

ANCIENT ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE  
BODIES OF NEW YORK  
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# Facts of Scottish Rite

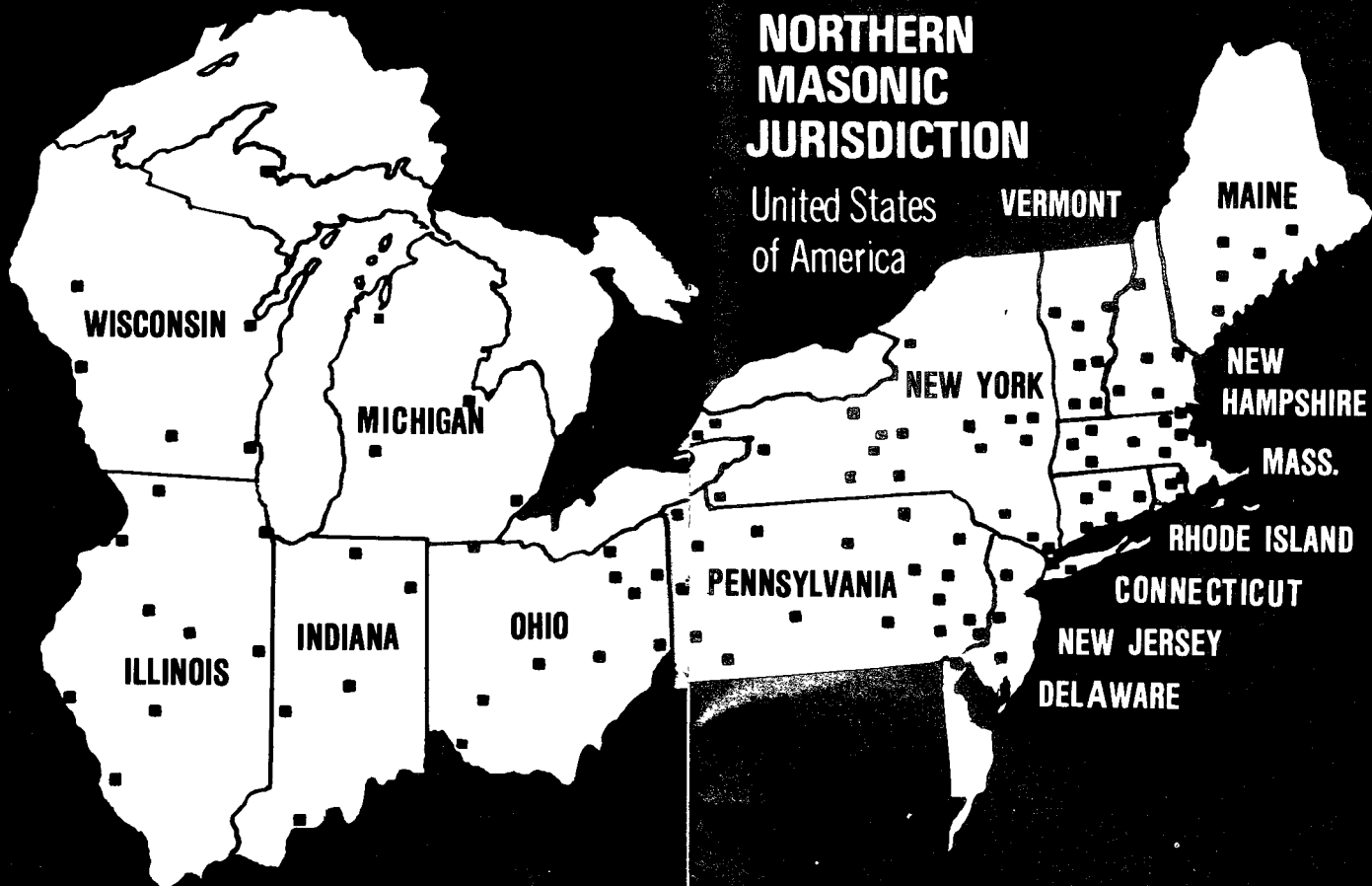


Over the years there have been many misconceptions about the purpose, requirements and operations of Scottish Rite Freemasonry. A few local centers have published and circulated explanatory pamphlets which have been most helpful to better understanding on the part of nonmembers and members alike. However, even in this day such statements are heard as "You have to go to Scotland to acquire the degrees." . . . "It costs hundreds of dollars to become a member" . . . "It takes years to become a 32° Mason" . . . "All degrees must be taken at the same time" . . . "A candidate must learn all the signs and words." . . . "One must be a

member of another collateral Masonic order before being eligible for Scottish Rite." . . . "You have to wait for an invitation to join."

