

HISTORY OF THE MASONIC KILTIES OF NEW JERSEY *1914-1979: THE FIRST 65 YEARS*

PART ONE: 1914-1964

FOREWORD

In this the year of our Lord 1964 we are celebrating in appropriate manner the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Masonic Kilties of New Jersey. And so it has been deemed fitting and proper that a short history of this organization be put together in printed form, not only as a memento of the occasion but as a memorial of a glorious past and of a great number of our membership who have been called to the Celestial Lodge above or who have moved to other States and can no longer attend our meetings or Lodge visitations. Also to those who on account of advancing years or for health reasons cannot pursue these activities.

Whatever history may follow must necessarily be incomplete, as early records are missing and in some instances were never put in black and white.

So memory must be relied upon to a great extent and where that may fail or the mist of time dulls remembrance, we beg the indulgence of the reader.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MASONIC KILTIES OF NEW JERSEY

"We meet upon the level and we part upon the square:
What words sublimely beautiful those words Masonic are."

In the second decade of the 20th century a group of Scotsmen living in Jersey City, New Jersey, banded together and formed a semi military organization, every man outfitted in Scottish Highland dress and named it "The New Jersey Scottish Highlanders" patterned after one of the Scottish Highland regiments.

Now there was among this body of Scots many enthusiastic Freemasons who conceived the idea in the year 1914 of visiting Hiram Lodge #17 Jersey City - with the approval of the Worshipful Master - dressed in the

uniform of the above mentioned organization for the purpose of assisting said Lodge in conferring the Third or Master Mason Degree and in particular on a candidate in whom these Brethren were interested. It should be recorded here that so far as is known the only member of the Masonic Kilties of New Jersey now living and who attended that meeting is Most Worshipful Donald J. Sargent who at the time was a junior officer in Bergen Lodge #17, but who through the years has done so much for Freemasonry in general and for the Kilties in particular. He was Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of New Jersey. On two different occasions he was President of the Masonic Association of New Jersey Scottish Highlanders.

The work done that night by these Scottish Masons in Hiram Lodge #17, combined with their colorful dress and kilts made such an impression that soon they were invited to other Lodges, a fact which gave birth to the formation of a Masonic organization by this group of Scotsmen for the purpose of promulgating, to the very limit of its cable tow, the teachings of Ancient Craft Masonry. From the opening statement of this history it naturally followed that the name chosen for this organization was "The Masonic Association of New Jersey Scottish Highlanders." And for forty years the "Jersey Kilties" prospered through fair weather and foul. They grew in favor and increased in number and even Brother A. Harry Moore and Brother Harold Hoffman, both Governors of the sovereign State of New Jersey, were counted in the membership.

No one will ever be able to estimate or conceive the good accomplished or the amount of brotherly love and affection, spread with the symbolic trowel, in hundreds of visitations to Masonic Lodges not only in New Jersey, but also in New York, Connecticut and Vermont.

In the year 1922 another group of men of Scottish birth and blood located in the city of Paterson, New Jersey, inspired by the same spirit of Freemasonry and feeling that there was need for an organization of Kilties in this New Jersey city and surrounding territory, also banded into a Masonic group, held a meeting, elected officers and chose the name "The Austen Hall McGregor Scottish Highlanders Masonic Association" named in honor of a Past Grand Master of New Jersey who gave of his time and substance in the early beginning of this association. "The McGregors" or "Paterson Kilties" as they were called, also met with great success in their growth and their visitations to various Lodges and soon they too were accepting invitations from beyond the boundaries of the Grand Jurisdiction of New Jersey, as well as many from within.

So these two Kiltie associations continued to function as separate units for many years, but latterly sought whenever practical or possible to dovetail their activities both Masonic and social for the greater welfare of

each other and the Craft in general; indeed a large number of the personnel held membership in both associations. So what had been apparent for a long time finally reached fruition on December 3, 1954 when the two organizations merged into one and became known as "The Masonic Kilties of New Jersey" and still more popularly as "The Kilties." As such it is felt that there are limitless opportunities to be of great service to the craft in New Jersey and elsewhere when opportunity affords and can doubtless go on to greater things, for the glory of the Supreme Architect of the universe and the benefit of our beloved Craft.

Four Past Grand Masters of New Jersey are numbered in our membership, as well as a great many Brethren who give of their time and talents to insure unbounded success to every endeavor.

Any history of the Masonic Kilties of New Jersey would be incomplete indeed without reference to those of our number who have added so much quality to the many activities of our organization; namely, the Pipe Band.

