



SCOTTISH RITE OF FREEMASONRY

# BULLETIN

VALLEY OF WASHINGTON • ORIENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA **SPRING 2018**

## Ill. Charles S. Iversen, 33°

S.G.I.G. Emeritus • Editor of the Bulletin (1990 - 2018)



# SCOTTISH RITE CALENDAR • SPRING 2018 through FALL 2018

The meeting time for these events is 7:30 p.m., unless stated otherwise, in the 2nd Floor Lodge Room. The meetings are limited to Scottish Rite Masons unless stated otherwise. All meetings are preceded by dinner at 6:00 p.m. in the Temple Refectory.

## MAY 2018

- 1 Mithras Lodge of Perfection
- 7 Evangelist Chapter of Rose Croix

### 11 SPRING REUNION

- 4:00-5:15 p.m. – Registration
- 9:15 p.m. – Recess to Saturday

### 12 SPRING REUNION

- 8:00 a.m. – Class reports;  
Light Breakfast
- 3:30 p.m. – Almas Shrine Memorial
- 6:30 p.m. – Reunion Concluded with  
Dinner and Festivities

- 15 Robert de Bruce Council of Kadosh
- 19 CTC – Alexandria VA
- 19 Harmonic's Spring Concert
- 22 Albert Pike Consistory
- 23 DCSR Golf Tournament
- 28 **MEMORIAL DAY –  
D.C. OFFICES CLOSED**

## JUNE 2018

- 5 PEN/Faulkner Program
- 9 Tough Mudder
- 12 Evangelist Chapter Rose Croix
- 19 Robert de Bruce Council of Kadosh
- 26 Albert Pike Consistory

## JULY - AUGUST 2018

- 4 **INDEPENDENCE DAY –  
OFFICE CLOSED**

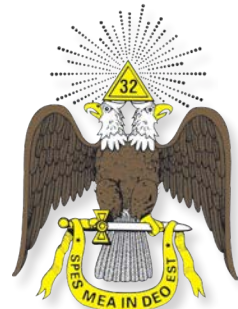
SUMMER RECESS – DCSR offices will be open Monday-Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. to assist you.

## SEPTEMBER 2018

- 3 **LABOR DAY –  
D.C. OFFICES CLOSED**
- 4 Mithras Lodge of Perfection
- 7 Evangelist Chapter of Rose Croix
- 18 Robert de Bruce Council of Kadosh
- 25 Albert Pike Consistory

## OCTOBER 2018

- 2 Mithras Lodge of Perfection
- 9 Feast of Tishri
- 16 Robert de Bruce Council of Kadosh
- 23 Albert Pike Consistory



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# BULLETIN

SPRING | 2018

## CHARLES SOREN IVERSEN, EXTRAORDINARY FREEMASON (1920-2018)

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- RED CROSS OF CONSTANTINE
- A MAN OF LETTERS
- A MONUMENT
- A LEGACY
- ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



*Charles with his wife Eleanor*

### **PUBLISHER**

Ill. Leonard Proden, 33°

### **EDITOR**

Ill. Carroll J. Collins, 33°

This Bulletin is published twice a year for members of the Valley of Washington, Orient of the District of Columbia, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction of the United States of America.

2800 Sixteenth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009



SCOTTISH RITE OF FREEMASONRY  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



2800



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## Welcome New Candidates

**BY ILLUSTRIOUS LEONARD PRODEN, 33°**  
SOVEREIGN GRAND INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE  
SUPREME COUNCIL IN WASHINGTON, DC

It's Reunion time and a special one as we have partnered with Almas Shriners here in our Nation's Capital to allow masons the opportunity to become a 32° Scottish Rite Mason and a Noble of the Almas Shrine. This special gathering will have the full presentation of the 4°, 14°, 18°, 30° and 32° with all other degrees communicated. A Shrine Ceremonial will take place at the conclusion of our Scottish Rite Degrees.



*Ill. Leonard Proden, 33°*

We welcome all of our candidates to the Valley of Washington and I would like to offer the welcome of our then Deputy to the Supreme Council, Ill. Charles S. Iversen, 33°, S.G.I.G Emeritus, as written in the Fall 1990 Bulletin:

*So it is with the candidates... They now reap in the Scottish Rite the seed which they planted in the Blue Lodge. They, as we all have done when we became Masters of the Royal Secret (32°), have embarked upon the College of Freemasonry. The Scottish Rite degrees carry Masonic education beyond the Hiram legend of the Blue Lodge, into philosophy, history and chivalry. They cover the centuries through the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Reformation. The teachings go beyond the rudimentals and become as profound and as meaningful as we make them.*

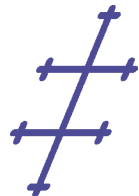
*We welcome the candidates into our Scottish Rite Family and we encourage them to enjoy this new experience in Masonry. Study the degrees (including those which will only be communicated to you), attend the Tuesday evening meetings during the year, be active on committees, volunteer for parts in the degrees. In other words, be a real member of our Family—be a Scottish Rite Brother.*

*The following is, in my opinion, the essence of a Scottish Rite Mason:*

*“Remember that it is better to love than to hate; that it is your duty not to be better than your brethren, but to be better than yourselves; and that the more you have the more you owe to those who need your assistance.”*

Timely words then and still certainly applicable now. Plan to join me at this special Reunion that is dedicated to and named in memory of Charles S. Iversen.