The following pages have been prepared in brief question and answer form not only to dispel such misunderstandings but to furnish added information to Master Masons seeking "more light."

Since this booklet has been written for use throughout the Northern Jurisdiction, it can not be too specific as to the methods followed in each of the fifteen states and 112 Scottish Rite centers. Basic principles, regulations and procedures are set forth, and the reader is cordially encouraged to seek further detail from the local Scottish Rite organization nearest to him.

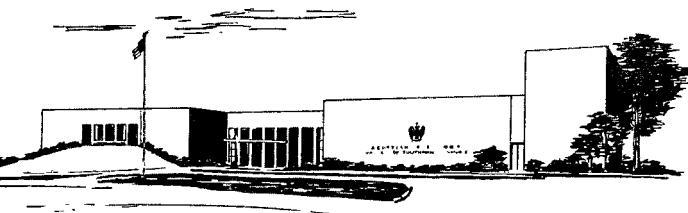




*Supreme Council Headquarters  
Lexington, Mass.*

*Over the years, Master Masons  
have continued their search for  
"more light" through the medium  
of Scottish Rite for countless reasons*

- ✓ Scottish Rite answers many questions raised in the Symbolic Lodge.
- ✓ Scottish Rite degrees can provide a better understanding of the meaning of Freemasonry and its basic principles through the use of drama and appeal to the eye as well as the ear
- ✓ Scottish Rite work is always conducted in an atmosphere of reverence and dignity.
- ✓ Scottish Rite membership will enlarge your circle of Masonic acquaintances and provide additional opportunities for congenial fellowship.
- ✓ Scottish Rite affords varied opportunities for active service in keeping with the talents of each member.
- ✓ Scottish Rite through its benevolences not only assists members in distress but has established a program designed to benefit all mankind.
- ✓ Scottish Rite, long an international organization, continues its work for better understanding among nations and a just and peaceful world.



*Southern Illinois  
Belleville*

## PURPOSE, HISTORY, DEVELOPMENT

### What is Scottish Rite?

Scottish Rite is one of the two branches of Freemasonry in which a Master Mason (Third Degree) may proceed after he has completed the three degrees of Symbolic or Blue Lodge Masonry. (The other branch is known as York Rite consisting of Capitular and Cryptic Masons and Knights Templar.) Scottish Rite includes the Degrees from the Fourth to the Thirty-third, inclusive. The moral teachings and philosophy of Scottish Rite are an elaboration of the basic Masonic principles found in Blue Lodge or Symbolic Freemasonry. Sometimes likened to a "College of Freemasonry," Scottish Rite uses extensive drama and allegory to emphasize the content and message of its degrees.

### Where did Scottish Rite originate?

Masonic historians throughout the world still seek the positive answer to this question. The use of the word "Scottish" has led many Masons to believe that the Rite originated in Scotland and that Scotland remains the fountainhead of its activity. Such is not the case.



*Indianapolis, Ind*

Actually, the first reference to the Rite appears in old French records where the word "Ecosais" (meaning Scottish) is to be found. During the latter part of the Seventeenth Century, when the British Isles were torn by strife, many Scots fled to France and resumed their Masonic interests in that country. It is felt that this influence contributed to the use of the word "Scottish."