In the early days only a single piper played the Kilties into a Lodge room, but now there is a fine band which for many years has given inestimable service in stirring Scottish blood and is greatly enjoyed and sought after by our American Brethren and without which our association would lose much of its appeal.

All hail to the Pipers and Drummers of the Masonic Kilties of New Jersey, may they long continue their fine work and inspire our organization to nobler deeds and greater achievements!

In 1957 and again in 1961, through the courtesy of the Grand Master of New Jersey, the Grand Master of Scotland and a great many of our Scottish Brother Masons; about 25 members of the Masonic Kilties of New Jersey made a pilgrimage by air to spread the cement of brotherly love and affection among those of the Mystic Tie in Scotland, as well as to exemplify the Master Mason Degree according to the New Jersey ritual in a number of Lodges in Glasgow, also Hamilton, Dumfries Dundee and Montrose.

The reception by our Scottish Brethren was most generous, sincere and inspiring, as well as spontaneous. The hospitality extended to the Kilties was also most cordial and generous and made these visits to Auld Scotia occasions long to be remembered.

It appears, however, from a letter written at the time of our first visit in 1957 by one of our Scottish Brethren that a great deal of doubt existed about fellow Scots either of birth or blood, coming from America and

entering Scottish Lodges, dressed in kilts, prepared to do Masonic work. But let an excerpt from the above mentioned letter speak for itself. "While I was sitting there (in the Town Hall of Bridgeton Glasgow) I couldn't help hearing some of the conversation before the meeting opened. Everybody seemed to be very doubtful of the Yanks. One bit went like this: Jock says to Sandy, 'And whit are the Yanks gonna dae'? Sandy, 'Och! It's just a novelty, only they have on their kilts.' That seemed to be the general opinion in the hall; nobody seemed to know what was going to happen." The letter continues "The hall was now packed to capacity and Lodge opened in due and ancient Scottish form and was then turned over to the Kilties after their colorful entry. The place was as quiet as a tomb, the audience appeared to be afraid to move in case they made a noise, and those at the back are standing on their seats so that they won't miss anything.

"The Kilties have the audience where they want them, the Critics have been silenced and everybody is carried away with the way the Jersey boys are going about their work. Altogether it was a magnificent performance that has put a new look on an old tradition.

"The exemplification is over, the Kilties have won the hearts of everyone in the audience and when the meeting was turned back to the regular Lodge officers the Right Worshipful Master asked for applause, this was given with great enthusiasm and was both loud and prolonged."

A sequel to the second visit in 1961 is that the Kilties again made such a favorable impression on our Scottish Brethren that our organization was requested to grant permission to a number of Glasgow Masons who desired to form an association and name it "Friends of the Masonic Kilties of New Jersey." This permission was granted and since then an animated correspondence has been going on between said association and our own.

An item worthy of note here is that in 1958 and again in 1962 some Scottish Brethren stole our thunder, came from Scotland by air, visited with us in Kearny and Paterson where they exemplified the Third Degree according to the Scottish ritual in a very impressive manner.

The Kilties also had the opportunity of reciprocating some of the hospitality extended to them in Scotland.

During the 50 years that the Kilties have been accepting invitations from Masonic Lodges for the purpose of assisting said Lodges in conferring the Master Mason Degree, no accurate count has been kept of the number of Lodges visited or the number of candidates raised.

Many Lodges have requested the group on several occasions and one Lodge every year since 1922.

Figures and numbers are not really important, but perchance it would be interesting to give a conservative estimate as to just how many Lodge visitations have been made in the five decades of our history.

So after careful consideration and from what records are available, it is estimated that 600 visitations have been made and 1800 candidates raised.

The Kilties have always been most graciously received in all of these Lodges and which without exception have been profuse in their commendation of our labors in the quarries of Freemasonry.

It might be appropriate at this time to quote from a letter which was sent to the Kilties some years ago after one of our visitations. "Brethren know that on the occasion of your visit to Gavel Lodge on the night of November 17, 1952, you performed the labor of raising five candidates to the sublime degree of Master Mason in a fashion never before witnessed in this Lodge. The work was excellently and expertly done with masterly precision and impressiveness. You have set a pattern of perfection which may some day be equaled, but never excelled."

Words like this thrill the Kilties and are gratefully received as they inspire us in humility to go forward with greater zeal in promulgating the teachings of our Craft both by precept and example within and without the body of Freemasonry.

Regarding attendance at Lodges when the Kilties are invited, the SRO sign could have been displayed on countless occasions in the past and in some instances many who desired to be admitted to a communication found it impossible to gain entrance.

While the chief object of the Masonic Kilties of New Jersey is to be of service to the Brethren in the various Lodges during degree work, to the Craft in general and to our Supreme Grand Master, the social side of our organization is not forgotten or neglected.