Thank you for continuing to be a Scottish Rite Mason.



## A Grateful Noble

BY ILLUSTRIOUS SIR JEFFREY D. HOLT, 33°  
2018 POTENTATE OF ALMAS SHRINERS

Es Selamu Aleikum,

Welcome to the Joint Scottish Rite Reunion and Shrine Ceremonial, named in memory and tribute to Illustrious Sir Charles S. Iversen, 33° SGIG Emeritus and Past Potentate of Almas Shriners. The Nobles of Almas Shriners are honored to take part in the Spring 2018 Joint Reunion and Ceremonial.

Illustrious Iversen served as Potentate of Almas Shriners in 1986, which happened to coincide with Almas Shriners' Centennial year. His leadership during that period of celebration and transition helped shape Almas as the inclusive and forward-thinking temple that we know today.

My most recent memories of Charles are of his storytelling and his sharing about his year as Potentate, and the joys and struggles he encountered during his year of service. He generously provided me with a keen insight into the office which I was preparing to assume. His valuable advice to "secure our past, but not at the sake of the future", continues to guide me as I serve the Nobles of Almas. As any Masonic leader may agree, there is always a battle between what we are currently doing, and what we are doing to preserve our future. I will always be grateful to Ill. Sir Charles for helping prepare me to lead Almas Shriners.

Albert Pike stated that "We have all the Light we need, we just need to put it in practice." My challenge to each of you is to strive to emulate the example of Ill. Sir Iversen and find a place in our Scottish Rite Valley and/or Almas Shriners and put the lessons learned in this weekend's Reunion and Ceremonial into practice.

Aleikum Es Selam,

Noble JD



*Ill. Sir J.D. Holt, 33°*



## In memory of Illustrious and Most Worshipful Brother, Past Sovereign Grand Inspector General, The Valley of Washington, Orient of the District of Columbia

BY ILLUSTRIOUS GEORGE R. ADAMS, 33° G.C.

Illustrious and Most Worshipful Brother Charles S. Iversen, 33rd degree, SGIG, AASR, Southern Jurisdiction, USA, a/k/a “Charles”, represents to me and those who knew him the highest and noblest example of what it means to be a Freemason. I can make this statement with confidence since it has been my blessed privilege to travel in his wake as a Freemason for nearly a half century from Worshipful Master of our Mother Lodge, Benjamin B. French No.15, to Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia, to Head of the Scottish Rite’s Valley of Washington, Orient of the District of Columbia and finally as a member of the Ritual Team of The Royal Order of Scotland.



*Ill. George R. Adams, 33° GC*

Charles served our Craft with humility, integrity, intelligence and distinction and was a meaningful example to all who knew him. He will be remembered as a bright light in the temple of our Craft and within the force field of his personality.

Charles was a gentle soul who stood his ground when it came to principle. As a Freemason he exemplified the qualities of 1) integrity 2) intelligence 3) sincerity 4) authenticity 5) dedication to family and country 6) hard work 7) brotherly love 8) humility 9) patriotism and yes 10) humor (Charles was the purveyor of humor each Tuesday night at our Scottish Rite meetings).

No tribute to Charles would be complete without mentioning his wonderful lady Eleanor who was his life companion and the light of his life. My wife Charlie and Eleanor became close friends on their various trips with the Royal Order of Scotland. Eleanor was a lady with artistic talent who complemented Charles with her loving, uplifting disposition.

Our Valley has and is blessed by the leadership and example of this magnificent brother and we ask that our Heavenly Father fold the arms of his love and protection around Charles (and Eleanor) as they journey on through God’s cosmic universe.

Ill. George R. Adams, 33° G.C.





## A Memorial Tribute to Ill. Charles S. Iversen, 33°

BY ILLUSTRIOUS JERRY SAMET, 33°

I wanted to write a few lines about Charles Iversen. I knew Charles for many years. I was his Personal Representative for many years, but more than that his and Eleanor's friend and like family for many, many years. We did a lot of eating together, traveling together and sometimes visiting mutual friends together. We traveled together to many countries, Charles, Eleanor and I. It was like family, we knew what each other liked and disliked. Wherever we were, we always stopped for ice cream. In Paris, our friends Helene and Jean Francois were as close as family to us. Helene would take Eleanor and go shopping for dinners we all enjoyed, just like family. When my mother, Margaret was alive, she traveled with us and they were all like Sisters.

