:

Sec 1. Maintain the assets of the Society intact and in good repair within the Onondaga Masonic Districts;

Sec 2. Appoint a Custodial Committee until a new Society shall be founded pursuant to these by laws;

Sec 3. Appoint a qualified successor, Ad Vitam;

Sec 4. No successor having been appointed, pursuant to the above Sections, owing to incapacity, removal from the District or death, one shall be appointed by the majority vote of the Masters of the Lodges then working in the Onondaga Masonic Districts, who shall be charged with fulfilling the letter and spirit of Sections 1 & 2 above and the letter and spirit of these By-Laws in general.

R.: W.: Frederick Greene, Secretary
Bro. Gary L. Heinmiller, Project Coordinator

Adopted by the Executive Board of the OMDHS
November 14, 1995

Addenda:

The following Addenda, pertaining to Committees and their duties is recorded for the informational and planning purposes: