

Constitution of the Order of the Symbolic Chain

Preamble and Declaration of Purpose:

Feeling that the younger brethren of Indian Consistory #3, Valley of McAlester, have too often been neglected, and with a desire to honor deserving brethren under 40 years of age, as well as to give strength and support to the Masters of the Bodies, the following: Herbert H. Beck, Harve A Butler, Lawton Beasley, Merle Chapman, Coleman L. Eckle, Earl Samual Gibson, Willet Miller Haight, James Albert Long, David Earl McCroskey, Osborn Fisher Muldrow, Lloyd Virgil Newton, Charles P. Rosenberger, John Clyde Staiger and Neil Ronnel Woodcock; met at the Spring Reunion at McAlester, Oklahoma, in 1933 and organized the Order of the Symbolic Chain (Chain Gang) for the following purposes:

To give recognition to young members of a more active participation in the Scottish Rite work by banding together in a working organization.

Such organization to be a self-governing body except that the Charter member named above shall be an advisory body as long as they are alive and active in the Consistory.

Believing that the time may come when other Consistories may desire to form such organizations, we reserve the right to copyright all rituals, constitutions and insignia, and to issue charters to chapters of other Consistories at such fees as may be determined should such occasions arise.

Article I

The name of the organization shall be "The Order of the Symbolic Chain."

Article II

Section 1: The elective membership shall never exceed 32.

To be eligible for membership to this Order, one must have attained the 32nd degree of Scottish Rite Masonry, and have been active in the service of Indian Consistory for a period of at least two years prior to his election.

No man may be elected to membership who has passed his fortieth year.

Elective membership shall consist of all members under the age of 40 years and shall be distinguished by a red ribbon on their medallion.

Section 2: Members

On attaining the age of forty years, a member shall retain all the rights and privileges as well as his duties to the Order, except that such members shall not be eligible to election to office.

These members shall be distinguished by a purple ribbon on their medallion.

Article III

Section 1: Elective offices

Elective officers of this Order shall be Venerable Master, who shall be the presiding officer, Senior Warden and a Junior Warden, also a Secretary-Treasurer which may be either one or two officers.

The duties and powers of these officers shall be such as are usually assigned to such officers by Masonic Law.

Section 2: Appointive Officers

The Venerable Master shall appoint annually a Chaplain, a Senior Deacon, a Junior Deacon and a Tyler.

The duties of such appointive officers shall be those as assigned by the Ritual and as generally given by Masonic Law.

Section 3: Elections

Officers for the ensuing year shall be elected annually at the last Reunion of the year.

Article IV

Section 1: The Initiatory fee shall be determined by the individual chapter.

Section 2: All members shall pay dues annually as set by the individual chapter.

Article V

Section 1: Regular meeting shall be at such hour and place as may be designated during the Reunion of the Consistory to which we owe allegiance.

Section 2: Special meetings may be held at such time and place as the membership may determine, or they may be called by the Venerable Master.

Article VI

Section 1: Membership in the Order may be terminated by resignation and shall be by failure to attend two consecutive meetings without proper excuse.

Section 2: Membership shall be terminated when a member ceases to belong to the Consistory or when he fails to pay dues for two years to the Order except that the Order may remit such dues when deemed fit.

Article VII

Section 1: This being the original chapter of the Order of the Symbolic Chain, this chapter retains the power to charter other such chapters as may seem wise, which chapters shall conform to the purpose for which organized as stated in the Preamble and shall pay to the chartering chapter such fees as may be determined hereafter.

Article VIII

This Constitution may be amended at any regular meeting by two-thirds vote of all members present, provided that notice of the intention amend and a copy of the proposed amendment be read at least one regular meeting preceding the one at which the vote is taken.

By-Laws of the Chain Gang

My Brethren, while or Initiation Ceremony of the Order of the Symbolic Chain is of a solemn nature beckoning greater responsibilities, yet we are young men and life is not necessarily all grim and solemn; we believe our friendship can be bound closer by a littler laughter and enjoyment.

We are proud of the jewel of our Order, and we hope you will be proud to wear it, too. But we realize that human nature is prone to be forgetful. We want to help the Brethren remember the By-Law which requires every member to wear his jewel with the proper color ribbon while in the Temple during a Reunion, and we help him remember by imposing a fine of a cold drink or similar penalty on our forgetful Brother to each and every Brother catching him without his Medallion.

Our By-Laws require that each and every member sign the Register of the Order once during each Reunion; this Register is kept at the Information Desk. It establishes the fact that you were at the Reunion for History in days to come, and helps the Secretary in checking his records.

Which leads us to a requirement of our Constitution providing that any Brother absent from two consecutive Reunions without an excuse will be suspended from the membership. This is a Service organization built upon a limited group of men, it is true, yet we do not intend to set ourselves up a judges as to what is or is not a good excuse. It is rather that we believe it is not too much to ask a Brother, if he actually values his membership in the Order, that he drop us a little note of Friendship if he is not able to be with us in person. We do not intend to impose a hardship, but rather to bind you to use by the closest ties of Friendship and Remembrance.

That our Chain of Friendship might be closer bound by personal ties, we have a ruling requiring a member, when passing through the home town of a fellow member, to contact by personal visit, or by phone call, if only to say "Hello, I'm glad to see or hear from you."

If you only stop long enough to phone to tell your Brother you have thought of him, you have strengthened our Chain of Friendship, and left your Brother with a warm feeling that he is in a circle of men who remember each other.

Since all the Lobby activities are Chain Gang inspired, and in most cases Chain Gang Directed, you will probably find yourself serving on some Chain Gang Committee. You were chosen because of your work, now we will place even more on you.

From time to time, events bring forth nicknames to various and certain Brothers, little catch words and phrases and even signs, often of a ribald meaning. These are our little ties of fun in our Order. Join us in the enjoyment of these whimsies, and soon you will understand why men drop important business to spend time, if only a few hours, with the Chain Gang.

By-Laws for the Order of the Symbolic Chain

1. These by-laws may be changed by a majority vote of those present at a regular meeting of the Order. A quorum shall consist of 16.
2. Members of the Order are required to wear their medallion and proper ribbon, prominently displayed while in the Temple during a Reunion. Any member found without his medallion so displayed is liable to a penalty of a "coke" or its equivalent by each and every member so finding the delinquent member.
3. It shall be a mandatory for a member to contact the members living in the town he is visiting, either by phone or personal visit.
4. Initiatory fee (in McAlester Chapter) shall be \$5.00.
5. Annual dues (in McAlester Chapter) shall be \$1.00.
6. Chain Gang shall furnish one medallion to each new member.
7. All membership shall be required to sign the Register.
8. Chapter By-Laws shall be read to new members at the time of initiation.