

# Bethany Lodge History

As the newly installed Grand Master's Theme for his term in office is "Back To the Future", it is fitting to note that this sentiment was expressed by the then Wor. Merton E. Chute of Bethany Lodge: "Look to tomorrow, build for the future with Masonry in your heart and our children will have as proud a heritage as we have ... and possibly better!"

At the close of the Civil War, the two towns of West and South Amesbury were thriving places. Work was plentiful; peace and harmony was the norm. There were no cars or buses. In general, people walked everywhere. The nearest Masonic Lodge was Warren Lodge in Amesbury about 4 miles away. With such extremely limited transportation available, an effort began to bring a lodge into this rapidly growing community.

In 1868, 25 brothers petitioned Grand Lodge for permission to form a lodge in West Amesbury. Dispensation was granted in December of 1868 and the charter, signed by MW William Sewell Gardiner, was presented in December of 1869 with Charles C. Dame the Past Grand Master installing the officers. For the first 6 months, the lodge utilized the regalia on loan from Warren Lodge.

In July 1876, Grand Lodge officers dedicated the laying of the cornerstone of the new town hall in the newly incorporated town of Merrimac. In 1894, a new hall in the Little and Larken Block was dedicated. In 1918, Bethany Lodge returned to its original and remodeled lodge building in the Lovell Block where it continued to meet until 1930 when the Lovell building's owner sold the building necessitating another move.

