

History of The Builders Masonic Lodge No. 376

10-13 minutes

At a meeting in late April or early May 1976 between brothers Rusty Glendinning, Bill Wolf and Art Stone, which had started out to be an instruction session in the Entered Apprentice Degree, the subject of whether there was the need for a new lodge in Sarasota came under rather intense discussion. The evening closed with no agreement between these brothers, Bro. Stone saying yes, Bro. Wolf maybe yes, and Bro. Glendinning no. This meeting might well have been followed by the same inaction that had followed other such "bull sessions" which had occurred over the prior three to four years except that W:. William G. Wolf made a trip to Melbourne on the weekend of June 5th and 6th to attend the Homecoming of M:. W:. Richard F. Griffie, Grand Master of Masons of Florida and during this trip further explored the idea of a new lodge with Bro. Ray Wolf, who accompanied him on this trip. When he returned to Sarasota Bro. Wolf already had a tentative list of Brothers whom he thought might be interested in working to establish a new lodge, and he contacted Brother Stone to see if he was interested in working to make the new lodge a reality. It was decided that the first items of business would be to write to the Grand Secretary for the instruction material from Grand Lodge

about how to organize a U. D. lodge, to inform the Masters of Cary B. Fish and Sarasota Lodges about the efforts that would be being made to organize a new lodge, and to begin to contact brothers who might be interested in participating in such a venture. It was also decided to contact the Grand Master on the weekend of June 12th and 13th in Lake Worth or Miami to inform him of what was being done and to ask him questions that had arisen about the procedure for organizing a U. D. lodge.

Even before the meeting with the Grand Master there was enough interest expressed by individual brothers that a meeting was called for June 16th of all those who had expressed an interest in the new lodge. The District Deputy attended this meeting even though he had returned only the day before from a trip out of the state. Fifteen brothers were at this meeting and fourteen of them expressed their desire to sign the petition for a U. D. lodge. The District Deputy called the Grand Secretary the next day and was able to pick up the U. D petition from him at the Home Board meeting on Sunday June 20th.

The second organizational meeting was held in Manatee Lodge #31 on June 24th so that the District Deputy could deliver the U. D. petition and the brothers could select the Worshipful Master, William G. Wolf; Senior Warden, Paul Wilke; Junior Warden, Robert L. Kennedy; Treasurer, Ray Wolf and Secretary, Arthur T. Stone to be recommended to the Grand Master to be placed in those offices.

One of the first questions that had been asked was where should the new lodge meet. It was the unanimous belief of the brothers that it should be located on the south side of Sarasota. At one time it was suggested that a temporary meeting location in Sarasota

Lodge might be considered to give more time to locate a suitable meeting place. It was quickly decided however that every effort should be made to locate initially in that area of the community where it was desired that the lodge would have its permanent home. The first choice for location was the Samoor Grotto Building at 5250 S. McIntosh Rd. which site was approved by the District Deputy prior to the 2nd organizational meeting. A suitable expense sharing agreement was reached after negotiations extending over about one month.

The third organizational meeting of the brothers organizing the new lodge was held June 29th at which time the name of the new lodge was chosen, The Builder's Lodge. At this time also degree practices were organized so that the brothers could be able to prove their proficiency in the work to R.: W.: Oscar Allen the member of the Committee on Work for our Zone. Brother Stone stated that he believed that with the talent available to the new lodge they could be ready for this proficiency by the last of July and the practices were organized with this self imposed deadline in mind. The examination was held in Sarasota Lodge on Thursday night July 29th and Brother Allen stated at its conclusion that he was more than satisfied with the manner in which the work was performed. He further stated that he knew of lodges which were long organized that he wished could confer the degrees as well as he had seen them conferred that evening.

With the early determination that the Samoor Grotto Building would be the first choice of a meeting site for the new lodge, this meant that Cary B. Fish Lodge No. 346 would be the lodge located nearest to the new lodge and would, therefore, be the lodge that would be required to give its approval. The problem that this

presented was that after its meeting on July 19th this lodge would go dark for the summer. The Worshipful Master, William Johnson III, was contacted and it was arranged for the Worshipful Master and Secretary of the new lodge to be at the meeting of July 5th to present the initial request for permission to organize the new lodge with the vote being taken on July 19th. With only one dissenting vote the new lodge was approved by Cary B. Fish Lodge at its meeting on July 19th

The fourth meeting of the brothers organizing The Builder's Lodge was held on July 20th. This evening was devoted largely to determining which of the require supplies would be purchased and which would be made by the Brothers. The Secretarial items and books were donated by one of the brothers. Another brother donated the Altar Bible, Square and Compasses for the Altar, and receiving tool for the Senior Deacon. Another Brother donated the Tyler's Bible. The officers aprons and jewels were borrowed from Sarasota Lodge. The three lesser lights, the pedestals for South, West and East, the Columns for the Senior and Junior Warden Stations, the four rods, the Cable tows, the setting maul, the working tools, and the gavels were made and donated by different members of the lodge. The white aprons for members are to be made by the Eastern Star, but temporarily we are borrowing these items from Cary B. Fish Lodge No. 346. To date the new lodge has had to purchase only the Rod tops, white balls and black cubes for the ballot box and Candidates Aprons. The Altar and Kneeling Pads were available at the Samoor Grotto.