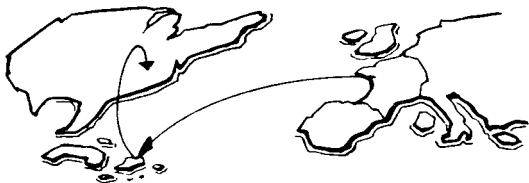
The earliest documented records trace the actual beginnings of the Rite to Bordeaux, France, about the middle of the Eighteenth Century. From there, it was carried to French possessions in the West Indies and thence to the United States. The first Supreme Council was established in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1801, and all other regular Supreme Councils throughout the world are descended from it. It is of interest to note that the Supreme Council for Scotland did not come into existence until 1846 and thus does not hold any priority which would call for the work of the Rite to be performed in that country.

### When did Scottish Rite commence in this country?

Antecedents of Scottish Rite existed in Albany, New York, as early as 1767. The first Supreme Council was organized at Charleston, S. C., in 1801, to cover the United States. In 1813, the Northern Supreme Council came into being as the United States expanded and as an offshoot of the Charleston group, so there are now two Supreme Councils in the United States. Ours is the Supreme Council for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction with headquarters in Boston (Lexington), Mass., and covering 15 northeastern, middle Atlantic and Midwestern states. The other is the Supreme Council for the Southern Jurisdiction with headquarters at Washington, D. C., and covering the remaining 35 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories and possessions.

### How long has Scottish Rite been an international organization?

Since its now officially-recognized beginning in 1801 in Charleston, Scottish Rite has spread throughout the globe. In several countries, particularly in Latin America, Scottish Rite was



the pioneer Masonic organization with Symbolic or Blue Lodge Freemasonry being organized afterwards. The Rite was carried to the new world by French and Spanish members; to India, the Far East, and Africa by English, Irish and Scotch members; to Indonesia by Dutch members, and so on.

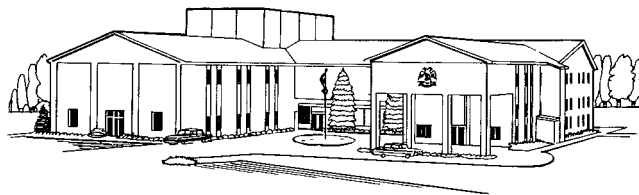


Scottish Rite of the Northern Jurisdiction enjoys official and friendly relations with its counterparts in the following countries.

|                 |                    |             |                         |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Argentina       | Cuba               | Iceland     | Peru                    |
| Austria         | Denmark            | Ireland     | Philippines             |
| Belgium         | Dominican Republic | Iran        | Spain                   |
| Bolivia         | Ecuador            | Israel      | Scotland                |
| Brazil          | El Salvador        | Italy       | Sweden                  |
| Canada          | England            | Luxembourg  | Switzerland             |
| Central America | Finland            | Mexico      | Turkey                  |
| (Guatemala)     | France             | Netherlands | U.S.A.                  |
| Chile           | Germany            | Nicaragua   | (Southern Jurisdiction) |
| Colombia        | Greece             | Norway      | Uruguay                 |
| Costa Rica      | Honduras           | Panama      | Venezuela               |
|                 |                    | Paraguay    |                         |

The Northern Jurisdiction is a regular participant in the International Conferences of Supreme Councils which take place every five years and contributes to the maintenance of the International Bureau of Scottish Rite information and its multi-language bulletin. Northern Jurisdiction representatives have also attended interim regional meetings of European Supreme Councils and Latin American jurisdictions.

*Northern New Jersey  
Lincoln Park*



## ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION

### What is the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction?

The Northern Masonic Jurisdiction specifically covers the following fifteen states: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin.

### What is the membership of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction?

At present (June 30, 1984) there are 475,885 Scottish Rite Masons throughout the fifteen states. Of this number, 3,700 are Thirty-third Degree Masons comprising the membership of the Supreme Council.



### **How does Scottish Rite operate?**

There are Scottish Rite centers called "Valleys" in 112 cities and towns in the fifteen states. There are four coordinate divisions in Scottish Rite – Lodge of Perfection, covering the 4° to 14° (presiding officer – Thrice Potent Master); Council of Princes of Jerusalem, covering the 15° and 16° (presiding officer – Sovereign Prince); Chapter of Rose Croix, covering the 17° and 18° (presiding officer – Most Wise Master), and Consistory of Sublime Princes of the Royal Secret, covering the 19° to 32° (presiding officer – Commander-in-Chief). Some Valleys do not have all four divisions and, in such cases, their candidates receive Council, Chapter or Consistory work in neighboring Valleys.