Many times when we had a meeting somewhere, Charles would have researched the place and we would make a side trip to palace he researched. His ability to read about a city, a town or a place was unbelievable.

Charles was a great friend and brother and Masonic Brother to people all over the world. He will be truly missed by all.

From,

Ill. Jerry Samet, 33°



*Ill. Sir J.D. Holt, 33°*



# CHARLES SOREN IVERSEN

## Extraordinary Freemason (1920-2018)

BY KEVIN S. FRIES, 32° KCCH



Charles Soren Iversen, a DC resident for more than 80 years, Potentate of Almas Shrine, Past Grand Master, Sovereign Grand Inspector General, and a member of many professional, civic, and fraternal organizations, he lead the transformation of a great society of men and brothers into a cosmopolitan, diverse, and international city of Freemasons.

He devoted his life to the idea that all good men can be Freemasons. The pride DC Freemasons take today in the practice—not just the belief—that in this city, we are stronger because of our diversity rather than despite it, is a legacy he devoted a lifetime of service to attaining.

Most Worshipful Brother Iversen, worthy of many honorifics, was known to all as Charlie, lived a great American life, great as much for the breadth of his accomplishments as for the spirit and integrity he embodied. He lived the American century, witnessed some of history's darkest hours and enjoyed the love of his family, excellence in his career, and unique, unparalleled even, fraternal accomplishment in DC Freemasonry.

Charlie died at home on January 27, 2018. Though he outlived most of his peers, who were, perhaps, the best witnesses to his contributions, Masonic and otherwise, he leaves in many

more a memory, not simply of a good-natured soul with a quick wit and ready joke, but a man who could traverse the complexities of life's challenges, big or small, and always keep an eye to the future.

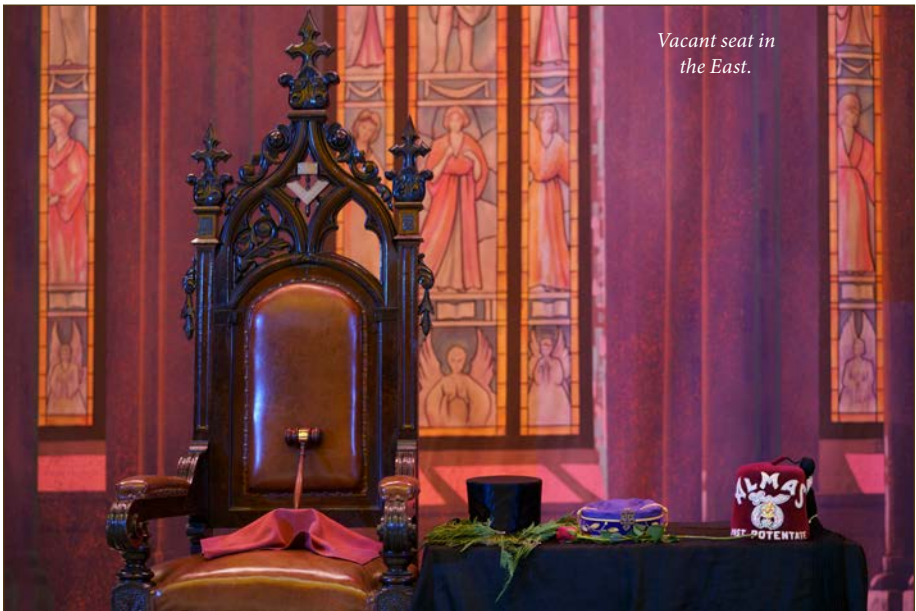
Charlie had numerous, stunning traits of character: he was a man of honor, of principle, who worked hard and won the love and respect of a city of active and notable men.

The moment though, is now to celebrate together his life and our knowing him, and I offer as best I can snapshots of his contributions and a collection of memories for that purpose. Other sources will have to be consulted for a strict chronology and exhaustive treatment of all of Charlie's labors.

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## REMEMBERING CHARLIE

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On Saturday, February 24, 2018, family, friends, fraternal sisters and brothers, and admirers of Charlie came to the D.C. Scottish Rite Temple to offer a final good-bye.

The auditorium was bedecked with portraits of Charles, an empty chair, and a sprig of acacia. The ceremony featured both the Scottish Rite and the Grand Lodge funeral services. Ill. & Rev. Dr. W. Kenneth Lyons, 33°, GC, offered a message, which was followed by remarks by Charlie and Eleanor's daughter Joan, the Sovereign Grand Commander, and the Grand Master of Masons of the District of Columbia.

The remembrance ceremony began with remarks by Ronald A. Seale, Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council, S.J.

“In imitation of the legend of Hiram Abif, we have gathered... and so are we all taught to live so that at our death... honors may be paid to us. And so we gather for that same purpose for a man who honors are especially due and fit,” Illustrious Seal said from the podium.

“Everyone here has a story about Charlie. Allow me a brief moment to tell mine. One morning my wife and I found ourselves in Dulles Airport... And I looked down the corridor, and there came Charlie with that same mischievous grin that always made you wonder what he was up to... I’ll always remember that spring in his step.”