For a long period of years the annual Burns Dinner has been held as close to the 25th of January as possible. At first this was strictly an affair for the Kilties and their wives or lady friends, the latter being allowed admission gratis, but some of them gave donations of food for the occasion. The price of admission to each Kiltie was fifty cents and although the fare was not sumptuous, it was always in abundance and honor was done to the Immortal Memory of Scotland's national bard -

Robert Burns. The social committee generally spent many hours on the day of the dinner, peeling spuds and attending to other culinary chores, as well as setting up tables and dishing out the grub. Since 1937, the Burns dinner has been an annual affair and greatly enjoyed by all those who attended. It was originally sponsored by the "Masonic Association of New Jersey Scottish Highlanders" and has been held in various places, including Grantwood, Bayonne, Jersey City and Kearny. Through the years this annual affair has expanded and many friends of the Kilties now attend and enjoy a more sumptuous repast by a professional caterer, but with haggis and other Scottish fare continued in the menu. The cost too has changed to a more robust figure. However, the toast to the Immortal Memory is still the highlight of the evening, with the entertainment and dancing remaining on a par with that of bygone days.

It might be apropos to mention here that one of our own members, Brother Bob Miller, is a prominent authority on Burns and has been the fine speaker at our Burns dinner on several occasions and his services elsewhere are greatly sought after.

Another outstanding event in the Kilties social calendar is the annual dinner in October held at the Masonic Club in Paterson. This affair was originally sponsored by the "McGregors" or "Paterson Kilties" and through the years has proved most successful and pleasurable although at times taxing to capacity the facilities of the hall and the caterer. Our late Brother Right Worshipful Andrew C. Blyth, for a number of years added a feature to this dinner which was a great attraction for the ladies. "Andy" being one of the best liked, well known and highly esteemed of men, used to visit his friends and Brother Masons who were merchants in Paterson and whom he used to affectionately refer to as "River Street Scotsmen" and persuaded them to donate gifts for the above mentioned occasion. This was done in a most generous manner so that every lady who attended the dinner in consequence received a gift.

The Kilties have a monthly meeting on the second Tuesday of each month excepting during July and August or when the date of a visitation to a Lodge falls on or near said meeting night. The place of these meetings is the Masonic Club in Paterson where we have always been treated with kindness and consideration for which we are deeply grateful and appreciative.

Another feature of the year's activities and originally a "McGregors" event is the semi-annual meeting. This, for many years, was really an outing from Friday night until Sunday afternoon with the actual meeting being held on Saturday night, when current business of the organization was discussed and plans laid for the remainder of the year. Here is a quote

from the poet of our association namely Right Worshipful Brother Al Watson:

"It happened one night in the middle of June,
In a house by the side of a lovely lagoon
Where the Kilties had gathered to schedule their tours
At the summer estate of the Roderick Mores."

And happen it did and this occasion was great success for a long time. Up there in the sticks - hard by Bear Pond and just beyond Lake Hopatcong - the pipers could blow to their hearts content and the skirl o' the pipes was heard late and early. There were skillful cooks among the Kilties who purveyed and served anything from Welsh rarebit to ham and eggs, to clam chowder, to grilled steaks, to say nothing about peas and tatties or stew. Coffee and tea were also on the menu as well as other beverages, calculated to both quench the thirst and oil up the vocal chords for both song and prose. Who can forget our beloved Brother Pete Milne with his funny stories or his song: "Your Tool Box Will Be Raffled Bye and Bye"?

Or perchance, as he played on his pipes: "Shall We Gather At The River." a sure indication of his Sunday School influence in Dundee.

There was sleeping accommodation for twenty or more men at the bungalow, better known as "Two Kind Words," but this was sometimes not enough for those wishing to stay overnight -- so slumber had in some cases to be found on the seat of a car, that is, if slumber could be found or was desired. Many, of course, pursued a homeward journey after the meeting on Saturday night.

Brothers Roderick More, Sr. and Roderick More, Jr. provided pillows and blankets as well as other facilities for an enjoyable time.

The activities of the year came to a close with the annual meeting in December, but later moved up to November so that the newly elected officers and appointed committees would have greater latitude in preparing for the coming events of a New Year.

The above mentioned meeting or meetings - as was the case before the merger - were held in many and varied places and perhaps the best liked and most popular location of all was any spacious cellar of one of the members who had such a basement to place at the disposal of the group for that purpose. Indeed the largest number ever to assemble at one of these annual meetings was in the cellar of Right Worshipful Brother Bill Aitken in Clifton in the year of 1952 when 60 Kilties overcrowded the place. So the following year the Masonic Club in Paterson was chosen

where there was more room and amenities were better suited for the occasion.

