

The History
of
Breckenridge Lodge
A. F. & A. M. No. 47



Charter Granted September 20, 1882

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The history of Breckenridge Lodge #47 A. F. & A. M. is coincident with the history of Colorado for here in Summit County Masonry became a reality as Colorado became a state and as men began their search for Colorado's wealth there were among them Master Masons who felt the need of friendship and Brotherly love, pending the time when gold veins pinched out, food became scarce and snows deep.

Parkville Lodge being second oldest in Colorado Territory played a major part in the organization of our most Worshipful Grand Lodge by placing three members in its first staff of officers.

Parkville Lodge became a mountain metropolis and in it, Masonry flourished, even though its building, furniture, and jewels of office were hewn from any available source.

Parkville Lodge was chartered on June 5th, 1861, by the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Nebraska to:

Bro. James Ewing - W.M.

Bro. O. A. Whittemore - Proxy S.W.

Bro. S. M. Robbins - Proxy J.W.

The hills still bear silent testimony of their diligence as miners and Masons and of their constant search for new frontiers.

On August 3, 1861, Parkville Lodge #7 was declared to be one of the three subordinate Lodges of Colorado and was named Summit #2.

Bro. C. H. Blair, Worshipful Master of Summit Lodge #2 was later Junior Warden of Breckenridge Lodge U.D. August 27, 1881.

William F. Eberline, L. B. Smart, John Boylan, R. H. Manzing, Roderick Mimeum, and F. B. Wallis, five Master Masons having crossed the hills from Parkville into Breckenridge, were visitors at Doric Lodge #25 on August 6, 1881, and requested a letter of recommendation from them for Dispensation and a Charter.

One of these five Master Masons, John Boylan, was Worshipful Master of Breckenridge Lodge, both under dispensation and the first year under charter; William F. Eberline and C. H. Blair were Senior and Junior Wardens at the same time.

Breckenridge Lodge was chartered September 20, 1882, and Lodge was held in the second story of a furniture store in Breckenridge, at the corner of Lincoln Ave. and Main St. for several years.

Hard times must have been the rule from the beginning, since records show that suspensions for non-payment of dues made long lists in the Secretary's records, and took up much of their time. Our first Worshipful Master no doubt had some financial difficulties for he at one time had charges preferred, but was given ample time for payment as was also many a Master Mason during those trying times.

It is gratifying to realize the ever increasing efforts to maintain the character of the Lodge when the community was flooded with an element of questionable characters; one fellow was suspended and re-instated twice as he made many honest efforts to secure better employment than that of being a bar-tender.

At the turn of the century, a period of prosperity began and again long lists filled the records, this time being lists of re-instatements, at one time there were seventeen, this was the year of 1906.

The town of Breckenridge was booming and on the third day of July the Lodge was invited to lay the corner-stone of the new Court House, for which occasion G. B. Folsom donated the trowel.

The Lodge had by this time become more financially sound and moved into its new home at the corner of Washington Ave. and Main St., having paid \$800.00 for the building. Their pride must have known no bounds, as on July 2, 1917, they laid away antique jewels and furniture and moved in a shipment of new equipment consisting of three chairs (one triple chair), an Altar, three pedestals, one pair of Masonic Pillars and Map Globes, Deacon's tops and Rods, Steward's Tops and Rods, lecture charts, one slipper and one ballot box, at the price of \$229.50.

Through the years many persons have contributed to the effects of Breckenridge Lodge, also to its edification, a picture of Prs. McKinley was given by Frank Willis August 5, 1899.

A mallet of walrus tusk was carved by a native of Alaska and presented by Bro. Bernard Hettle; it is now in the Masonic Museum in Denver.

Bro. Chas. Burnheimer and Mrs. Engle gave a picture of Edwin C. Carter. Archie Palmer offered a prayer for the Pres. F. D. Roosevelt. Bro. Clayborne presented the Lodge with a silk hat. Isaac Palmer gave J. D. Prier a hand-made gavel. Bro. C. L. Young presented the Lodge with a Bible October 16, 1933.

