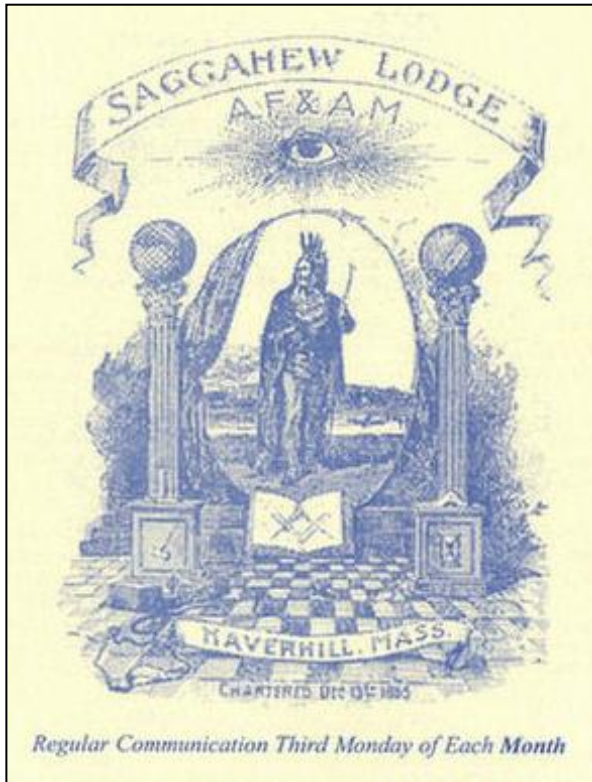


Saggahew Lodge AF&AM



150 Years in Freemasonry

Haverhill of the 1860's is described as "a flourishing town. It consisted of about 100 buildings, mostly handsome, some elegant. A costly bridge, 800 ft long, connected the town with Bradford. There were 98 shoe and 2 boot manufacturers mostly on Merrimack St (where the Haverhill Masonic building is today). The shoes were mostly sold in the south. At the start of the civil war, it was feared that the manufacturers were ruined. However, they kept on producing and went into army shoes, and were soon more prosperous than ever."

The prosperity of the city led to a great press of candidates to Merrimack Lodge. In 1861 there had been only 4 candidates, in 1864 there were 29. They had nearly 40 communications in 1864. Members as well as officers founding it fatiguing, and talk of a new lodge gained favor.

Before the stated meeting of Dec 7, 1864, Bro James E Gale called on the master of Merrimack Lodge and stated that some 20-30 members wished to form a new lodge, if it could be done without any feeling of opposition of even a small minority of the members, ...Notice was accordingly given, and Bro Gale presented a petition for the consent of the lodge to establish another lodge in Haverhill, signed by himself and eleven others. Bro gale made a few remarks...and after a few well-chosen words by Bro Phineas E Davis, on motion of Bro John Edwards, it was voted unanimously to grant their request. ...And it may be said that the relation between the two lodges has ever been most harmonious.

In a few days a dispensation was granted to Saggahew Lodge, and on December 13, 1865 the lodge was duly constituted...

Among the twenty-seven original and charter members of Saggahew, all of whom demitted from Merrimack, were a good portion of younger men. Some of the older men were Carlos P Messer who was a Colonel in the Civil War; James H Carleton, who later purchased the Whittier Birthplace and presented it the Whittier Trustees; James Nichols..who would later build the Winnekenni Castle as a summer home. (Both of these sites are still landmarks in Haverhill and enjoyed by the public today). But the natural leader was James E Gale who was deeply drawn to Masonry and became our first

Master and later Commander of Haverhill Commandery as well as District Deputy Grand Master.

The eighteenth special communication of Saggahew Lodge was held the afternoon of January 12, 1866, with MW Charles C Dame, Grand Master of Masons in Massachusetts and ten other Grand Lodge officers present...the new charter of the lodge was presented, and the Master and Wardens installed.

Early in 1872 measures were taken which resulted in the purchase of the lot on the corner of Merrimack and How Streets. A special meeting was held on June 24, 1873 for the dual purpose of celebrating St John's Day and laying the cornerstone of the new Masonic Temple. The 102nd Stated Communication on February 15, 1875 was the meeting of Saggahew Lodge held in the new Masonic Temple. Today the Haverhill Masonic Building is the oldest building in Haverhill still used for its original purpose, and is busy almost every day of the week with one of the many bodies who meet there.