### **How is Scottish Rite directed?**

The Supreme Council is the governing body and meets once a year in formal session. From its 3,700 members there are 49 selected for "Active" status. This smaller group, which can be likened to a board of directors, elects the officers of the Supreme Council and determines its policies. There are at least two "Active" members in each state, one of whom is designated as "Deputy" by the Supreme Council, and who exercises supervision of Scottish Rite activities in his state. The Supreme Council, itself, is led by a Sovereign Grand Commander with offices at the Lexington, Massachusetts headquarters.

The Supreme Council Constitutions are the basic law for all subordinate Scottish Rite Bodies.

### **What is a Council of Deliberation?**

The Council of Deliberation is the statewide organization of Scottish Rite. Each of the fifteen states has such a Council which meets annually. The Deputy of a state is automatically the Commander-in-Chief of the Council whose membership is made up by the members of the Supreme Council in that state, certain officers of each Scottish Rite Body in the state, certain

past presiding officers of those Bodies and recipients of the Meritorious Service Award. A Council of Deliberation has in its state, such legislative and judicial power, not exercised by the Supreme Council, itself.

## **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS**

### **What Masonic status is required?**

Membership in good standing in a regular Symbolic Lodge is the only Masonic status required for the purpose of petitioning for the Scottish Rite.

### **Must I be invited to join Scottish Rite?**

As a Master Mason in good standing, you are encouraged heartily to apply for membership in the Rite without awaiting a specific invitation. You may ask a Scottish Rite friend for a petition form or contact the nearest Scottish Rite Secretary for an application or further information.

### **What are the requirements of residence?**

No subordinate body of the Rite may elect any candidate unless he is, at the time, an affiliated Master Mason in good standing and has resided in the state one year and in the local jurisdiction (valley area) for six months. Scottish Rite law, however, does provide for the possibility of waiving the usual residence requirements upon the presentation of valid reasons.

### **Can Scottish Rite membership be divided?**

Primary Scottish Rite membership shall not be divided but shall be with the bodies of one Valley so far as opportunity exists.

### **Are there any regulations as to physical condition?**

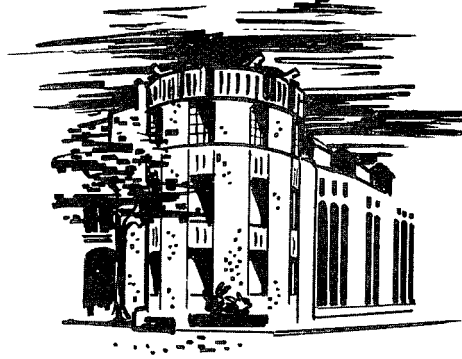
Physical impairment shall not be considered a disqualification from receiving the degrees of the Rite.

### **What is the attitude of the Northern Jurisdiction with respect to religion?**

Like the Symbolic Craft, Scottish Rite does not seek to intrude upon the prerogatives of the



Toledo, Ohio



*Milwaukee, Wis*

Church nor does it attempt to teach any creed. Scottish Rite is not a religion and does not pretend to be a substitute for religion. Its rituals do not hold out the hope of heavenly rewards.

The Rite does require that its adherents profess a monotheistic belief in Almighty God and encourages its members to become active participants in their respective churches. The Fraternity is a meeting place for Christians, Hebrews, Moslems, Parsees and any other believers in a monotheistic faith. As such, it has become the handmaiden of religion. To inject or discuss religious creeds could only be divisive.

Scottish Rite does seek to teach its members a system of morality and thereby develop in our brethren virtues and character which make men worth while.

### **What is the attitude of the Northern Jurisdiction with respect to politics?**

The position of the Northern Jurisdiction has been fully set forth in a Declaration of Principles adopted in 1923 and reaffirmed in 1929, 1934, 1938 and 1969. The concluding paragraphs of this Declaration read

“Recognizing that principles unite men, that programs sometimes divide them, and that the preservation of unity of purpose and devotion to principle is essential to Freemasonry, the Supreme Council affirms its continued adherence to that ancient and approved rule of Freemasonry which forbids the discussion within tyled doors of creeds, politics, or other topics apt to excite personal animosities.”