Breckenridge Lodge has a fabulous record of beneficent achievements; besides annual donations to local churches and schools, it has contributed to relief in State and National disasters, not only by direct endowment but also through the Red Cross and the March of Dimes.

Special attention has been given to the memory and maintenance of old Summit Lodge #2 at Parkville. Its effects have been carefully preserved and cherished. Special occasions have necessitated the use of its ancient Bible and tin jewels of office and an annual picnic, instigated July 27, 1941, is held in remembrance of our departed Brethren and their fallen edifice.

A bronze monument erected July 26, 1941, now marks the site of old Summit Lodge #2 and many Master Masons visit it, and the marker at Parkville Cemetery.

The interest Breckenridge Lodge takes in this spot is prompted by loyalty for the Lodge to which it feels it owes its heritage.

If a more accurate record had been kept, no doubt Breckenridge Lodge could boast of a most colorful history with many unique incidents; unfortunately, only a few are available. A Bro. Master Mason was known to have traveled twenty-three miles by sleigh and on horseback, and on one occasion he arrived to find the Secretary absent with the desk keys and no quorum present.

Bro. L. F. Christensen received his Entered Apprentice degree at Breckenridge Lodge #47, his Fellow Craft degree at Mt. Wolford #163, and his Master Mason degree at Corinthian Lodge #42.

William Yust was initiated November 4, 1916, and raised October 28, 1920, nearly four years later and attended Lodge quite regularly; another stood on his E.A. degree for three years, finally finishing in California. He, too, spent most of his time with the Tyler.

During gas rationing, the Lodge Hall was often empty and as many as eleven consecutive "no quorums was present" and the Brethren voted to cancel many communications, yet at the raising on Bro. Raymond Wailes and Bro. Frank Warren, its floors must have sagged present were ten officers, ten members and fifty-three visitors, seventy-three were present at the banquet, representing twenty Lodges in Colorado and one in Illinois.

At the raising of Bro. Raymond Hill and Bro. Lawrence Hoggatt, that number was topped by two, making a total of seventy-five.

In recent years many Masters of Breckenridge Lodge have diligently worked for the betterment of conditions in general, and each making some improvements as his project during his term as Master.

Bro. T. J. Fletcher sponsored the papering and painting of the Lodge hall and ante-room.

New and very comfortable chairs were purchased by funds raised from scrap-iron sales during a two year period started by Bro. Ray Wailes and finished by Bro. Raymond Hill, who also built the cover on the back porch.

Cement floors in the kitchen, an oil range and the Past Masters plaque were the products of Bro. Wesley Enyeart's efforts.

Bro. Thomas Gibson felt the need of repairing the building's foundation and made this his project.

The kitchen needed a hot water system, and Bro. Archie Palmer directed his talents to that end.

Cramped quarters in the preparation and regalia rooms had been a burden to Bro. C. P. (Bud) Enyeart during his year as Senior Deacon, so he had a partition removed, combining the two into a very desirable and well arranged room with ample cupboards and shelves.

A rest room for the lower hall was finished on January 8, 1940.

The Lodge Hall was re-wired and new fixtures installed, the rheostat was not installed until December of 1947.

The upper and lower halls of the lodge building are separated by only a few inches, but at times when the mercury dropped to -35° and the wind howled at 50 MPH, those few inches seemed to stretch into a mile as Master Masons raced from one level to the other. This problem was solved by a stairway built during the term of Bro. Ira Blundell, at the cost of \$129.00.

Breckenridge Lodge, being the essence of hospitality, often found itself pulsing with vigor far above normal. At times, in fact, near the point of disaster, again those few inches that separate the two halls became a problem, and on January 26, 1950, supports were placed in the lower hall, maintaining a more constant level for the ceiling.

Breckenridge Lodge #47 purchased six and two-thirds acres of placer ground from Wm. McAdoo, January 14, 1896, for \$120.34, to be used as a Masonic Cemetery.

The Lodge gave \$25.00 toward the construction of a building in the Cemetery and certificates for cemetery lots were available September 6, 1902, price \$10.00 per lot.