Illustrious Seal went on to discuss a trip to Washington State, enjoying time with Charlie, as well as sharing a ride to the airport on the return trip. “When you look at the accomplishments of a man like Charlie, his legal accomplishments, his Masonic accomplishments, with all the people Charlie rubbed elbows with, he could take as much enjoyment sitting in Dulles airport with a Brother eating a hotdog and make it seem like a feast. It was Charlie taking care of us... I suppose Charlie will always be with us... He will still be here in our hearts and our memories and every time good men come and gather around.”

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### EARLY LIFE

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Charlie’s Iversen line hailed from Denmark, with his grandfather Soren coming to the U.S. in 1891; but his mother’s people were from New England, and had been there since before the American Revolution. The Iversen family was living in Cheshire, MA, when Charlie was born on December 9, 1920, and moved to Washington in 1930.



*Boyhood in the District*

As a grade-schooler, Charlie attended H.D. Cooke in Northwest DC, and would mention how as a boy, he would play baseball on the Scottish Rite building site. Charlie wrote about being young in DC in the 1930s and the article was one of many he contributed to this publication.

Charlie’s father was a wholesale grocer in the city and played an important role in his son’s life, not least of his influences included guiding Charlie on a path to being Brother Iversen. Before that, however, judging from a directory of members from the Princeton Club of Washington in the DC Historical Society, father, and son enjoyed the amusements and traditions of that organization.

Prior to reporting for his military service, Charlie married Eleanor DeSale on May 18, 1943, in St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Washington, DC. Almost exactly a year later, the couple



had a daughter, Joan Maren Iversen, whose later marriage and family made Brother Iversen a very proud father, grandfather, and great grandfather.

As a young married couple, Charlie and Eleanor lived in the District, but they would go on to live in the suburbs of Silver Spring and Bethesda.

Charlie and Eleanor were always fun to socialize with, according to Bob Hanson who came to the Scottish Rite Celebration of Life service. Mr. Hanson, a former Freemason, and a distant relative of Maryland's delegate to the Continental Congress in 1779, like Charlie, was very active in civic life, especially in Rotary. He knew Eleanor before she was married, had mutual professional connections with Charlie, and would play cards with the couple.

"Charlie was a good bridge player," Mr. Hanson said over the phone with what I imagined a grin like Charlie's.

Yet Mr. Hanson offered a take on more than just Charlie's socializing, he also knew Charlie in business, referring clients to him. "People, especially older people, would not know how to handle their estates, and Charlie would help them," he said. Mr. Hanson and I agreed Charlie was a family man helping people conduct the business of family in a trustworthy and necessary way.



*Charles & Eleanor, May 18, 1943*

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## GOD AND COUNTRY

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Charlie served his country proudly during and after World War II, finally resigning his commission in 1950. He served as Order of Battle Officer to the 5th Infantry Division, served in Ireland, worked at Military Intelligence Headquarters in London, landed on Normandy Beach, he is careful to add after the treat of enemy fire had passed, and served as an interpreter for those investigating war crimes near Munich after the conflict had ended, certainly one of history's darkest chapters. His military service alone would likely fill pages and hours of storytelling.

I heard him say how, while working on the Nuremberg trials interrogations, he made and kept as a friend and fellow-Washingtonian the man with whom he worked most closely. Charlie again was able to make the best of difficult circumstances, to say the least.

When I asked him to describe meeting Charles de Gaulle, Charlie took the opportunity to add a touch of irreverence in noting the visor on de Gaulle's cap and the round waist, perhaps evoking a Bill Mauldin cartoon from the 1960s. He always liked to keep things in perspective.

Charlie was active in his church as well, mostly in the late 1950s, serving as a Reader, then Trustee, and then as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, here in D.C.

The building he worshipped in is now a hotel, called “The Line.” With friends, I walked into the building for the first time after years of passing it by. We looked up together and saw a large sculpture hanging from the ceiling. It took several glances to see it had been made from the organ pipes of the church. I remembered Mr. Hanson telling me about the prominent people who worshipped here, and that Charles right along with them would have remembered when that organ was new. It was a moment of living history for me, and a moment of reverence not just for Charlie and his faith, his experience, but a recognition of the many worlds all around us at the same time. It is a lesson I think Charlie would appreciate, even though it edges toward the wondrous and abstract.



*Lieutenant Iversen*

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### A MENTOR

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Charlie helped countless brothers along their respective paths in life and Masonry, not just by virtue of his leadership roles, but also by building close friendships with individual Brothers.

Most Worshipful Roman Volsky, PGM, was one such Mason who benefitted from the guiding hand of Charlie who had traveled a similar road.

“Charlie was the first real Mason in my life that I met in America. I met him right at the Scottish Rite, and his big portrait was right there. He was very open about who should be a Mason. My experience before that was put-offish, [others] were not as open or as cosmopolitan as [those in] Washington,” said MWB Volsky.