“This Supreme Council further affirms its conviction that it is not only contrary to the fundamental principles of Freemasonry, but exceedingly dangerous to its unity, strength, usefulness, and welfare for Masonic Bodies in their official capacity to take formal action or attempt to exercise pressure or influence for or against

any particular legislative project or proposal, or in any way to attempt to procure the election or appointment of governmental officials, whether executive, legislative, or judicial, or to influence them, whether or not members of the Fraternity, in the performance of their official duties.”

The leadership of the Northern Supreme Council stands squarely behind the foregoing statement and forbids the use of Scottish Rite publications or mailing lists for the circulation of messages of a political nature.

### **Is the character of petitioners investigated?**

Each subordinate body has the right to inquire into the character and Masonic standing of each applicant through the use of investigating or membership committees

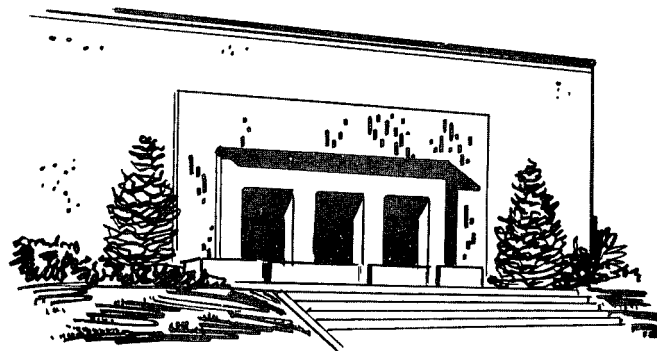
### **Are candidates balloted upon?**

No person shall receive the degrees of the Rite or be elected to membership by affiliation without the unanimous consent of the Brethren voting thereon

### **What does it cost to take the Scottish Rite Degrees?**

Generally speaking, the cost of securing the Fourth to Thirty-second Degrees, inclusive, ranges from \$125.00 to \$200.00. Fees are established for each body in a Valley. For instance, on a \$150.00 basis, a Valley might charge \$40.00 for Lodge of Perfection (4<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>), \$25.00 for Council, Princes of Jerusalem (15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>), \$25.00 for Chapter of Rose Croix (17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>) and \$60.00 for Consistory (19<sup>th</sup>-32<sup>th</sup>). Dues are nominal.

Minimum fees and dues have been established by the Supreme Council, but states and Val-



*Wilmington, Del*

leys have the right to increase such fees and dues as needs indicate. Valley dues statements may include or add a Supreme Council Assessment of \$2.00 annually.

## DEGREE STRUCTURE

### Are Scottish Rite degrees considered "higher" than other Masonic degrees?

The Scottish Rite shares the belief of all Masonic organizations that there is no higher degree than that of Master Mason. The Supreme Council and its subordinate bodies acknowledge the Masonic supremacy of Symbolic Grand Lodges, and the Grand Master of Masons is recognized as the ranking Masonic officer present when in attendance at any Scottish Rite meeting.

Our degrees are in addition to and in no way "higher" than Blue Lodge degrees. Scottish Rite work amplifies and elaborates on the lessons of the Craft.

Interruption of a member's Symbolic standing automatically interrupts his Scottish Rite membership whether his rank be 14° or 33°.

### What is the degree structure of Scottish Rite?



The Lodge of Perfection—4° - 14°, inclusive, are commonly called the Ineffable Degrees. In these eleven lessons, the candidate will observe many references, scenes and characters which recall and amplify the three Symbolic degrees.



The Council of Princes of Jerusalem—15° - 16°, inclusive, teach lessons using settings based on the ancient captivity of the Hebrews and the building of the second Temple.