Records of Masonic burials seemed uncertain in many instances, so it was agreed to purchase metal grave markers to be placed on all known Masonic graves and flags to be placed on graves on Memorial Day. Steel posts were purchased and placed in the Masonic cemetery in Breckenridge to mark the lots, so that the snow plows would keep in the streets.

This history would not be complete without expressing our deep gratitude to Doric Lodge #25, not only for its ready willingness to offer recommendation for our Charter, but also for its devotion to our best interests through the years which have followed.

Nor can we fail to mention how well the word "Brother" has been exemplified by our Brethren from Corinthian Lodge #42, Mt.

Wolford Lodge #163, Georgetown Lodge #12, Central City Lodge #6, Blackhawk Lodge #11, Leadville Lodge #35, Eagle Lodge #43, Idaho Springs Lodge #26 and our Most Worshipful Grand Lodge.

Edwin C. Carter and Martin J. Waltz served continuously for five year terms.

During a period of 76 years 1881-1957

14 applicants were found unfavorable by committees
44 E.A. were never raised to Master Masons
4 F.C. were never raised to Master Masons
33 applicants for affiliation (one was rejected)
54 Applicants for membership were rejected
1 Application - died before committee report
302 applicants were raised
473 applications were received
2 ministers applied, one was raised - one moved away
8 applicants never re-appeared. JUST VANISHED
1698 Stated Communications
374 Special Communications
23 Special Communications
2095 Total Communications
61 Master Masons deceased
153 times a quorum was not present
11 consecutive "no quorum" July to November 1935
3 No communications because secretary was absent with keys
63 unfavorable and rejections constitute 10.3% of all applications
2 Emergent communications were held the same Sunday
46 demits

Because many early secretaries' records were not legible and had to be re-written, these figures are as nearly correct as possible.

Committee on History,
Frank Warren
Thomas Gibson
Robert Roush

September 20, 1957 appointed 1954 by Bro. Wes Enyeart, W.M.
The 75th Anniversary
Breckenridge Lodge #47

This period of history covers 18 years, starting with the 75th year, September 21, 1957, through October 1975.

The financial situation of the Lodge during the first few years of this period was a great concern of current presiding officers. The dues collected covered the ordinary expense of lodge operation and left a small amount for charity. The improvements for the building were paid for out of funds raised for the special projects. A considerable amount of money was realized from the sale of scrap-iron that was salvaged from the local mines. Raymond Wailes and Ray Hill spearheaded this project and almost every resident member donated time and labor. The first drive raised \$1,617.12. A second drive was conducted with the help of Bro. Frank Merrick; this raised over \$1000.

Carl P. Enyeart, W.M. 1957, saw the project started to replace the oil stove and coal stoves with gas-fired, forced air furnaces. The project was completed in 1958 at a cost of \$771.73. The installation labor was donated by several Brothers. A 500 gal. propane tank was purchased for \$218.20.

Bro. Olin Mueller had for his project the remodeling of the dining area. The drafty "store front" was replaced, the ceiling lowered 2 feet and the walls and ceiling textured and painted. New fluorescent lights were installed and folding tables and chairs purchased. The total expenditure was \$1,182.13. Bro. Frank Merrick had upper and lower cabinets made for the kitchen; these were donated to the lodge.

In 1959, Bro. Leo Michalek had the old caretakers quarters, known as the "Annex", removed and a new coat of white paint put on the exterior of the building. New lights were also installed in the kitchen.

Bro. James A. Smith in 1960, with the help of an enthusiastic committee of Past Masters, raised the funds and saw a new carpet installed in the Lodge room at the cost of \$1,675.00. The money was raised by the members subscribing \$10.00 for each square yard. Several yards were purchased in the memory of Bro. Clinton Hooker.

In 1961, Bro. Howard Giberson saw walnut veneer wainscot installed in the lodge room at the cost of \$169.31.

Bro. Loren Enyeart had a fireproof vault built in 1961. All the material and labor was donated by the brothers with the exception of a used fire-door that cost \$50.00.