The locale of these places was many and varied like West New York, Jersey City, Hasbrouck Heights, Rutherford, East Orange, Nutley, East Paterson, Morristown, Clifton and now Paterson. But, wherever the location of these annual meetings, besides carrying out the business of the evening, they were very social affairs, suitable eats and refreshments were served and a time of good fellowship and brotherhood was and still is enjoyed by those who attend.

It has always been difficult to find a suitable place for degree work rehearsals, so the Kilties are deeply indebted to Clifton Lodge #203 for its generosity in permitting the use of their beautiful Lodge room for that purpose and this was particularly true prior to the visits made to Scotland. So it is fitting and proper that the gratitude and appreciation of the Kilties be expressed and recorded herewith to this fine Lodge.

Under the auspices of the Kilties a Scottish concert and dance was held for several years at the Masonic Temple in Paterson in which our band played a prominent role, as well as individual members in the actual program.

However, a great deal of work was entailed in this connection and so after due consideration of this and for several other reasons these concerts and dances were abandoned -- although this disappointed many people who enjoy Scottish music and dancing.

The Kilties have always been blessed with a great deal of talent of one kind and another in their ranks. They at one time used to accept invitations to visit Chapters of the Order of the Eastern Star, when pipers, dancers and singers used to regale those present with a very creditable evening's entertainment. However, that ceased in the early 1940's and since then only when one of our members has been the Worthy Patron of a Chapter, have the Kilties accepted such an invitation.

It should be recorded here with some pardonable pride that at least eleven Kilties have occupied that honored station, some of them more than once, and so it has been the pleasure of the Masonic Kilties of New Jersey to pay their respects to the several Chapters of the Order of the Eastern Star where our fellow members held the office of Worthy Patron.

Another bit of history that is worthy of note, is the fact that no less than fourteen members of the Kilties have been appointed to an office in the Grand Lodge of New Jersey. Surely some indication of the caliber of the membership of our organization as well as the high esteem which is held

for the Kilties by those who have been chosen to rule and govern the Craft in New Jersey; namely, the many Grand Masters of this Grand Jurisdiction, who have seen fit to make these appointments.

Through the generosity of the Lodges we visit, in donating to our resources and through other activities engaged in by the Kilties, it has been possible during the years of our existence to contribute a considerable amount to charity. Visits to the Masonic Home at Burlington, New Jersey, have been made from time to time when the Kilties were privileged to entertain the guests there with Scottish music and dancing and it is expected that this practice will continue.

The Scottish Highland dress worn by the Kilties has evolved or been updated since 1914 from time honored doublet and long shoulder plaid with white spats to the waist long khaki tunic with belted shoulder plaid continued hose tops and white spats. Now in the last decade or so, gradually turning into full evening dress, with black Prince Charlie jacket, long stockings to match the kilt, dress sporran and shoulder belted plaid with brooch and the name of the organization inscribed thereon.

The tartan of the kilts too have changed to bright colors, but the variety of the tartans has been retained, as it is felt that this is an added feature and makes the Kilties more colorful and less regimental looking on our entrance into a Masonic Lodge room.

Many interesting and amusing incidents have taken place or been induced by the good humor of the Kilties during their prolonged wanderings and these have added to the pleasure of the trips both by bus and car.

Yes, the Kilties have always been composed of working men, but no finer or more dedicated group has ever been assembled anywhere.

One of the amusing incidents referred to above might bear being recalled at this time. It happened during our first visit to Trinity Lodge #79 in Atlantic City where we stayed overnight. Worshipful Brother Frank Kearns had a gasoline pump at his place of business and cordially invited all those with cars to come and "fill up" before returning home. It can be readily understood that this generous offer appealed to the Scottish frugality and was greatly appreciated as well as being gratefully accepted. But, lo and behold one of our better known humorists pulled up at the gas pump only to discover that the gas tank on his car was locked and the key back in the hotel room. Some said this individual nearly died of a broken heart.

Many pages could be filled with the names of our membership past and present who have given of their time, energy, talents and substance to perpetuate the work which was started so simply and humbly 50 years ago and which has brought the Masonic Kilties of New Jersey to the high state of favor and esteem which they enjoy today. However, while it is not possible or practical to record all these names, let it be said of those who have gone on before. "They rest from their labors and their works do follow them." And to those who are still able and willing that your efforts and work should continue to be worthy of the calling of the Masonic Kilties of New Jersey to promulgate to all mankind, as well as those of the Mystic Tie, the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man.