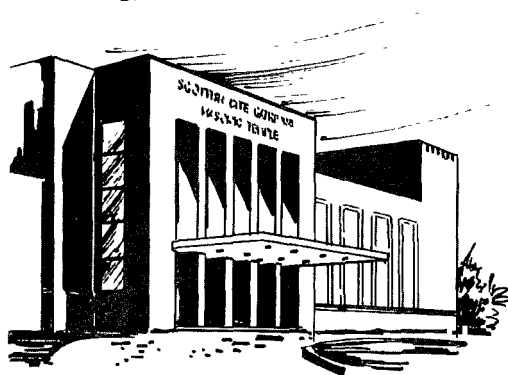


The Chapter of Rose Croix—17° - 18°, inclusive, are the spiritual heart of Scottish Rite and emphasize a new law that the only lasting Temple is in the soul of man.



The Consistory—19° - 32°, inclusive, portray memorable lessons that range in settings from the days of chivalry through the 20th Century.

*Harrisburg, Pa*



Degree structure organization differs somewhat in various jurisdictions throughout the world. For instance, in the Southern Jurisdiction, U.S.A., degree work is carried on within the Lodge of Perfection, 4° - 14°; Chapter of Rose Croix, 15° - 18°; Council of Kadosh, 19° - 30° and Consistory, 31° - 32°. Our Canadian brethren have only three divisions—Lodge of Perfection, 4° - 14°; Chapter of Rose Croix, 15° - 18° and Consistory, 19° - 32°. In Europe and South America, the Rite has still different groupings of degrees to suit the needs of each jurisdiction. Overseas, such terms as "Areopagus" and "Sovereign (or) Grand Tribunal" may be found. However, the basic principles and purposes remain the same, and, as a matter of fact, it usually takes considerably longer to acquire Scottish Rite degrees in overseas jurisdictions.

### Must I take all degrees at once?

Although Scottish Rite degree-conferring meetings are often scheduled to permit the 32° to be attained within a comparatively brief period, it is not necessary for an applicant to complete all his work at one time. A candidate is elected actually four times, once each in the Lodge, Council, Chapter and Consistory and pays a fee for each division. He may choose to take the degrees of each body separately over a longer period of time rather than in a concentrated series of meetings.

### Will I witness every Scottish Rite degree upon initiation?

Since there are twenty-nine degrees in the Scottish Rite structure, many requiring elaborate stage preparation, it is not always practical for a Valley to exemplify or work each one during a degree-conferring session. The Supreme Council has set minimum standards as to the number and selection of degrees to be presented. These

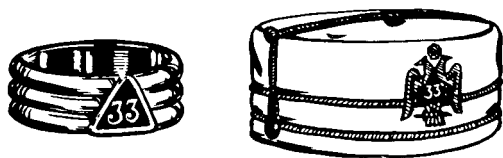
standards can be and have been increased by many Valleys to give the candidates as full a program as time and facilities permit. Degrees not exemplified or worked are communicated or revealed to the candidates in essence. It is hoped that members, after initiation, will return frequently to Scottish Rite Reunions or meetings and witness degree presentations not previously seen.

### Is memorization required?

A candidate is not required to commit the Scottish Rite degrees, signs, passwords, tokens or grips to memory. No examinations are given either during the degree work nor for admission to the meetings of other Valleys.

### What evidence of membership is necessary for admission to Scottish Rite meetings?

Following initiation, a member gains entrance to meetings of his own Valley upon presentation of a current dues card. Visitors to Scottish Rite Valleys are required to furnish proof of membership in the Rite by a current dues card and, in some instances, by the presentation of a membership patent or certificate.



## AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE

### What is the Thirty-third Degree?



This is the highest or official degree which can only be granted and conferred by the Supreme Council. It cannot be applied for. Each year at the annual meeting of the Supreme Council, a number of Thirty-second Degree Masons from throughout the Jurisdiction, are elected to receive the Thirty-third Degree because of outstanding service to the Fraternity or for service to others which reflects credit upon the Order. Nominations for the Thirty-third Degree are made by the Deputies of each of the fifteen states after consultation with their fellow Active Members in each state. Nominations are then submitted to the entire

Active Membership of the Supreme Council for ballot. Following election, candidates await the next annual meeting when the Degree is conferred in full ceremonial form

