

A BRIEF HISTORY OF GOTHIC LODGE,
A.F. & A.M., No. 608, G.R.C.

The year was 1919 and the world was recovering from the First World War. The soldiers were returning to their former lives in the towns and villages across the nation and were looking for some way to improve themselves. Lindsay was no exception and that search resulted in a large influx of new members into Faithful Brethren Lodge, No. 77, as well as the other lodges within Victoria District and across the province. In that year, there were 31 initiations in Faithful Brethren Lodge, and it was felt that it was time for a second lodge to be formed in Lindsay.

At the regular meeting of Faithful Brethren Lodge on December 5th, 1919, when the attendance was 71 members and 4 visitors, R.W.Bro. James B. Begg moved, seconded by W.Bro. Harry Brimmell "that Faithful Brethren Lodge, No. 77, recommend to the Grand Lodge that a new lodge be formed in Lindsay." The motion carried. The membership of Faithful Brethren Lodge, No. 77, stood at about 300 at that time.

Very little was done in 1920 to obtain a list of petitioners but in 1921, R.W.Bro. James B. Begg began an active campaign in support of the project. By March 1st, 1922, he had obtained the names of 47 brethren on the petition, 32 of whom were members of Faithful Brethren Lodge and the other 15 were from other lodges but residents of Lindsay.

The petition for the new lodge, along with a list of the petitioners, was forwarded to the District Deputy Grand Master, of Victoria District, R.W.Bro. Albert E. Bottum of Bobcaygeon and under the date of March 15th, 1922, he submitted the same to the Grand Lodge.

A further meeting of the "petitioners" was held on March 27th, 1922, and the name "Gothic Lodge" was proposed by W.Bro. Harry Brimmell which met with the approval of those present and therefore was adopted. It was recommended to the Grand Lodge through the D.D.G.M. and approved by the Grand Master. The regular day of meeting was established as the Third Monday.

At the same time, a committee was appointed to bring in a suggested slate of Officers with the following being named:

R.W.Bro. James B. Begg	W.M.
W.Bro. Sam W. Clarke	I.P.M.
W.Bro. Sidney F. Chamberlain	S.W.
W.Bro. Robert W. Groves	J.W.
Bro. (Rev.) G. R. Maconochie	Chaplain.
R.W.Bro. John W. Anderson	Treasurer.
Bro. William R. Allely	Secretary.
Bro. Ed Stubbins	S.D.
Bro. Archibald J. McBride.....	J.D.
W.Bro. A. Lorne Campbell	D. of C.
Bro. (Dr.) Howard A. Nesbitt	S.S.

Bro. E. M. LockieJ.S.

Bro. S. L. Reade I.G.

Authority to form the new lodge was furnished promptly with the dispensation from Grand Lodge being dated May 9th, 1922. The first meeting of “Gothic Lodge” was held on May 22nd, 1922, when it was instituted by R.W.Bro. Albert E. Bottum, D.D.G.M. of Victoria District No. 20. He presented the dispensation to the lodge, which it was read by the Secretary, Bro. William. R. Allely. R.W.Bro. Bottum then proceeded to install and invest the officers for 1922.

Ten petitions for initiation were received, the first candidate being Mr. Edgar George Lytle, grain and seed merchant, Oakwood, a member of the firm of Hogg & Lytle. At the regular meeting on June 19th, four others were initiated and at an emergent meeting on June 25th, five more were initiated.

Grand Lodge was held in the Cities of Fort William and Port Arthur in July of 1922, and R.W.Bro. James B. Begg was appointed a delegate with expenses paid. They amounted to \$85.00. R.W.Bro. Robert W. Groves, an affiliated Past Master of Faithful Brethren Lodge, No. 77, was elected D.D.G.M.

The Warrant for the new lodge was dated at Hamilton on July 19th, 1922 and signed by R.W.Bro. William J. Drope, the Deputy Grand Master, and R.W.Bro. William M. Logan, the Grand Secretary.