“He took me under advisement and that continued over the 20 years that I have known him. He was basically concentrating on one thing and one thing only. Do not try to be attention getting, just do your job. Your integrity and your reputation [are] more important than your position. That was him being humble, himself having [had] the most illustrious career in Masonry that anyone can imagine. He is and was the symbol of humility. You need to work as though you enjoy it, and if you enjoy it people will see, and you should get as much fun

out of [Freemasonry] as possible. There is nobody behind the curtain. If you strive to get to that curtain, that is the wrong motivation. And that is how it went.”

Charlie’s mentoring and influence, for me, also focused on the importance of meeting your obligations. “He always kept his word no matter what,” MWB Volsky said. And Charlie did on countless occasions, including keeping a promise of more than seven years and installing RWB Volsky as Grand Master despite increasing age and the passing of time.

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### AT THE BAR

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Charlie was a lawyer by profession. He was admitted to the Bar of the District of Columbia in April 1948. Also admitted to the Bar of Maryland in 1955, he went on to practice law for forty-eight years. In the course of those years, he was associated with Musgrave and Leonard, Willey and Crooks in the District, and Raysor, Barbour and Iversen in Maryland. He took leadership roles not only among his brethren, but also among his professional peers as well, serving as an officer or chairman of committees of the DC Bar, serving as Treasurer of that body one year.

He also served at the following Bars: U.S. Supreme Court, U.S. Court of Appeals of the D.C. Circuit, Court of Appeals of D.C., Court of Appeals of MD, U.S. District Courts of D.C. and Maryland, the U.S. Tax Court, and the U.S. Court of Military Appeals.

From the late 1950s to the late 1980s, Charlie was active in the local legal profession in many ways. He held membership in the Barristers of Washington, D.C., D.C. Estate Planning Council, the Lawyers Club of Washington, also of the now-disbanded National Lawyers Club.

He retired from the practice of law in 1996.



*Scales of Justice*

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### FREEMASONRY

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In November 1948, Charlie was raised in Benjamin B. French Lodge No. 15, and went on to have one of the most storied Masonic careers of D.C. Masons of his generation. His Masonic resume is long, very long. His family took receipt of his 70-year pin at the Scottish Rite Celebration of Life service. He was active, involved, and engaged until the very end of his life. I remember seeing him drive himself home after meetings, backing his Prius, out of his parking spot at the bottom of the sidewalk ramp at the DC Scottish Rite, and marvel how lucky he was to be able to be independent so late in life.

He was Master of his mother lodge in 1969, Potentate of Almas in 1986, Grand Master of Masons in DC in 1990, and then Sovereign Grand Inspector General in 1991. The historical dates and sequence of Charlie’s career are chronicled in the recently published Compendium containing his Scottish Rite writings, printed by MWB Volsky. Charlie was

a member of many other Masonic organizations aside from the Shrine, the Grand Line, and the Scottish Rite, including The Order of the Eastern Star, as was Eleanor, but even their active lives, like our own, only contain 24 hours. He was also a member of all three York Rite Bodies, a Legion of Honor recipient in National Capital DeMolay, a member of the Masonic Veteran Association of DC and National Sojourners in Bethesda, MD. As if that was not enough, he was also a member of the Royal Order of Scotland, The Tall Cedars of Lebanon, and the Grotto.

Charlie talked about his year as Master with great pride and joy when I asked him about it in 2014. He was proud to have a prominent Federal judge speak as one of his lodge programs, engineered with the help of MW & Ill. Renah F. Camalier, 33° G. : C. : ., a former member of the DC Board of Commissioners that governed the District in the years prior to home rule.

Charlie enjoyed the regular dinners at the home of the Lodge officers and the smart and carefree fellowship of his Brothers. After years of resisting involvement in the fraternity, his Mastership was the beginning of an amazing Masonic career.

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### ALMAS SHRINE

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In the mid-1960s, shortly before the huge Shrine-hosted national parades on the streets of Washington, where President Johnson and many other political and Masonic dignitaries participated in what was then a great show of national and Masonic pride, and also source of social commentary, Charlie joined the Shrine.

By the late 1960s Charlie was an experienced, even wise, Freemason, having been Master of his mother lodge, served his country in war, and becoming a successful professional.

He told me the story of his election to Potentate as a mix of chance and the support of a loyal following. According to Charlie, he swooped in at the last minute and his winning was not only surprising to him.

This year the Shrine, through the leadership of Potentate Jeffrey Holt, is taking special care to remember Charlie. Illustrious Holt explains: “Part of what is motivating me, is a special memory of Charlie. I believe we always go through periods of transition in Freemasonry and in our community, and when Charlie became Potentate, was a steadying influence during a very serious transition in our fraternity, the sale of our original temple that had been in use for over fifty years.”