And to quote our Brother Mason and Brother Scot Robert Burns:

"Then let us pray that come it may -
As come it will for a' that -
That sense and worth o'er a' the earth,
May bear the gree and a' that.
For a' that and a' that
It's comin' yet for a' that
That man to man the world o'er
Shall brothers be for a' that!"

Pages could also be filled with the names of the many different Lodges to which the members of the Kilties belong. It might be said that they are as numerous and varied as the tartans of their kilts. A few of our members were made Masons in Scotland and still retain membership in their Mother Lodges.

Even as Freemasonry is not a religion, so the Kilties cannot be considered a religious group.

Nevertheless, whenever opportunity affords, church services are attended in a body headed by our pipe band to worship our Great Creator, as was the case during our three visits to Atlantic City Lodges, when it was necessary to stay from Saturday until Sunday, also on the occasion of our visitation to Seneca Lodge in Torrington, Connecticut.

The Kilties have also been known to travel as far as Sussex and Red Bank for the express purpose of attending divine services, as well as to churches nearer by in Newark, Paterson and Jersey City.

The name of Right Worshipful Charles S. Elliott is worthy and deserving of mention in this history for his long faithful and untiring efforts on behalf, first of the Masonic Association of New Jersey Scottish Highlanders of which he was President for a goodly number of years and

then was elected to the Office of Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer of the Masonic Kilties of New Jersey, in which he gave yeoman service until the end. He was also a Past District Deputy and later appointed Grand Historian of the Grand Lodge of New Jersey - an office he held for some fifteen years.

He was very active with the Kilties up to the time of his passing and then he was well beyond four score years.

His memory like many others will ever exhort those of us who remain in the great cause of Freemasonry.

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime
And departing leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time."

Able following Charlie Elliott as Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer is Right Worshipful George D. Easdale who as soloist, as President and now in his present office has made such a tremendous contribution to the Masonic Kilties of New Jersey. So it is only fitting and proper that expression be given, in this document to our Brother Easdale, of appreciation and gratitude for the sterling service and great effort he so graciously contributes to the work and welfare of our organization.

Then there is our Recording Secretary Brother Andy McFarlane who deserves a word of commendation for his excellent work in keeping a true record of the activities of the Kilties and which will prove most important if and when another history is written maybe 50 years from now.

The other current officers of the Masonic Kilties of New Jersey whose names are recorded elsewhere in this document also deserve and are herewith accorded words of congratulations for the smooth functioning of the association. But no matter how dedicated, skillful or well informed they may be, in directing the activities of the organization, they still need and desire the continued support of the rank and file which is necessary and all important for the continued success of the Masonic Kilties of New Jersey.

In conclusion it has been thought advisable to acquaint the entire membership with the resolutions or regulations which were unanimously adopted when the merger of The Masonic Association of New Jersey Scottish Highlanders and The Austen Hall McGregor Scottish Highlanders Masonic Association took place and which are hereinafter stated thusly.

The following is an excerpt from the minutes of the joint meeting held on December 3, 1954, in the Masonic Club, Paterson. "With the Annual Meetings of the two Scottish bodies on refreshment, a joint meeting of the members was held and Right Worshipful William R. Jack was requested to occupy the chair. The invocation was pronounced by Brother John Coyle. Right Worshipful Allen E. Burns was requested to keep the minutes of the joint meeting. The chairman read to the meeting the recommendations of the Committee appointed to work out the details of the merger of the two bodies and it was the sense of the meeting that the recommendations of the Committee be taken up one by one and voted on separately."

This was done and, with the change of a few words here and there, were unanimously adopted as follows and are recorded herewith in this history.

1. The name shall be "The Masonic Kilties of New Jersey".
2. Officers to be elected, President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer, Recording Secretary. The Vice Presidents should be men capable of moving up to the President's chair and who are or have been Master of a Lodge.
3. Officers to be appointed by the President, Three Chaplains, Three Marshals, Two Color Bearers, and One Dress Major.
4. The Band to elect or select from their number a Pipe Major.
5. The finances of both organizations shall be placed in one Treasury.
6. A letter shall be sent to every member of both organizations advising of the merger, change of name, etc. and that everyone (with the exception of those who are sick or infirm) be requested to pay dues of one dollar per year, said dues to be paid forthwith as a tangible token of their continued interest in the new organization. Waiver of dues because of illness or infirmity to be left to the discretion of the officers.
7. A current Blue Card or Life Membership certificate must be presented before receiving a dues card of the aforementioned organization.
8. The initiation fee for new members shall be five dollars and all prospective members of the organization shall be required to obtain and wear kilts.