R.W.Bro. Robert W. Groves represented the Grand Master at the constituting and consecrating of Gothic Lodge No. 608, A.F. & A.M. on Monday, September 18th, 1922, at which R.W.Bro. William J. Drope, the Deputy Grand Master, was the guest speaker.

On December 18th, W.Bro. Sid Chamberlain, Manager of the Bank of Montreal, who had been Senior Warden, was elected Worshipful Master for 1923.

On January 15th, 1923, the by-laws of the lodge were adopted. R.W.Bro. James B. Begg installed and invested the officers with W.Bro. Sidney F. Chamberlain as Worshipful Master but when the returns were made to Grand Lodge the lodge was informed that he had not served twelve months as a Warden in Ontario, and he was therefore disqualified. R.W.Bro. A. M. Fulton became the second Worshipful Master of the lodge and was installed on March 5th.

Bro. Ed Stubbins, machinist, initiated in Speed Lodge No. 180, Guelph, June 20th, 1916, affiliated with Faithful Brethren Lodge No. 77 on October 5th, 1917, and a charter member of Gothic Lodge, No. 608, was the first Worshipful Master to come from the ranks, and served as such in 1924.



Figure 1. M.W.Bro. William J. Drope, G.M., 1923 - 25

Thereafter, Gothic Lodge, No. 608, continued to flourish reaching 104 members in 1931 although it dropped back during the depression years to 91 in 1938. Membership then continued a gradual increase reaching its peak year in 1962 when there were 173 members. Since that time, there has been a small though steady decrease year over year in membership, with the number sitting at 140 as of 1972, but only about 110 at the turn of the millennium.

During its first fifty years in addition to the 47 charter members, 298 brothers have been received into membership by initiation or affiliation. In the last fifty years, we have added another 210 names to the register yet lost so many to deaths, demits and suspensions.

R.W.Bro. William MacMillan was the first District Deputy Grand Master elected from the members of Gothic Lodge, during the Annual Communication at Kingston in 1932. R.W.Bro. W. Ewart Rogers served as D.D.G.M. in 1943, R.W.Bro. Herbert H. McFadden in 1956 and R.W.Bro. Ivan G. Rodd in 1970.

One notable brother of Gothic Lodge was R.W.Bro. G. Kenneth Johnson who was initiated January 17th, 1949, was Worshipful Master in 1959, served as Grand Registrar of Grand Lodge in 1965, and was appointed to the Board of General Purposes of Grand Lodge in Toronto on July 21st, 1971.

On April 21st, 1958, Bro. William R. Allely was awarded the William Mercer Wilson Medal in recognition of his services to Gothic Lodge No. 608 as Secretary from 1922 to that date. His service to this lodge as secretary continued into 1960.

From 1922 to 1965 inclusive, the lodge met on the third floor of the Post Building, William Street, North. In 1963, the property at the corner of Ridout Street, Mill Street and Kent Street, East, was purchased for \$10,400.⁰⁰ with the purpose of constructing a Masonic Temple. Work commenced on May 19th, 1965, and the transfer of furniture, etc. from the old temple to the new was done on December 27th, 1965.

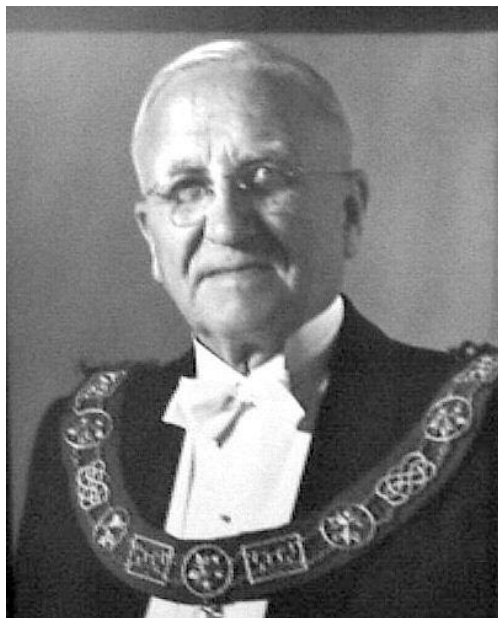


Figure 2. M.W.Bro. James N. Allen, G.M. 1965-67

Administration of the Temple is by the Lindsay Masonic Temple Corporation with the cost of the structure and its contents being just over \$60,000.00.

