Order of the Eastern Star
From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Order of the Eastern Star** is a fraternal organization that both men and women can join. It was established in 1850 by Rob Morris, a lawyer and educator from Boston, Massachusetts, who had been an official with the Freemasons. It is based on teachings from the Bible,[1] but is open to people of all theistic beliefs. It has approximately 10,000 chapters in twenty countries and approximately 500,000 members under its General Grand Chapter. Members of the Order are aged 18 and older; men must be Master Masons and women must have specific relationships with Masons. Originally, a woman would have to be the daughter, widow, wife, sister, or mother of a master Mason, but the Order now allows other relatives[2] as well as allowing Job's Daughters, Rainbow Girls, Members of the Organization of Triangle (NY only) and members of the Constellation of Junior Stars (NY only) to become members when they become of age.

### Contents
- 1 History
- 2 Emblem and heroines
- 3 Officers
- 4 Headquarters
- 5 Charities
- 6 Notable members
- 7 See also
- 8 References
- 9 External links

### History
The Order was created by Rob Morris in 1850 when, while confined by illness, he set down the principles of the order in his *Rosary of the Eastern Star*. By 1855, he had organized a "Supreme Constellation" in New York, which chartered chapters throughout the United States.

In 1866, Dr. Morris started working with Robert Macoy, and handed the Order over to him while Morris was traveling in the Holy Land. Macoy organized the current system of Chapters, and modified Dr. Morris' *Rosary* into a *Ritual*.

On December 1, 1874, Queen Esther Chapter No. 1 became the first Prince Hall Affiliate chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star when it was established in Washington, D.C. by Thornton Andrew Jackson.[3]

The "General Grand Chapter" was formed in Indianapolis, Indiana on
November 6, 1876. Committees formed at that time created the Ritual of the Order of the Eastern Star in more or less its current form.[4]

### Emblem and heroines

The emblem of the Order is a five-pointed star with the white ray of the star pointing downwards towards the manger. In the Chapter room, the downward-pointing white ray points to the West. The character-building lessons taught in the Order are stories inspired by Biblical figures:

- **Adah** (Jephthah's daughter, from Judges)
- **Ruth**, the widow
- **Esther**, the wife
- **Martha** (sister of Lazarus, from the Gospel of John)
- **Electa** (the "elect lady", from II John), the mother

### Officers

There are 18 main officers in a full chapter:

- **Worthy Matron** - presiding officer
- **Worthy Patron** - a Master Mason who provides general supervision
- **Associate Matron** - assumes the duties of the Worthy Matron in the absence of that officer
- **Associate Patron** - assumes the duties of the Worthy Patron in the absence of that officer
- **Secretary** - takes care of all correspondence and minutes
- **Treasurer** - takes care of monies of the Chapter
- **Conductress** - Leads visitors and initiations.
- **Associate Conductress** - Assists with introductions and handles ballot box.
- **Chaplain** - leads the Chapter in prayer
- **Marshal** - presents the Flag and leads in all ceremonials
- **Organist** - provides music for the meetings
- **Adah** - Shares the lesson of Duty of Obedience to the will of God
- **Ruth** - Shares the lesson of Honor and Justice
- **Esther** - Shares the lesson of Loyalty to Family and Friends
- **Martha** - Shares the lesson of Faith and Trust in God and Everlasting Life
- **Electa** - Shares the lesson of Charity and Hospitality
- **Warder** - Sits next to the door inside the meeting room, to make sure those that enter the chapter room are members of the Order.
- **Sentinel** - Sits next to the door outside the chapter room, to make sure those that wish to enter are members of the Order.

Traditionally, a woman who is elected Associate Conductress will the following year be elected to Conductress, then the next year Associate Matron, and the next year Worthy Matron. A man elected...
Associate Patron will usually the next year be elected Worthy Patron. Usually the woman who is elected to become Associate Matron will let it be known who she wishes to be her Associate Patron, so the next year they will both go to the East together as Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron. There is no male counterpart to the Conductress and Associate Conductress. Only women are allowed to be Matrons, Conductresses, and the Star Points (Adah, Ruth, etc.) and only men can be Patrons.

**Headquarters**

*Main article: International Temple*

The General Grand Chapter headquarters, the International Temple, is located in the Dupont Circle neighborhood of Washington, D.C., in the former Perry Belmont Mansion. The mansion was built in 1909 for the purpose of entertaining the guests of Perry Belmont. This included Britain's Prince of Wales in 1919. General Grand Chapter purchased the building in 1935. The secretary of General Grand Chapter lives there while serving his or her term of office. The mansion features works of art from around the world, most of which were given as gifts from various international Eastern Star chapters.

**Charities**

The Order has a charitable foundation[^5] and from 1986-2001 contributed $513,147 to Alzheimer's disease research, juvenile diabetes research, and juvenile asthma research. It also provides bursaries to students of theology and religious music, as well as other scholarships that differ by jurisdiction. In 2000 over $83,000 was donated. Many jurisdictions support a Masonic and/or Eastern Star retirement center or nursing home for older members; some homes are also open to the public. The Elizabeth Bentley OES Scholarship Fund was started in 1947.[^6][^7]

**Notable members**

- Clara Barton[^8]
- J. Howell Flournoy[^9]
- Eva McGown[^10]
- Laura Ingalls Wilder[^12]
See also

- Order of the Amaranth

References

2. ^ "Eastern Star Membership" (http://www.easternstar.org/eligibility.html). General Grand Chapter. http://www.easternstar.org/eligibility.html. Retrieved 2010-06-03. "These affiliations include: * Affiliated Master Masons in good standing, * the wives * daughters * legally adopted daughters * mothers * widows * sisters * half sisters * granddaughters * stepmothers * stepdaughters * stepsisters * daughters-in-law * grandmothers * great granddaughters * nieces * great nieces * mothers-in-law * sisters-in-law and daughters of sisters or brothers of affiliated Master Masons in good standing, or if deceased were in good standing at the time of their death"
4. ^ "Rob Morris"

12. ^ Big Muddy online publications (http://www6.semo.edu/universitypress/bigmuddy/NF/Laura_Ingalls_Wilder.htm)

External links

- General Grand Chapter homepage (http://easternstar.org/)
- New York Grand Chapter homepage (http://nyoes.org/)
- Eastern Star Organizations (http://www.dmoz.org/Society/Organizations/Fraternal/Freemasonry/Related_Organizations/Eastern_Star/)