

April 29, 2026



## THE ESSEX LIGHT

*Quarterly Newsletter of Essex Lodge No. 7*  
Celebrating Brotherhood, Tradition, and Community  
Meetings 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays (Closed July & August)

### Message From the East

By: Dennis P. Uhlmann, Jr.,



This past quarter has been one of energy, growth, and strong participation within Essex Lodge No. 7. Our Brothers have continued to demonstrate their commitment to the Craft through attendance, ritual work, education, and fellowship. The strength of our Lodge is evident not only in our meetings, but in the connections we build with one another and our community. I invite all members, new and old to come out to our meetings, presentations, degrees and events. The strength of our lodge and Freemasonry is, and has always been in our membership.

### Degrees and Ritual

We had an EA degree in January where we initiated four new masons, one of which for Essex Lodge, Micha Charles, and Three who are members of Livingston Lodge #11. This degree was truly a district event with Officers from Essex and Livingston taking part in the Degree.

There will be a Master Mason degree on June 16, 2026, where we have at least one brother ready to be raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason. If you are available on that night, it is strongly suggest you come out if you can. Our Tyler, Matthew Simmonetti will be giving the Master Mason Lecture, something he has been working on for sometime now.

There will also be an emergent Saturday FC degree sometime during the summer. We will be sure to circulate the information as soon as it is scheduled.

The 8<sup>th</sup> District will be holding a Gold Token night on Monday June 22, 2026 during our District Lodge of Instruction. Formal Invitations for all of our Gold Token recipients will be sent out shortly. Again, if you can make it out, we would love to have the lodge room full for this wonderful event.

### **Lodge Activities & Speakers**

Our regular communications this quarter featured a number of engaging speakers and wonderful programs. Masonic light and information is such an integral part of our organization and something that we are bringing back with a vengeance. If you were hoping that the meetings would be merely business meetings without any meaningful masonic sustenance or fellowship, I sincerely apologize. I believe you will find our meetings to be meaningful, event driven and full of light.

The Brian Johnson Memorial Devils Hockey game was a wonderful time and success. We had over 40 members and guest in attendance and even took a picture on the Ice. This is a well attended and wonderful event. One which we hope to continue for many years to come.

Our annual Pig Roast is scheduled for June 20, 2026. It is free of charge for all members and their families. It is open to all masons, and friends of masons as well. We will be charging \$30 for adults for non-members and \$10 for children. Food, drinks, and fun times will be served up for all who come! I welcome you all to come out and enjoy yourself at this fantastic event.

### **Community & Fellowship Highlights**

The Lodge hosted a highly successful Easter Egg Hunt and Child ID program (CHIPS), bringing together families, the lodge, and members of the community. This event continues to grow and reflects our commitment to outreach and community development. The lodge has also been instrumental in assisting in advertising, resurrecting, and supporting the Masonic Child ID program in the State.

Additionally, social events such as group outings and shared meals helped strengthen the bonds of Brotherhood outside the Lodge room.

### **Building & Grounds Update**

As you may remember, since the early days of the lodge when DeMolay met in our basement, the right side was filled with rocks, dirt and debris from when the left side of the basement was dug out and finished. This year, while installing new stairs to the basement, and while inspecting the structural integrity of the building, we endeavored to remove the debris once and for all and make use of the full basement.

While cleaning out the debris, it was discovered that three of the support columns which supported the building were completely rusted and were beginning to fail. The decision to remove the debris potentially saved the building from future structural failure. As a result of decades of being covered in dirt and moisture they rusted through and close to complete failure.

It was also discovered that the chimney stack, which was partially removed many years back, as well as the right side of the building was also close to structural failure and was becoming unstable. The building was literally being supported by chunks of rock and mud. In total 6 support columns were replaced, a support structure was also constructed out of cinderblocks and cement to properly support the right side of the building and the remaining chimney stack. These discoveries and repairs prevented potential future catastrophic building failure.

A sincere thanks to our current Lodge Trustees, as well as Brother Mark DiOrio (Congdon-Overlook lodge 163) who is a licensed builder and his team for the hard and great work they have done and are completing. The basement project is almost completed. I invite you all to come to the lodge when you can and see the new basement and all of the work that has been done and enjoy our now structurally sound and safe building. These improvements are essential to preserving our historic building and ensuring it remains a safe and lasting home for future generations of Masons.