The Temple was dedicated on Saturday, April 16th, 1966, by M.W.Bro. James N. Allan, the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario. Twenty-two members of Gothic Lodge, 58 from Faithful Brethren Lodge No. 77, and 128 brethren from 48 lodges between Windsor and Ottawa were present.

On June 3rd, 1972, Gothic Lodge celebrated its 50th Anniversary with a banquet at the Cambridge Street United Church Hall. W.Bro. Stephen E. Tripp was the Worshipful Master and Bro. R. Earl Quackenbush was the Senior Warden. R.W.Bro. A. Elwin Robertson from Haliburton was the D.D.G.M. at that time, and the guest

speaker for the evening was R.W.Bro. Bruce McCall, from Brussels, Ontario and a member of the Board of General Purposes.

Since the 50th Anniversary, Gothic Lodge has been pleased to provide three more of its members to serve as District Deputy Grand Master, namely R.W.Bro. Gordon R. Henry in 1984, R.W.Bro. Floyd W. Hall in 1998 and R.W.Bro. Darren J. Byrne in 2012. Also, in 1985, R.W.Bro. David M. Wilson served our Grand Lodge as the Grand Registrar, under M.W.Bro. A. Lou Copeland, Grand Master.

The 75th Anniversary of the lodge was celebrated with a special evening in the Lindsay Masonic Temple on March 28th, 1998. The lodge, under the direction of the Worshipful Master, W.Bro. David Parrott, hosted a banquet in the hall followed by a special meeting of the brethren in the lodge room. R.W.Bro. Lee Smith was the D.D.G.M. for the occasion and R.W.Bro. Rev. William Fairley, Past Grand Chaplain was the guest speaker.

This brings us to near the present date when our lodges have been closed for 2 years dues to the COVID-19 pandemic. Still, Gothic Lodge, No. 608 has continued to serve the community and offers friendship and brotherly love to all fellow masons.

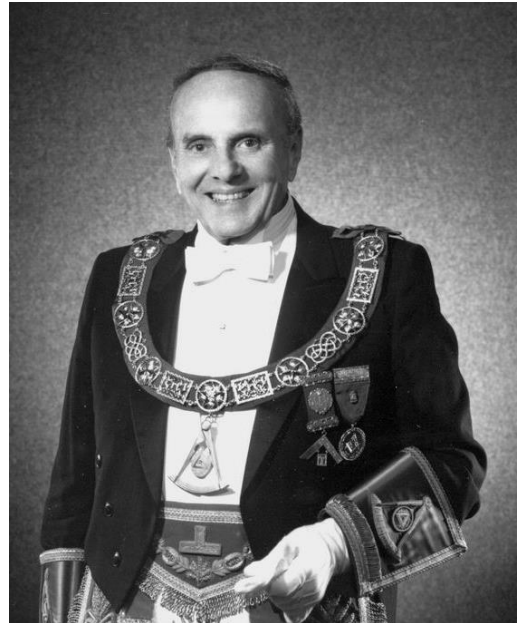


Figure 3. M.W.Bro. A. Lou Copeland, G.M. 1985-87

May 9th, 2022 is the 100th Anniversary of the issuing of the dispensation to form the lodge, and May 22nd, 2022 will be the 100th Anniversary of our first meeting. The members remain committed to the life of their lodge in this picturesque town of Lindsay in the beautiful Kawartha Lakes.