Bro. Charles Lund in 1963 and with the construction ability of Bro. Herman Christensen and others spent \$39.58 of lodge money and the storage cupboards in the preparation room were built. During this year the land lease agreement with Phillips Petroleum Company was completed. Bros. John Nix, Ray Hill, and F. E. McHenry worked on the agreement. (described later)

Bro. John Nix in 1964 saw the ladder lights and globes installed on the front of the building. Bro. Wesley Enyeart fabricated the ladder. Bro. Dean Willis, who was the sign painter at Climax, painted the globes with their appropriate emblems. Cost to the lodge was \$97.43 for materials. The sign was dedicated to the memory of P.M. Frank Warren.

Bro. F. E. McHenry in 1965 engineered the installation of new oak flooring in the dining hall. He also collected \$233.00 for the Grand Lodge Flood Relief program.

The following 4 years were uneventful except that in 1966, Bro. Forest Cooper saw 9 Brothers raised in the Lodge. Bro. Theodore J. Fletcher, P.M. and secretary, passed to his reward on April 4, 1969. Bro. Wesley M. Enyeart was appointed to fill the vacancy and has been elected secretary each year since.

Bro. Lester Vickers, W.M. 1970, saw the lodge room redecorated

under the supervision of Bro. Louis Gawart, J.W. Bro Ward Tiff ran new wiring for the lights. Cost to the lodge \$2,500.00.

1971 saw little activity other than regular convocations.

Bro. Louis Gawart, W.M. 1972, saw the program started whereby each brother, who qualified, was to receive a 25, 35, 40 or 45 year service button and each member was greeted, on the anniversary of his "Masonic Birthday", with a card. This program is in effect at this time.

The years of 1973, 1974, and 1975 have been uneventful except for regular meetings and the normal dispatch of business, with some degree work done.

The Annual Picnic and Pilgrimage to the site of Summit #2, followed by the annual visitation to Corinthian #42, fell by the wayside at about the time Corinthian #42 and Leadville #35 consolidated. There are now plans going to try and revive the picnic. Bro. Barney Whatley II designed and built a directional marker. It is in the shape of a Square and Compasses and has been placed along Highway #9 to direct interested persons to the site of the Summit Lodge and cemetery at Parkville.

The "Goose & Kraut" dinner was started over 40 years ago and precedes the annual installation. It has been continued and is well attended by local and visitin brothers these many years.

The Past Masters night, preceded by a "Potato Sausage" dinner has been an annual affair for over 20 years and is also well attended.

In the year 1958 the legal work was finished whereby the lodge received a deed to 3 city lots which had been donated by Bro. W. L. Davenport P.M. (1935), with the understanding that this property is never to be sold by the lodge, but must be used to further our ends in the construction of a new Masonic Temple.

Five years later, property in Breckenridge increased in value and these lots were desirable as a business location. A land lease was made

to Phillips Petroleum Company, with Koonce Chevrolet Company, A Colorado Corporation of Eagle, Colorado, as "lessee." This lease to continue until July 2, 1980, and with the option to continue it for five years and than an additional five year option may be exercised.

Payments are to be \$80.00 or one cent per gallon delivered, whichever is greater and one and one quarter cents per gallon on any extension after July 2, 1980. A gasoline service station was built and the first 12 years the lodge has received an average of \$194.00 per month as rent.

This income has permitted a greater expenditure by the Lodge in recent years, in the way of improvements, and with much less effort by the membership.

Breckenridge Lodge #47 can be very proud that in the many years of its history there has always been a number of its membership who were active in public or civic affairs, or were contributing something worthwhile for posterity. Until recent years the Mayor and Town Council members were not paid for the many hours spent on Town affairs. The County Commissioners were only paid a small fee for their efforts in County affairs, and all able-bodied men were members of the Volunteer Fire Department. A list including a few of these members follows.

