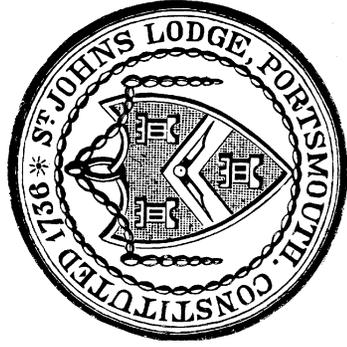
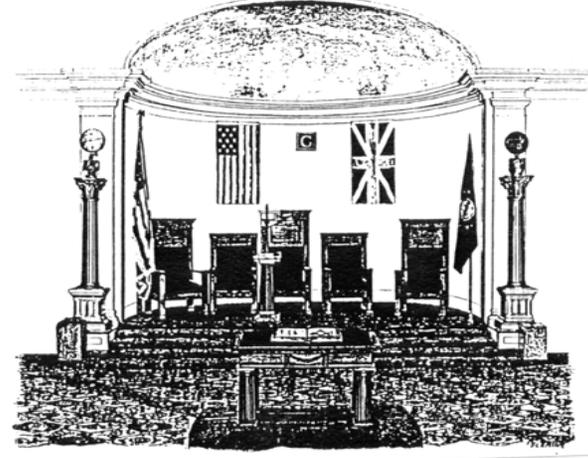


St. John's Lodge, No. 1, F&AM  
280 Bayside Rd  
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April 2013



# April 2013 Trestle Board

St. John's Lodge No. 1  
Portsmouth, NH

# The Master's Message

Greetings Brethren!

The Rainbow Girls will be helping Wor. Phil out in the kitchen at our stated. Don't forget to bring a few extra dollars for their auction.

I would like to thank the officers of this Lodge and other dedicated brothers for their hard work over the past several weeks. I have asked a lot of you and your willingness to attend, volunteer and travel shows great character.

In addition to our busy Masonic schedule we travelled out into the district in an effort to raise awareness for the Out of Hibernation 5K and to raise donations for the Wounded Warriors Project. I am pleased to say that our efforts were successful, but more importantly, that we are representing St. John's Lodge in an impressive push. I know that our presence is appreciated on the sidelines of these Lodges and I would encourage you to continue your travels. On a side note, I will just add, that the Travelling Gavel is currently situated at Gideon Lodge and their stated is on April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

*To venture causes anxiety, but not to venture is to lose one's self...*

Soren Kierkegaard

Don't forget that we need some volunteers for the road race on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. We will be accepting donations up to that day. Runners can find the necessary links at [www.portsmouthfreemasons.org](http://www.portsmouthfreemasons.org)

Fraternally Yours,

*Wor Jonathan Neihart*

Contact  
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2013



## The 7th Annual Out of Hibernation 5K Road Race Saturday, April 13th



Brothers, we need volunteers the night before the race and the day of the race!

Friday night, from 5:00-8:00, we'll be accepting registrations and handing out number bibs, t-shirts, etc.

Saturday morning, the fun starts at 7:00AM. We have to set up, accept late registrations, hand out bibs and t-shirts, etc. We need a lot of volunteers to man the intersections and direct runners.



## From the Secretary's Desk

Brethren:

Please look at your dues card. If it doesn't say 2013, your dues are NOT current. Right now, fewer than half of the brothers have paid their dues for 2013. What does this mean if you're dues aren't paid yet? Technically, it means that you are not in good standing. This means that you cannot vote.

We want all of our brothers in good standing at every meeting. If you haven't paid your dues yet, please write a check now to the Lodge. As always, if you are having financial difficulties, please talk to the Master or the Secretary.

Sincerely yours,

*Wor. Gib Palmer.*  
Secretary

## Historical Sketch

Auburn Street Cemetery, now called Proprietor's Burying Ground at the South Street Cemetery.

Dr. Thorn continued to serve with great distinction at the Portsmouth Navy Yard until 1826 when he was reassigned to the West Indies Squadron in Pensacola, Florida. This Squadron was formed due to the need to suppress piracy in the Caribbean Sea, the Antilles and the Gulf of Mexico. Construction of the Pensacola Navy Yard, also known as the Warrington Navy Yard, began in April 1826. It became one of the best equipped naval stations in the country and in its early years dealt mainly with the suppression of the slave trade and piracy in the Gulf and Caribbean as the garrison of the West Indies Squadron.

Dr. Thorn served in Florida for only a short time and sadly, died of Fever on August 18, 1827 at the young age 45 years. On December 23, 1828, a petition of Charlotte M. R. Thorn, widow of Dr. Thorn, requested her to be placed on the list of naval pensioners of the United States. Ten years later, on October 11, 1838 she passed away in Portsmouth.

Charles W. Brewster described Dr. Thorn as a gentleman of noble spirit and of much prominence. Indeed; he was a good man in every respect, especially as a husband and father, and as a naval officer and surgeon. Dr. Thorn was an American Patriot who served his country during wartime; and during times of peace, he helped grow and protect our fledgling country. It should not be a surprise to you to know that Bro. Robert Livingston Thorn was a Freemason; but you may be surprised to learn that he was a member of our St. John's Lodge having been Raised here on September 1, 1819.