9. The Annual Meeting shall be held on the first Friday in December and the Semi-Annual Meeting in June. (The date of the Annual Meeting was subsequently changed to the first Friday in November, for the reason earlier mentioned in this document.)
10. Upon entering a Lodge only the President and the Marshal shall stand West of the Altar. The Band, of course, shall continue to occupy its accustomed place.
11. We will continue with the Burns Dinner in January and an Annual Dinner in October. A monthly meeting will be held on the second Tuesday of each month, excepting June, July, August and December and when said monthly meeting does not conflict with a visitation to a Lodge. Invitations to visit Lodges and petitions for membership in the organization will be taken up at the next regular meeting after receipt.
12. The President shall serve not more than two years consecutively. (This regulation was added at the Annual Meeting in Clifton Temple on November 6, 1959.)

And so we end this history with the thought that the present group of Kilties is quite as informal (except when we are in a Lodge room and doing Masonic work) as were our predecessors of 50 years ago, but also quite as dedicated to labor in the quarries of Freemasonry.

"Hands round ye loyal craftsmen in the bright fraternal chain,
We gather here and work below to meet in heaven again.

"We'll stand before the Orient and our Master will be there.
Our works to try, our works to prove, with His own unerring square."

Right Worshipful William R. Jack (1965)

PART TWO: 1965-1979

FIFTEEN ADDITIONAL YEARS

Fifteen years have gone by since the 50th Anniversary of our organization. When your historian composed the 50 year history in 1964 he was optimistic enough to state that the records being kept by our then

Recording Secretary, Brother Andy McFarlane, would be most important if and when a future additional history was to be written.

However, it was suggested by some of our members, that an additional 15 year history be written now, in order to have on record, some of the interesting things that have happened in our Kiltie organization.

Unfortunately, the records carefully kept by Brother McFarlane and later by Worshipful Brother David Blyth seem to have suffered a like fate as the earlier records referred to in our 50th year history. So, they having been completely lost - memory will again have to be relied upon and your indulgence asked for in case of any possible errors.

To begin with, it is pleasing to be able to state, that the Kilties still enjoy quite the same popularity - and perhaps a bit more - so than heretofore. Even in these days when there is a lull in fraternal organizations, it is surprising that the Masonic Kilties of New Jersey are receiving many Lodge invitations to assist in conferring the Master Mason Degree; thus creating greater interest in the beautiful New Jersey ritual.

Even the social activities of the Kilties have improved in recent years for, although our Annual Dinner of previous years usually held in October has been omitted; this has been taken up by a much larger and more impressive Burns Night Dinner Dance each January.

In the writer's opinion, the greatest change in the past 15 years has come in the personnel of our organization. This, of course comes in a world of change and we must accept this change whether we like it or not.

We have had occasion to mourn the passing of many of our dear Brethren who gave years of their best endeavors - and, they are greatly missed. On the other hand we have been fortunate to include in our membership some younger and talented men so that our work still keeps its high standard and perchance, may even be improved.

We have also had the pleasure of adding to our group, men prominent in Grand Lodge and with them has come added prestige. Appointments too, have been made to Grand Lodge staffs from our membership; which bears out what was stated in our 50 year history "These appointments surely give indication of the caliber of the kind of men who make up our membership."

Another item worthy of note is that a number of our members have served their respective Lodges as Worshipful Masters. In the present year (1979) four Kilties were installed to serve for the 1980 year. Others are

occupying officer chairs, and, no doubt will eventually become Masters of their respective Lodges.

Our 50 year history told of visits we made to Connecticut; New York and Vermont. In the additional 15 years we have added the State of Maryland for, on three different occasions, visits have been made to Annapolis Lodge in that State. The last visit in 1978 was unique for this reason - instead of exemplifying the M.M. Degree (as is customary in another jurisdiction) we actually conferred the degree upon a Fellow Craft candidate of Passaic Lodge No. 67 of Passaic, N.J. This was covered by proper dispensation from M.W. Kenneth L. Larsen our N.J. Grand Master. The Grand Master of Maryland, Brother Roy H. Statler, Jr. and his staff of officers were in attendance. Our own Kiltie member, Right Worshipful Brother Herbert N. Boyd, then Junior Grand Warden (now Senior Grand Warden) represented our Grand Master on this visit and brought the felicitations of our Grand Master to all present.

This history is proud to note that Brother Herbert N. Boyd was elected to the office of Junior Grand Warden in April 1978 and then to the office of Senior Grand Warden in April 1979. It is expected that he will be elected as Deputy Grand Master in April 1980 and to the office of Most Worshipful Grand Master in 1981.