Perhaps the most well known was Bro. Edwin C. Carter, Charter Member and P.M. 1884 thru 1888, was founder, owner and curator of the Carter Museum of Natural History. Professor Carter, upon the occasion of his death, was eulogized in the Summit County Journal by almost 4 full columns in the issue dated February 17, 1900. From this account several quotes follow: *on Friday of last week, the remains of Prof. Edwin Carter, escorted by Messrs. T. M. Hudgins, C. A. Walker, Christ Kaiser, and Fred Bruch, arrived here over the South Park, and were met at the train by a large number of Masons, who conveyed the beautiful casket to Masonic hall, where the body laid in state till 1:30 Sunday, when the funeral took place from the lodge room. . . . The display of flowers at the casket was the largest, finest and most elaborate ever seen at a funeral in Breckenridge. . . . Brother*

Carter was born June 1, 1830, in Oneida, N.Y.; came to Colorado in 1859, and to Breckenridge in the summer of 1860, where he has since resided. He was made a Mason in old Summit Lodge No. 2 in Georgia gulch, in 1862, and was one of the charter members of Breckenridge Lodge No. 47, when it was organized. Served five terms as its W.M., and one term as its secretary. . . . As a citizen he was honest and upright. He was one of Summit County's first county commissioners, serving one term.

Christ Kaiser, Charter Member and P.M. 1902 & 1903, Owner of The Kaiser Market, his humor and benevolence was known to all, no person in need was ever turned away.

M. J. Waltz, P.M. 1910, was R.R. Depot agent for years and later elected County Judge.

Edward T. Stuard, secretary of Breckenridge Lodge #47 from 1919 through 1946. He was appointed as Town Marshall from 1914 through 1921, and elected County Assessor 1922 and served through 1950.

Fred Cramer, P.M. 1913, he was County engineer for years and famous for the excellence of his maps of the areas in Summit, Lake, Park and Chaffee Counties.

George A. Robinson, P.M. 1914, 1915, 1919, and 1923. He was County Treasurer for than 20 years. He also served on the Town Council and was Pres. of the School Board for many years.

Carl A. Kaiser, P.M. 1920, was both City and County Attorney and also served on the School Board for many years.

Charles Burnheimer, P.M. 1921 & 1922. He was a banker and later served as Clerk of the District Court.

Earl W. Phillips, P.M. 1925, served as secretary of Breckenridge Lodge #47 from 1947 until his death March 9, 1952. He also served as Town Marshall, on the Town Council and was a Charter Member of the first Breckenridge Volunteer Fire Department.

Adam Hullender, P.M. 1927 & 1928, served as Town Marshall.

E. C. Peabody, P.M. 1929, was County Clerk and Recorder for 12 years; he also served on the County Draft Board during W.W. II.

Wyatt L. (Dave) Davenport, P.M. 1935, served on the Town Council. He built the Memorial Marker to Summit #2 and donated 3 city lots to the Lodge.

Joseph Marz, P.M. 1937, served several years as Town Marshall.

Ray Loomis, P.M. 1949, served as County Sheriff for about 10 years.

Theodore J. (Ted) Fletcher, P.M. 1950, was County Assessor, and Secretary of Breckenridge #47 at the time of his death, April 4, 1969. He served his lodge as secretary for 17 years. He was also a former Mayor and Fire Chief.

Ray F. Hill, P.M. 1952, was County Commissioner for several years, also County Road Supervisor.

Wesley M. Enyeart, P.M. 1954, District Lecture, District #27, from January 1961 to the present time. Secretary Breckenridge Lodge #47 from April 1969 to the present, also served as a Town Council member and on other civic committees.

C. P. Enyeart, P.M. 1957, served on many civic committees, was County Commissioner for over 20 years, later County Manager, also served as Town Manager.

Olin M. Mueller, P.M. 1958, served on numerous civic committees, was a loyal School Bus driver until his retirement this year. He is County Coroner and a member of the School Board.

Howard Giberson, P.M. 1961, has been involved in many civic groups, a charter member of the County Library Board, and later a member of the Board of Directors of the Summit Historical Society. He served as County Commissioner for several years.

John T. (Johnie) Nix, P.M. 1964. He was a civic minded citizen and served for many years in public service. He was a County Commissioner of Summit County for several terms and worked on

many other projects for the welfare of the people of the Western Slope of Colorado.

Certainly some have been left out that should be listed. Records seldom list the good deeds of men and one has to rely on memory and legend.

The last eighteen years of this history was compiled and fraternally submitted by, Wesley M. Enyeart, secy. #47.

November 24, 1975