**Alan Robinson  
Historian**

April 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

**Stated Communication—Open in EA  
Wednesday, April 3, 2013**

Program—The Morgan Affair presented by Wor. Rod MacDonald—DEO

**Dinner**—Chicken Cordon Bleu

(Dinner 6:00, Open 7:00)

**Officer dress— White tie and tails**

**Out of Hibernation 5K Road Race**

**Friday, April 12—5:00-8:00 Early Registration**

**Saturday, April 13—Registrations start at 7:00AM**

**Special Communication—Entered Apprentice Degree**

**Wednesday, April 17, 2013**

(Dinner 6:00, Open 7:00)

Dinner—Submarine Sandwiches

**Officer dress— White tie and tails**

**Special Event**

**Triple 8 Travelers Lodge # 32—39th Anniversary Banquet**

**Best Western—580 US Hwy 1, Portsmouth**

**Saturday, April 20, 2013**

6:00PM—8:00PM

**Tickets \$25**

**Special Event—District # 1 Master Mason Degree**

**St. John's Lodge**

**Candidate to be determined**

**Wednesday, April 17, 2013**

(Dinner 6:30, Open 7:30)

Dinner—Pork Loin and mashed potatoes

## St. John's Lodge

## Historical Sketch

### Dr. Robert Livingston Thorn

On Vaughn Street in historic downtown Portsmouth there were two significant buildings – the first was the Assembly House where people of distinction gathered on occasion and where even Bro. George Washington attended a party. The other was the Meserve House built in 1760 and named for its first owner, George Meserve. Over the years, numerous important men of the City and their families lived in this house, including James Sheafe, Dr. Nathaniel Haven, Hon. Jeremiah Mason, and Daniel Webster. Also living there were the families of Gen. Timothy Upham, Capt. Elihu Brown, Dr. Robert Thorn, and then successively, Maj. Edward Long, Joshua Whidden, John Sheafe, and G. W. Pendexter.

On the property of the Meserve House was a bergamot pear tree. This variety of pear is typically found in southern Italy and was cultivated in Britain since the time of the Romans. It produces a large, round fruit with a yellowish green skin. According to Charles W. Brewster in his Rambles about Portsmouth - #35, “after enduring the storms of a century, and liberally furnishing to the tables of Meserve, Sheafe, Mason, Webster, Upham, Long, Thorn, etc., [the pear tree’s] choice fruit, has but just passed to that decay to which all things mutable are destined. In the same garden are two towering sassafras trees, measuring nearly a yard in circumference, which are as old as the house. Who of the thousands who have attended the old North school, from the days of the Revolution to the present time, has not picked up the leaves as they have blown over the fence, and enjoyed their aromatic fragrance, and nutritious, pulp-like taste. Many a time, too, in successive generations, has the feeble knock at the door found the little caller asking the privilege of gathering some of the leaves of the ‘sarsafax’.”

The Meserve House stood for nearly 200 years, but by 1958 it had become an unattractive storefront and sadly, along with its entire North End neighborhood, it became a victim of Portsmouth’s urban renewal project.

Dr. Robert Thorn and his family lived in the Meserve House for several years in the early 1800’s. Robert Livingston Thorn was born March 4, 1782 in Schenectady, New York, a son of Samuel Thorn and Helena Van Slyck. He was one of twelve children that included seven brothers (Jonathan, Herman, James, Adam, John, Gilbert and Samuel); and four sisters (Eliza, Jane, Catherine, and Helena). His father, Samuel, was reportedly a ‘Minute Man’ in the Continental Army.

Robert enlisted in the United States Navy on March 3, 1800 as a Surgeon’s

Mate at a pay of \$30 per month and two rations per day. For the first several years of his enlistment, he served aboard several warships including USS Constellation, a 38-gun frigate which was the first US Navy vessel to put to sea and the first to engage, defeat, and capture an enemy vessel.

On February 2, 1809, Robert received the following order:

To Commodore John Rodgers, New York, NY, 2 Feb 1809: Place CONSTITUTION in commission with the following officers: Lieutenants Ludlow, Haswell, and Mitchell; Midshipmen Hite, G. C. Reed, Ludlow, Adams, Renshaw, Seth Nicholson, and Perry; **Surgeon [Robert L.] Thorn**; Purser Hunt. Surgeon’s Mates Butler and Barr have been ordered to ship.

Notice that the order referred to Thorn as a Surgeon (not a Surgeon’s Mate). It seems that the order was slightly premature because one month later on March 3, 1809, he officially received his commission as a Navy Surgeon and with it, a \$20 per month raise.

On March 13, 1809, Dr. Thorn received another order to attach to USS Constitution as its Surgeon. Six months later on September 23, 1809, he was ordered to USS Hornet, a brig-rigged sloop-of-war. It was on USS Hornet, under the command of Capt. James Lawrence that he served during the War of 1812. By the way, while later commanding USS Chesapeake, Bro. James Lawrence is the one who gave the Navy its famous motto “Don’t give up the ship.”

Dr. Thorn continued to serve on board ship until his next assignment in 1813. On December 9, 1813, he took charge of the medical department at the Portsmouth Navy Yard, serving under Isaac Hull, the first ‘Shipyard Commander.’ At that time, many of officers that ran the Navy Yard lived in Portsmouth and came to work every day by boat. In 1813, Isaac Hull received \$5,000 to build a suitable quarters for the ‘Shipyard Commander.’ He built what is now called Quarters A for \$3,500 and with the balance of funds, built the Navy Yard’s first hospital. Today, Quarters A is the oldest building standing on the Shipyard and it still serves as the residence of the Shipyard Commander. Although Isaac Hull got to live on Seavey Island, Dr. Thorn continued to live in Portsmouth in what we now know was the Meserve House on Vaughn Street.

While serving at the Navy Yard, Dr. Thorn met Charlotte Mary Rogers (born March 2, 1793) of North Yarmouth, Massachusetts, and on May 10, 1817 they were married. Charlotte and Robert had four sons - Samuel, Jonathan, Nathaniel, and Robert. Jonathan and Robert died young and are buried in the