His Lodge, Clifton #203 held a reception for Right Worshipful Brother Boyd on Oct. 7, 1978 to mark his election as Jr. Grand Warden. This was held at the Scottish Rite Cathedral in Lincoln Park.

Right Worshipful Brother Easdale was the soloist of the evening and a goodly number of Kilties were in attendance as Right Worshipful Brother Jack made a gift presentation on behalf of our group.

On a recent visit to one of the Lodges, we were presented with a plaque from our Grand Lodge commending The Kilties for their continued assistance to the Grand Lodge Charities. Each year we make a contribution to Grand Lodge Charity and just this past December their thank-you letter also told us we had been made members of the Grand Lodge Century Club. It should be stated here that these acknowledgments are greatly appreciated and a far cry from the days when the Kilties were less thought of and less popular.

During the past 15 years we have made three additional trips to Scotland - 1965, 1970 and 1975. These occasions were greatly enjoyed by all those who took part in spreading the cement of brotherly love and affection among our Scottish Brethren.

These trips led to reciprocation by several groups from Scotland and we were happy to present these Brethren to the Lodges and members of our jurisdiction. Conditions now on both sides of the Atlantic are such that no new visits are contemplated. It may be some time before this again takes place.

For the past fourteen years our semi-annual picnic meeting has been held on the lawns of the home of Brother Joseph and Florence Miller in Hawthorne. Starting in 1975 the wives and lady friends of our members have been present for the annual picnic. Also, starting with this year - 1979 - the semiannual business meeting was separated from the picnic using another calendar date. We are most grateful to Joe and Florence for their kind, gracious hospitality.

The occasional business meetings which were held in the Masonic Club in Paterson were transferred to the Passaic Masonic Temple due to the Club building at Paterson being torn down. This transfer became effective March 11, 1969 and we owe a debt of gratitude to the Masonic Temple Association of Passaic for permitting us to hold our business meetings in their beautiful Temple.

Our Annual Meetings are held on the first Friday evening of November and for the past eleven years we have met at the home of Worshipful Brother Peter and Betty Gray in Kearny. Their spacious and beautiful basement area is very suitable for these meetings and we are grateful to them for being splendid hosts.

Perhaps the most important part of our organization are the members of our Pipe Band. This group has suffered in the passage of time for - in a photograph taken in Atlantic City some twenty years ago with eleven pipers; four drummers; and a drum major - we can only name three who are still with us but inactive. However, some new pipers have joined us to take their places and for these good Brethren we are grateful. At present our greatest lack in the Band is side drummers, but perchance this too will improve before long.

The writer feels that he would be remiss to pass over mentioning two Brothers who for many years have played drums in the Band namely Bill McCaffery and Andy Speirs. Not only were they faithful band members but assisted in the degree work. Indifferent health prevents their appearance and we do miss them in a double capacity.

Our Annual Memorial Service for departed Brethren continues to be held in the Spring of each year at Paterson-Orange Lodge No. 43 in Paterson. This has been continuous since 1922.

Worshipful Brother Jerry Stack, our new Pipe Major, suggested that "pocket patches" might be a nice innovation for the Kilties to wear. He, along with Worshipful Brother Ken Baird (another piper) worked on this and they produced a colorful and beautiful design using the cover illustration we had on our 50 year history booklet; and which we also use on the front of our get well cards. The members were delighted with these patches and the stock is just about depleted.

This section of our history should bring up-to-date the fact that in addition to Austen H. McGregor; Donald J. Sargent; John S. Caie and Adrien B. Hommell all Past Grand Masters who are listed as members of The Kilties; we have now added to this list: M.W. Claude D. Van Stone who joined our group in 1972 and who was elected President of the Kilties in November 1979. Also, M.W. Edward Rainey was elected an Honorary member April 28, 1969 and M.W. Kenneth L. Larsen elected an Honorary member January 13, 1979. We are proud to list these distinguished Masons in our history.

Years of distinguished service to Masonry and The Kilties are reflected when we review those members of our group who have received from Grand Lodge their 50 Year Gold Tokens. To name all these honored Kilties would be dangerous for there would be a possibility of missing some names. Some were more active in their membership than others, but all were faithful Kilties and we here recognize them as a group and dedicate this paragraph to them.