The records of the lodge continuously show how much music has been loved. The Chorister was a regular officer until 1881, when it was changed to Organist. Quartettes, bands and Orchestras regularly performed for the lodge. Though today we do not have an Organist, Saggahew has several musicians amongst its members and can belt out "Happy Birthday" unlike most have heard.

May 2, 1888 "will ever be remembered in the history of the masonic fraternity in Haverhill, for on that evening was held the co-fraternal meeting of Merrimack and Saggahew Lodges, it being the first of its kind in Massachusetts." There were present 125

members of Merrimack Lodge, 115 of Saggahew and 92 visitors, making a total of 332 Masons. Past Masters of both lodges assumed the several stations and candidates were raised. The lodges closed at 10:45 PM, after which a banquet was held, with speeches and music by the Temple Quartette of Boston. The meeting broke up at 1 AM. A second co-fraternal meeting was held in 1896. A total of 325 members were present.

On August 20, 1888 Bro James E Gale died. Of him, the resolution in the Secretary's book says, "Its first worshipful master, its constant and devoted friend, its judicious and faithful adviser...may his example teach us that he most truly leads who most willingly serves his fellow men. To such belongs the Grand Master's welcome: Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

On December 5, 1889, the 25 the Anniversary of Saggahew Lodge was celebrated. The night was cold and stormy, in spite of which the occasion was truly Masonic and one long to be remembered.

On June 18, 1902, Merrimack Lodge celebrated its 100th Anniversary. Wor Fred D McGregor of Saggahew remarked "...may brotherly love always prevail and may the going down of the sun never find discord among Masons of Haverhill." Wor Nelson J Hunt replied, "May the maternal care of Merrimack Lodge and the reciprocal love and affection of Saggahew Lodge which now exists last till time shall be no more."

On December 15, 1913 Wor Mathew J Gray announced the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Saggahew Lodge. A reception was tendered out only living charter members, Oliver S Hubbard, R. Stuart

Chase, Charles W Chase, and David M Kelley. Only Bro Hubbard was able to attend, and he read the original poem "Saggahew" written in 1865 which was sung at the earlier communications of the lodge by a quartette of which Bro Hubbard was a member.

In November of 1919, a joint meeting of the two Haverhill lodges was held for the dedication of a Masonic Monument by the Grand Master. In all, 1200 persons were in line. The beautiful monument was given to the Masonic Fraternity by Mrs. Augusta H Tasker in memory of her husband, William Orin Tasker, a late member of Merrimack Lodge.

On January 20, 1941 Saggahew celebrated its 75th Anniversary with Wor. Albert A Schaefer presiding. And our 100th anniversary was celebrated in great style by Wor Richard Patterson and a banquet of more than 100 people. Today people still remember it fondly.

In 2013, together with several lodges, we celebrated 150 years at Grand Lodge with presentations by each of the lodge followed by lunch.

Saggahew's 1460th regular meeting on December 2014 marked the start of our 150th year, where we celebrated with a Table Lodge of Instruction, Wor Scott Reid presiding.

Over the years, Saggahew Lodge has seen numerous special degree teams perform ritual, including degree teams of Postal Servicemen, Haverhill Electric Company, the Beacon Hill Square and Compass Club, the Hood Rubber Craftsman, an Armenian group and the Hellenic Square and Compass Club.

Since 1951, the Haverhill Lodges have been involved with the Red Cross; originally as the Masonic Blood Bank, but still today blood drives are regularly organized in the Haverhill Masonic Building.

Today Haverhill Masonry is still strong. Both lodges have a full line of officers and good attendance. Saggahew is a very active lodge with an eager membership. Over the past several years, the lodge has had a mostly fresh officer line, backed up by 15 or more Past Masters who regularly attend and are quite active in the lodge, its committees and appended bodies. From the start Saggahew has been made up of great men and still is today.

Saggahew Lodge has been and still is a great example of how freemasons should meet. Our ritual is exceptional, our membership is stable, our attendance good and our doors are always open to visiting brethren. We look forward to another 150 years.



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