### What is the Meritorious Service Award?

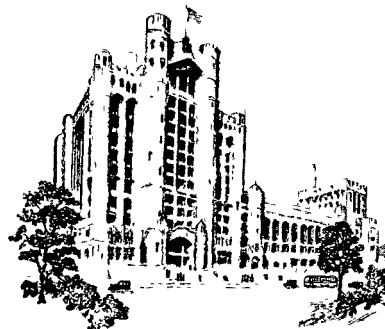


This honor is granted by the fifteen Councils of Deliberation to Thirty-second Degree or Thirty-third Degree Masons nominated for the award by the presiding officers of local bodies. Supreme Council law limits the number of such awards to one member a year from each body in a state, subject to reduction by each Council of Deliberation. At the end of July, 1984, there were 1,900 holders of the Meritorious Service Award throughout the Jurisdiction.

### What is the Gourgas Medal?



The Gourgas Medal is named in honor of the founder of this Supreme Council, an outstanding leader who is known to the Craft as the "Conservator of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry." This may be conferred by the Supreme Council, or by the Sovereign Grand Commander, upon a member of our Jurisdiction, or of any other Jurisdiction with which we exchange Representatives, in recognition of notably distinguished service in the cause of Freemasonry, humanity or country. Only twenty-four awards have been made since the decoration was established in 1938.



*Detroit, Mich.*



*Buffalo, N. Y.*

## ACTIVITIES AND BENEVOLENCES

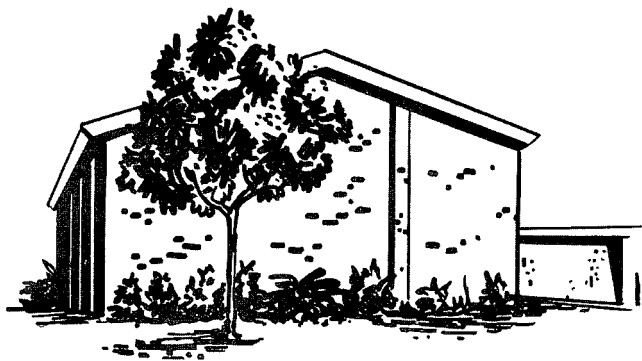
### **What activities can I take part in as a member of Scottish Rite?**

The opportunities for active participation are almost unlimited. The 112 Valleys of the Northern Jurisdiction are continually seeking the variety of talents necessary to the work of the Rite. Degree presentations not only require ritualists and those with dramatic abilities, but choirs, orchestras, stage crews, make-up men and service committees of all kinds. This is also true of plays and other entertainment programs, such as the November "Family Week" events, that many Valleys present for members and families. Scottish Rite Bodies search constantly for officer material, many Valleys have publications which welcome the help of those with a literary bent, membership committees seek personnel to maintain the flow of candidates, and publicity committees need the help of those experienced in this specialized field.

It is the aim of Scottish Rite to provide a suitable place for every member who wishes to have an active role in the advancement of the Rite



*New Haven, Conn.*



*Montpelier, Vt*

### **What is meant by the terms "Reunion" and "Convocation"?**

These words are frequently used to refer to Scottish Rite meetings where degrees are conferred. As distinguished from routine business meetings of the Rite, Reunions and Convocations involve the use of degree casts, committees of all types, musical units, costuming and make-up personnel, stagehands and others. In some large Valleys, as many as 700 members take active parts in Reunions and Convocations.

### **How can I keep in touch with Scottish Rite after initiation if I live many miles from Valley headquarters?**

In an effort to overcome the problems of distance, the majority of Scottish Rite Valleys which cover large geographical areas have encouraged the formation of county or regional Clubs, Associations or Societies. These organizations enable members to meet regularly between Reunions or Convocations and to keep up their Scottish Rite contacts and friendships. Responsible to the parent Valley and its officers, Scottish Rite Clubs carry on business meetings, social programs, and ladies' nights at convenient locations for out-of-town members. Some Clubs have also adopted local charitable projects to add to their worthwhile activities.