### **Looking Ahead – 200th Anniversary**

Essex Lodge No. 7 will celebrate its 200th Anniversary on February 6, 2027. Planning is underway for this historic milestone, which will honor our past while celebrating the future of our Lodge. Currently the event will be a Cornerstone re-dedication which will be put on by our Grand Master and the Grand Lodge staff, and hopefully assisted by or presented by RW. Christopher Bollotta. Following the cornerstone ceremony, we will have a gala at Calandra's, replete with food, drinks, and fun.

If you would like to attend, please email [Essex200th@gmail.com](mailto:Essex200th@gmail.com) and RSVP with your name and your guest name. Currently the event is open to all members and one guest as we have limited seating capacity at 148. We are saving the majority of the seats for our members before we open it up to Grand Staff, the district and others to attend. Please no later than June 20, 2026 as soon as possible before we open up ticket sales.

We are also looking into purchasing a new banner, alter cover, and name plates to celebrate our 200th anniversary.

If you would like to make a donation to our 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary please reach out to [Essex200th@gmail.com](mailto:Essex200th@gmail.com), our secretary ([secretary@essex7.com](mailto:secretary@essex7.com)), or the worshipful master ([Worshipfulmaster@essex7.com](mailto:Worshipfulmaster@essex7.com))

### **Nameplates for Members**

If you have lost, misplaced, or need a nameplate please reach out to [Secretary@essex7.com](mailto:Secretary@essex7.com) so that we can get you a replacement. However, we will be looking to design a new nameplate celebrating our 200 years of excellence. The nameplate will be designed and the

design released to the membership in advance of the 200<sup>th</sup> and will be available for members who are current with their dues.

## Dues and Lodge Support

This is a friendly reminder to please remit your annual dues as soon as possible. Timely payment of dues is essential to the continued strength and stability of Essex Lodge No. 7. Your contributions directly support the operation of the Lodge, maintenance of our building, and most importantly our Masonic and philanthropic efforts within the community. Through your support, we are able to uphold the principles of our Craft and extend charity where it is most needed.

We understand that circumstances can vary. If you are experiencing financial difficulty and are unable to meet your dues obligation, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Secretary or the Worshipful Master. Our Lodge is built on brotherhood, and we are here to assist and support one another in times of need.

Conversely, if you are in a position to give back, we encourage you to consider assisting a Brother who may be struggling or making an additional contribution to support relief efforts within the Lodge. Acts of generosity strengthen the bonds we share and embody the true spirit of Freemasonry.

Dues may be paid by check or conveniently via Zelle at **secretary@essex7.com**. Thank you for your continued commitment to Essex Lodge No. 7 and to the principles we hold dear.

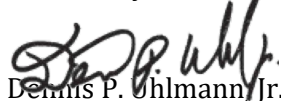
## Closing Charge

As we move forward together, I encourage each of you to come out and be involved whenever you can—your presence and participation are what keep our Lodge strong and vibrant. If you prefer to receive a paper copy of the Trestleboard, please email [secretary@essex7.com](mailto:secretary@essex7.com) and we will be happy to send one out to you.

Most importantly, if you are aware of any Brother who is sick, homebound, or in need of assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Worshipful Master or the Secretary. We promised to help any brother who may be in of assistance; it is at the very heart of what we do. It is through that care that our Brotherhood truly thrives. Thank you all, and I look forward to seeing or hearing from you all.

If you enjoyed reading this newsletter, or are interested in helping with next quarter's let us know!

Fraternally and Sincerely,



Dennis P. Ohlmann, Jr.  
Worshipful Master 2026

Photo Highlights  
Installation



**Easter Egg Hunt/Child ID**



# Lodge Events/Speakers



# Devils Game



Guess Who? Its Lew!

THE JERSEY JOURNAL, SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 1979



Mar 22, 1979 →

**HEAR THAT MELODY?—Robert Baird, center, listens to the skirl of the bagpipes as the Masonic Bagpipe Band entertains at the Masonic Temple, Bayonne. The pipers, from left, are Jerry Stack, Robert Rankin, Lewis Wefferling and Ken Baird.**