Illustrious Brother Holt continued. “As any leader in Masonry would probably agree with me, there is always that battle between what we are doing now and what we are doing to preserve our future. And Charles was at that point he was a key leader in the letting go of the old shrine temple, so I’ve always felt that part of what we do as officers we are obligated to look not only to the current needs of our membership but the future need of our fraternity and I have always respected Charles for that... not only as the SGIG, but also as Grand Master. He was there at the cornerstone laying of the new building where I now sit.”



When I spoke to Charlie several years ago and asked about his time as Potentate, he told me proudly of the 100th anniversary, and especially about a commemorative program booklet on which he worked. He mentioned that he was pleased to have paid for what I took him to worry might seem as an extravagance, by having Nobles pay to have their pictures appear in the back of the book. So I was pleasantly surprised when Illustrious Brother Holt had a copy of that book when I went to interview him for this article.

“One of the things that struck me when I read this book about the 100th anniversary of Almas was on a dedication page where Charles wrote that he dedicated the book to nobles of the first century of operation.”

“Charles was not only looking forward but also looking back. I think that is part of being a noble of Almas and a Mason in the District of Columbia, we have a proud history that we should always build upon but never let it hold us back... When I was elected Oriental Guide...he gave me some advice. You will not be able to please everyone but you are always trying to do your best for the future. What we are currently doing in the preserving of our temple, how we do our business as nobles, even to the point of how we transport our kids from here in DC up to Philadelphia just as I take all my decisions this year I do my best for what is in the here and now but also what is best for the future.

“I think we as officers of the fraternity are doing ourselves a disservice if we are shortsighted. If I think of Charlie in one sentence: he was never shortsighted, he always saw the future. Proud of his past but always looking to the future.”



*Charles as Potentate*

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**GRAND MASTER OF MASONS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

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At the age of 69, after more than forty years of working in the quarries of Freemasonry, Charlie became Grand Master of Masons of the District of Columbia, adding to the small group of brothers who came to that office after serving as Potentate.

Almost as if foreshadowing his later years as representative to foreign jurisdictions, as Grand Master, Charlie took a leadership role in pushing the jurisdiction to look far beyond its borders.

Charlie shared his long and broad view of the world during a trip with Masons to Russia over a 7-city, 17-day tour. Charlie would later write, “We found that glasnost (openness) is a reality,” and the clarifying, edifying, parenthesis were his. Perhaps working for openness at home as well as appreciating it abroad, Charlie’s flair for the international continued.



*Charles as Grand Master*

Charlie “issued dispensation to the Masters and Wardens of a proposed Lodge to be known as Mehr Lodge, U.D.” According to the 1990 DC Grand Lodge Proceedings, this was the first dispensation to form a regular Masonic Lodge in DC in 43 years.

The decision was at least four years in the making, a result of negotiations between DC and the Grand Lodge of Iran in Exile, negotiations led by Deputy Grand Master of the Iranian Grand Lodge, RWB Robert Heyat, who would go on to become Grand Master in DC in 2007. The current Grand Secretary Emeritus, MWB Brother Mansour Hatefi, was elected Mehr Lodge’s first Master, with WB Christopher Sahakin and Fred Khoshnevisan as Wardens.

Charlie also continued the close relationship the fraternity has with The George Washington University by making Dr. Joel Trachtenberg a Mason at sight. The last

previous such conferral was some twenty-five years earlier. Once again, Charlie was expert at keeping one eye on history and one eye on the future.

As if such notable service was not enough, he served as Grand Master while also being Deputy of the Supreme Council for the Valley of Washington. Charlie, it seems, lived many lifetimes in the course of his 97 years.

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### SCOTTISH RITE

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Almost 20 years after being raised a Mason, Charlie took the Scottish Rite degrees here in DC. In October and November 1966, around the same time he joined the Shrine, over the course of about a week, Brother Iversen became a Knight of the Royal Secret, a 32nd degree Scottish Rite Freemason. In 1977 he received the K.C.C.H Honor, and was corneted a 33rd degree Inspector General Honorary in November 1983 by SGIG William E. “Buddy” Eccleston. Brother Iversen had many gifts, but one gift indeed was seeing the future of Freemasonry as an international community.

Twenty-five years after taking the first Scottish Rite degree, Charlie became SGIG in October, 1991. From 1993 to 2013, he was a representative of the Supreme Council to Nicaragua, Cuba, and Greece. His autobiography mentions and collection of family pictures show him and Eleanor traveling, I believe, to some of these very places.

From 1991 to 1999, he was involved in five Scottish Rite standing committees. He began his committee work laboring on the Benevolence and Fraternal Assistance Committee, the Education and Americanism Committee, and Letters Temporary and Permanent Charters Committee in 1991. He maintained an involvement in these groups for the duration of almost ten years. He would in 1995 expand further his involvement to include the Appeals and Grievances Committee and the Jurisprudence and Legislation Committees. Of the three committees he joined first, he served five two-year terms in each.