Each Scottish Rite member receives regular issues of "The Northern Light", a jurisdiction-wide magazine published by the Supreme Council. "The Northern Light", supplemented by many existing Valley publications, is a source of up-to-date and accurate Scottish Rite information for all members wherever they may reside. The Supreme Council has produced five motion pictures, "The Quest for Light", "What Came You Here To Do?", "Song of America", "Courage to Lead", and "Turning the Tide". These together with a carousel



slide-tape presentation entitled, "Serving The Nation — Strengthening The Rite" are available to interested groups and organizations through Valley Secretaries, in a continuing endeavor to explain Masonic origins, principles, purposes and benevolences

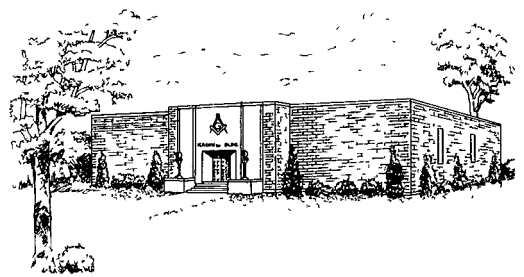
### **What are the principal charitable activities of Scottish Rite?**

Since 1934, Scottish Rite in the Northern Jurisdiction has directed and financed the first coordinated research program into the cause of schizophrenia—the most widespread and serious form of mental illness. This research activity —of benefit to all mankind is carried on with the cooperation of an advisory committee composed of leading medical scientists, psychiatrists and psychologists. Scottish Rite to date has appropriated more than \$9,750,000 for this purpose.

As a Masonic contribution to the Bicentennial observance, Scottish Rite constructed and opened a Museum and Library devoted to our national heritage. The attractive facility at historic Lexington, Massachusetts, has been erected by Scottish Rite members and friends for the purpose of disseminating knowledge of the country's history, purposes and ideals among all the people — especially our youth.



*Museum of Our National Heritage  
Lexington, Mass.*



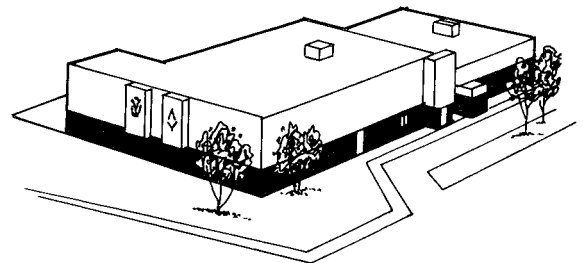
*Lewiston-Auburn, Maine*

Scottish Rite sponsors the Leon M. Abbott Scholarships, named for the former Sovereign Grand Commander who by a generous legacy founded the Supreme Council Education and Charity Fund. Over the years Abbott grants have gone to twelve university schools of journalism and two schools of international service. Now, a new aspect will award scholarships that recipients may use at universities of their choice. More than \$450,000 in scholarships has been awarded since 1952.

A number of local Valleys also maintain charitable projects of their own, contribute to the operation of Grand Lodge Homes and provide special relief assistance to distressed brethren and their families.

### **Will I be assessed for charitable or benevolent endeavors?**

There are no such assessments either by the Supreme Council or by local Valleys. The Supreme Council does make appeals for voluntary contributions from individual members to its Benevolent Foundation, the Abbott scholarships and the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum and Library, Inc. Some local Valleys solicit voluntary gifts for their hospital or similar funds. In all cases, response is entirely voluntary, and the Supreme Council and its subordinate bodies are content to rely on the judgement of the individual member in this respect.



*Providence — Cranston, R. I.*



## **Scottish Rite Masonic Museum of Our National Heritage Lexington, Massachusetts**

Scottish Rite needs the active participation of every Master Mason who is sincerely trying to practice the honored, time-tested principles of the Fraternity in his daily life and, particularly, in his relations with his fellow men.

And the world, in turn, needs, more than ever before in history, the example of such men—men who are dedicated to these great moral precepts and to the preservation of human dignity.

Never has there been a greater or more urgent need for men who are striving to practice true brotherhood—and nowhere will you find a greater opportunity to increase your capacity for enlightened service than in Scottish Rite Masonry.

**THE SUPREME COUNCIL 33° A.°A.° SCOTTISH RITE**  
 Northern Masonic Jurisdiction, U.S.A.  
 33 Marrett Road  
 Lexington, Massachusetts 02173