On Friday July 30, 1976 the U. D. Petition was ready for delivery to the District Deputy and after his review and signature for forwarding to the Grand Lodge. At 4:00 p.m. on that date the final

signature was added and the petition was ready to go. W:. William G. Wolf personally saw that it was delivered to the District Deputy for his signature, and then he received it back so that he could deliver it to the Grand Secretary on Saturday morning July 31st at the Grand Lodge Building in Jacksonville, Florida. The thirtieth signature to the petition was validated by the receipt of Brother Lawrence Woodard Smith's Demit which was received and delivered to the Grand Master on August 16th, in time for his name to be added to the Dispensation prior to its being granted.

This brings the history of The Builder's Lodge up to August 16, 1976 at 7:00 p.m. when 120 Masons have gathered at 5250 S. McIntosh Rd. and await the pleasure of M:. W:. Richard F. Griffie, Grand Master of Masons in Florida in whose hands the future of The Builder's Lodge rests.

Some interesting dates and events

June 24, 1976

The second meeting U.D. at MD Mason Company.

The following named officers were duly elected:

{ William G. Wolf, Worshipful Master

{ Paul Wilke, Sr. Warden

{ Robert L. Kennedy, Jr. Warden

June 29, 1976

The third meeting at MD Mason company.

The following officers were appointed:

{ Raymond C. Wolf, Treasurer

{ Arthur T. Stone, Secretary

{ William C. Petty, Jr., Sr. Deacon

{ Roy Reams, Jr., Jr. Deacon

Richard Kohlam, Sr. Steward

Terry Winkel, Jr. Steward

George Pate, Chaplain

Ted Forgeur, Marshal

Joseph Kader

A ballot was taken to determine the name of the new lodge. This resulted in a tie: "The Builders Lodge" or "Tyrian Lodge". A hand vote resulted in "The Builders Lodge" being chosen.

July 20, 1976

The fourth meeting U.D. at Savon Furniture company.

Cary B. Fish Lodge voted approval for organization of The Builders Lodge. Sarasota Lodge agreed to allow us to use a set of aprons and jewels. The Samoor Grotto would let us use their building: six months free rent, then 18 months at \$35 per month.

August 16, 1976

Stated Communications

The Grand Master of Florida, M.:W.: Richard F. Griffie and all Grand Lodge officers were present in Lodge. He set the Lodge to work U.D. and place all Lodge officers in their chairs.

May 7, 1977

Emergent Communication

The Emergent Communications of the M.:W.: Grand Lodge, F&AM of Florida was opened in Ample for by M.:W.: William Cleveland Mitchell, Grand Master in the Lodge Room of Samoor Grotto Lodge F&AM, for the purpose of Consecration, Dedication, Constitution and Installation of officers of the Builders Lodge No. 376, F&AM which had received its charter at the 148th Communication of the Grand Lodge of Florida.

March 15, 1983

Stated Communication

Bro. Bieber reported plan for Builders Lodge to furnish: seats, carpet, special lighting for lodge work and platform for officers in the new Grotto Building. In return lodge will receive three 5-year leases entitling them to three meetings per month at rent of \$150. Agreement accepted by lodge.

Late 1983

The Old Lodge Building (and the home of The Builders Lodge since dispensation) is brought down to make way for the new Samoor Grotto building.



January 17, 1984

Stated Meeting

Bro. Frank Zirpoli, Sr., newly elected Grotto Monarch, stated that, "the new building has been started.

For several months

There is much talk about donated lodge room regalia, equipment and furniture. Bro. Charlie Clements made and donated the alter and officers stations. A stained glass window was donated for behind the Master's Station. Toale Brothers Funeral Home donated the "rough and perfect ashlar". Many brothers are commended for long hours of work on the new building.

June 4, 1985

Stated Meeting

The lodge donated \$200 to Samoor Grotto for the sign outside the new building.

Lodge voted to go dark during the months of July and August.

Sometime in 1984 (exact date not entered)

The Builders Lodge takes up residence in the New Samoor Grotto Building, the lodge would stay at this location until early in 1998, when it moves to the Scottish Rite building. The move was necessitated by Samoor Grotto selling their building.



November 6, 1990

Stated Communication

There was a unanimous vote to raise dues by \$10 per to a total of \$40.

November 5, 1991

Stated Meeting

General discussion on ways the lodge could help Grotto with their financial difficulty (a harbinger of the future!)

More information will be added as it becomes available to the Webmaster.

[Return to The Builders Lodge Home Page](#)