During this time, his articles appeared in the *New Age Magazine*, the *Scottish Rite Journal*, and DC's own *Scottish Rite Bulletin*. The articles chronicle the larger Scottish Rite events at the time, including events at the Language and



Charles as SGIG

Learning Center, events supporting the organization's long-held dedication to education and helping students, and fund raisers for the fraternity and for community organizations. One issue features a photograph of him and Eleanor at Federal Lodge's Belmont Ball, a storied time in my own Mother Lodge.

Charlie was also known to regularly attend the Scottish Rite Reunions, and save for several instances when Eleanor was sick, his reputation was that he held near perfect attendance. Welcoming new members, encouraging the casts, and dedicated crew to see to the best that he could that all would go smoothly and enjoyably over the busy degrees. He would also often take a ritual role himself, in capping ceremonies, installations, and other events. His absence will be all the more noticeable in the coming weeks as we adjust to the loss of our great friend and brother.

Right Worshipful Brother Dean Clatterbuck also offered his observations about Charlie's tenure. "While we've always had quality people, I think he was one of the best SGIGs we've had... Charlie was always fair and even-handed and he carried that good humor.

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**SOCIETAS ROSICRUCIANA IN CIVITATIBUS FOEDERATIS**

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Charlie, in keeping with his ability to keep perspective, always balanced the social aspects of the fraternity with other arguably more serious labors. One very important lasting contribution to the jurisdiction was his work in establishing an important foothold in the local study of esoteric Freemasonry.



“Charles Iversen was the first “Chief Adept” for the D.C. College of SRICF, the Masonic Rosicrucians. The DC group was chartered in 2005, largely as a result of his efforts, wrote Illustrious Luke Young, 33°.

Brother Young continued: “[Charlie] served in this role for a decade. His warm and welcoming manner and his effective leadership, helped to create an invitational body where Masons of the Christian faith could let all other titles and honors take a back seat while discussing mysticism and esotericism as ‘fratres’ or brothers on the level.”

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**RED CROSS OF CONSTANTINE**

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Brother Iversen is also remembered for his work in the Red Cross of Constantine (RCC). When RW Clutterbuck, currently the seated Intendant General, joined the organization in 1997, Charlie was, of course, already a member by about two years.

“Charlie served with distinction in nearly everything single thing he did,” RW Clatterbuck said when asked about Charlie’s work in the Scottish Rite and the Red Cross of Constantine.

“The way he worked to keep the brethren happy and satisfied to resolve any minor differences that might have arisen. One of his real fortes was just good solid logic and that can be a hard thing to rebut,” Clatterbuck commented.



“Eleanor was such a strong force in his life and by his side, and she loved to... entertain and Charlie liked to go along with that. It was always fun. When we would get to these [RCC] meetings with the Imperial Council, we would...socialize with him quite a bit.... He was extremely popular in everything he did. He always looked forward to going to the Eastern Regular Assembly held in Pennsylvania in November each year and about 300 people show up. If Charlie wasn’t there for any reason you’d spend the whole weekend explaining where Charlie and Eleanor were.”

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**A MAN OF LETTERS**

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When he was not telling jokes at a Tuesday night meetings, I knew Charlie best as a contributor to the *Scottish Rite Bulletin*. Although I knew he was SGIG Emeritus, I did not see him that way. I saw him as a man with great and wide experience, and also wisdom, who shared a passion for writing. I was awestruck by his prolific contributions, and his sweeping treatment of his topics, often biographical in nature.





*Charles, typewriter and all*

He took to his writing task with a visible enjoyment. He would go for the grand topics, with his usual flair. His selection and treatment of his subjects reminds me he always had his eye on the peak experience. He would find a trusted historical source and lead readers to view the best attributes of his subject, whether it be Peter the Great of Russia or a fellow writer. The enjoyment though I think was being able to enjoy the Masonic experiences of men he could only read about, study, and wonder.

Charlie loved telling the stories of people's lives, as well as his own. In addition to the many contributions he made to the *Bulletin*, he also wrote a privately published autobiography of sorts, part memoir, part diary, and part letter to his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. His great grace and affable personality could in part come from having lived many lives, those of the men and women he lived and learned with, but also the brothers before him he met while writing and reflecting on how their combined experiences spoke to readers today.

He would write out his articles, as far as I know, longhand on yellow legal pads. Betty Steele, a former graphics and admin employee, would type the essays, at times wondering at and wrangling with the pages. They would edit and proofread before the *Bulletin* was sent off to the publisher. He was always extremely eager to see the final product, the carefully chosen images and his explorations in history mingled together for his beloved Brothers.

Most Worshipful Brother Volsky worked closely with Charlie's writing. He may have had the best perspective to offer. "I had a lot of experience with him because we published his memoirs. Having read that, and being blown away by the magnitude of knowing what this man had accomplished through his life and observing him in real life behaving like this is not a big deal, this is what we all have to do. That is what makes it gold, that is what makes it important, that is what makes it the illustration of the essence of his character and the style of his leadership," said MWB Volsky.