Two of our active members have received the 60 Year Wreath from Grand Lodge. Singled out is Brother Robert Miller who having received his degrees in Scotland in early 1920 became a Charter member of No. Arlington Lodge No. 271 in 1928, here in New Jersey. He received his 50 Year Token in 1969 at his Lodge; and his 60 Year Wreath at his home in 1979 when Grand Lodge Officers and Kiltie members were in attendance. The Miller family were also present at his bedside and were delighted to share in this impressive ceremony. Bob's word of thanks and appreciation were profuse along with a timely quotation from a poem of Robert Burns. Bob was an outstanding speaker pertaining to Robert Burns and on numerous Burns Night Dinners he gave the toast to the Immortal Memory of this great poet. Even before Bob was a Kiltie member it is noted that he spoke at the Jan. 25th 1937 Burns Night Dinner held by the Kilties at Cliffside Park. Bob, a dedicated Kiltie since 1944, was called to his eternal rest on June 11, 1979, just one month after the Gold Wreath presentation.

(This paragraph by Secretary Easdale)

The Second member of the Kilties to receive the 60 year Wreath was Right Worshipful Brother Bill Jack who became a Master Mason at Cincinnati Lodge No. 3 at Morristown back in April, 1920. He was Master of that Lodge in 1928 and a special night was held in his honor on April 10th, 1978 to mark his 50th year as a Past Master. Bill received his 50 Year Gold Token on May 26, 1969 and the 60 year Wreath on Oct. 22, 1979. His membership in The Kilties goes back to 1935. As the Kiltie Historian and Ritual Instructor this 88 year old youngster makes us proud whenever he is with us. Words are insufficient to tell of our love and respect for Bill Jack. His kindly manner and a sincere word of encouragement to the Brethren, truly makes him beloved by every Kiltie member. We delight when he makes a presentation to one of our honored Kiltie members telling those present that they are witnessing a phenomenon -

"Here are a group of Scots gathered together - and - they are giving something away."

We could continue to tell of dedicated members - some old-timers, some new. And pages could be written of the service rendered by those who have passed away during the past fifteen years. Those of us who are fortunate to still be active recall the many happy times we had together and we cherish the memory of the years past. Were we to mention only one it would be Brother Robert Phillips who was our Piper for more than 50 years. Bob died in 1977. To all our departed - "So mote it be."

In 1973 we were presented with two new flags: the American flag, by Mrs. Andrew Blyth in memory of her departed husband, and the Scottish Royal Standard by Brother Samuel Grayson. These fine gifts add dignity and color to our presence when we enter the Lodge rooms and we are indeed grateful to the donors. Our Brother Richard Williamson is also thanked for supplying the flag staff holders.

In our original Fifty Year History we did overlook making note, regarding our first visit to Scotland in 1957, that it was necessary for us to take with us the rods; canvas; jewels etc. in order to exemplify the degree. We had the rods made in two sections so that they would fit in a wooden case especially made for shipping purposes and with a lock for security. The box was dubbed "the Coffin". On our return from Scotland we learned that Paramus Lodge No. 293 was being instituted so The Kilties donated the items we owned to that Lodge. They have been kind enough to store "the Coffin" for us and on the four additional trips we made to Scotland they have supplied all the necessary paraphernalia in order to confer the Master Mason Degree. We are indeed grateful to this Lodge for their fine cooperation.

Not a great deal has been written about our work in the Lodge rooms except that "we try to aim at perfection". We do know that for the past 65 years we have impressed many, many Brother Masons with the fine quality of the New Jersey ritual.

Except for the President or the Brother who writes up the line-up card - our Kiltie members do not get advance notice of the part they will have in the degree until they arrive at the Lodge we are visiting. Their dedication and cooperation to our organization is a credit to each of our members.

The Kilties never solicit a visitation to any Lodge. We go strictly through invitation received by letter to our Corresponding Secretary who, in turn, submits it to the membership for approval. No fee is demanded for our visit although a donation is expected. This money is used for band instrument upkeep; insurance on pipes; drums; flags; charity, etc.

So - it seems that the additional fifteen year history now added to our fifty year history gives us a glorious span of 65 years in New Jersey Masonry. We are a vital and active organization working within and under the rules and regulations of our Most Worshipful Grand Lodge in the furtherance of promoting the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.

Your Historian casts his eyes over more than four decades of working with The Kilties and, it certainly has been a pleasure. Even now, recalling incidents in our mystic past, there may be errors or omissions; if so, please forgive me. I live with the joy of having associated with you and I give honor and respect to each of you for your dedication to THE MASONIC KILTIES OF NEW JERSEY.

May the best you've ever seen
Be the worst you'll ever see,
May the mouse ne'er leave your pantry
Wi' a tear-drop in it's e'e!
May your lum keep blithely reekin'
Till you're auld enough to dee,
May you aye be just as happy
As I wish you aye to be.

Right Worshipful William R. Jack
(1980)