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## A MONUMENT

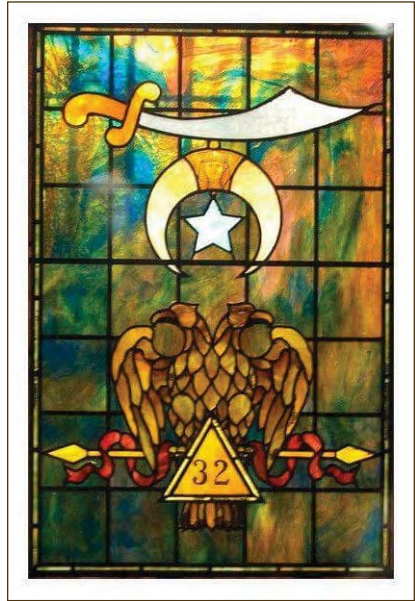
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A fitting tribute was paid to Charlie, with Eleanor on his arm, on the evening of February 28, 2001, when the Grand Lodge dedicated a stained glass window to Charlie.

The prayers, the words of greeting and dedication that evening are lost to me, and possibly to history, as I write this, but I am marveled by the essence of the honor. What higher honor, in a community that uses light as a key element of its teachings, could there be than a stained glass window installed in possibly the highest physical Masonic-specific location in the DC metropolitan area, the George Washington Masonic National Memorial?

The center window on the North side of the tower is a window adorned with emblems of the Shrine and the Scottish Rite, two organizations that Charlie led. The dedication ceremony was led by MWB George Adams, PGM, and George Seghers, then Secretary/Treasurer of the Memorial.

The window, quite literally, demonstrates the heights and the depths of Charlie's Masonic career. It shows that his peers held him in the highest regard, and it inspires the rest of us to keep pushing ourselves to follow his example.



*Charles' window at the GWMNM*

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## A LEGACY

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Charles Soren Iversen, man and Freemason, lead a long, full, and exemplary life. His life was full not simply from his activities, but the spiritual, Masonic, loving quality he brought to each person he met. He dedicated himself to laboring not simply within the community of Freemasons, in D.C. or around the world, but to other civic, professional, and social groups. His was a life of service, of honor, and achievement.

Defining what made Charlie unique is easy in the sense that most people could sense his innate talents but is difficult because capturing the true essence of his simple way of putting the world at ease is astonishingly rare. His humor, his intelligence, and countless other gifts of course contributed to his manner, but he was a Master Mason in the sense that he had graceful control over all— not just some—of his abilities.

Charlie's life was touched by many great figures in world history, however briefly, from Albert Einstein on the bucolic grounds of Princeton University to Charles de Gaulle in Normandy the aftermath of World War II, and doubtless to dignitaries of our own time. He appreciated the greatness, the goodness, of the world around him and worked to help others see and enjoy it as well. As Illustrious Jeff Holt said, Charlie was able to be grounded by history, his

own and that of others, and push us all on to a better future. Our work ahead is to honor that memory by building the best future we can envision. Most Worshipful Brother Richard J. Bautista summarized it succinctly at the February service, “We are blessed with a living memory of him in the thousands of lives he has touched and influenced in his long journey in Freemasonry.”

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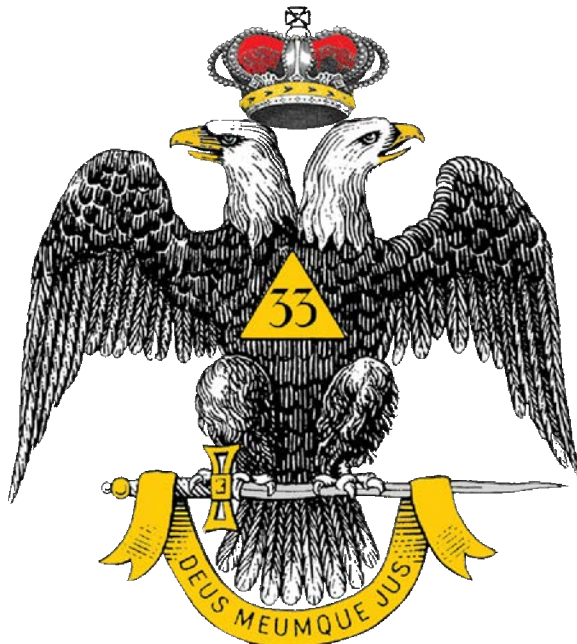
### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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To say this article was a team effort does not begin to approximate it. Thank you to all the folks who talked to me about Charlie, both on and off the record.



*Kevin S. Fries, 32° KCCH*



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## ILL. CHARLES S. IVERSEN, 33° MEMORIAL REUNION



*Officers of Grand Lodge and Benjamin B. French Lodge No. 15 assembled at the February 24th Memorial Tribute to the late Ill. Charles S. Iversen, 33°*

