

*Grace
Dee May*

MUSEUM &
LIBRARY

ILLUMINATIONS

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2025

Ring in the New Year.

Grace Dee May Museum & Library • 665 W Jefferson Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90007 • www.gracedeemay.org

ILLUMINATING THE LEGACY OF THE WEST

Grace Dee May

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LIBRARY**

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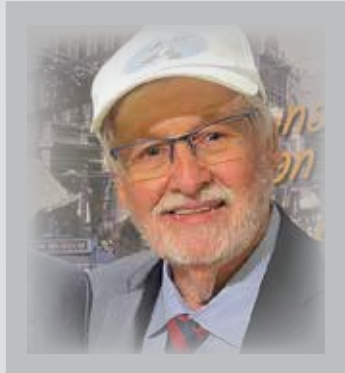
Audrey Marie Stein

In 2004, Audrey Marie Stein established the Grace Dee May Museum. Audrey believed that she had been richly blessed by the *Grace* of God. Audrey's nickname was *Dee* and she had been born in the month of *May*. So, as Director of the Foundation, she named the Museum the *Grace Dee May*.



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"Tomorrow is the first blank page of a 365-page book. Write a good one."

– Brad Paisley, Country Music Star & Freemason

Ring in a New Year!

As we ring in the New Year with bells, fireworks, parades and, perhaps,

a flute of champagne – my thoughts have turned to the significance of the ringing of bells. From the peeling of bells in church steeples to the school teacher calling youngsters to one room schoolhouses, bells alert us to moments of significance.

In this first issue of Illuminations in 2025, we are sharing a few stories of famous bells that I feel you'll enjoy. From the historic tale of the famed silver bell to the accomplishments of men who proudly honored the bell of our liberty, this issue of our online publication will help you ring in the New Year with some great stories from the archives of the Grace Dee May Museum.

I'd also like to ask that you give us a ring and connect with our unique non-profit. The GDM is the only museum dedicated to educating and enlightening the public on the accomplishments of the Freemasons of the West. Please consider becoming a museum member as we turn the page to begin a new year.

Sean Foran
Curator & Board President



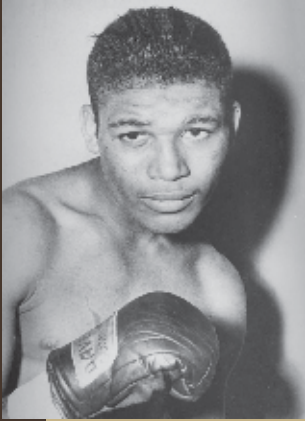
One of the many bells collected by Audrey Marie Stein

The Bell in the Ring

"Rhythm is everything in boxing. Every move you make starts with your heart, and that's in rhythm or you're in trouble."

— Sugar Ray Robinson

Sugar Ray Robinson –
a Prince Hall Mason,
member of Joppa Lodge
No. 55, New York



Jack Dempsey –
a Freemason,
member of
Kenwood Lodge
No. 800,
Chicago, Illinois



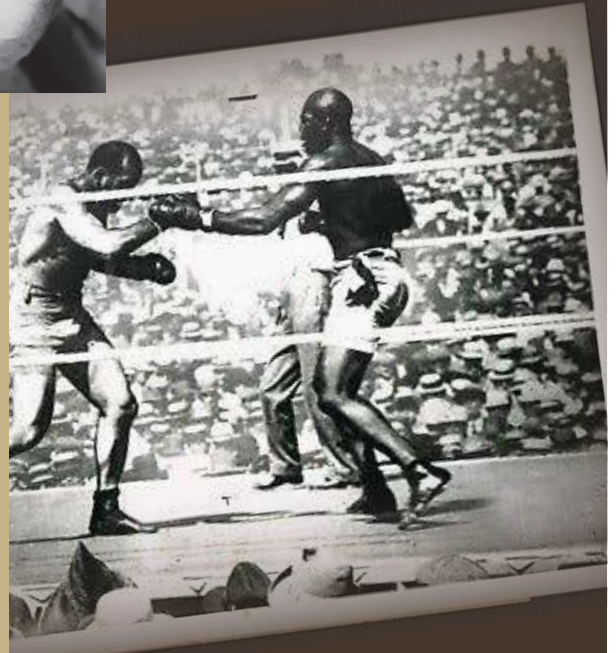
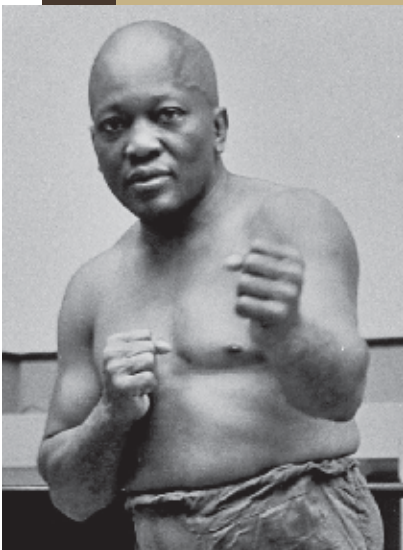
"You know what a champion is? A champion is someone who's ready when the gong rings - not just before, not just after - but when it rings."

— Jack Dempsey

Jack Johnson – a Freemason
and remains the most famous
member of Forfar and
Kincardine Masonic Lodge
No. 225, Dundee, Scotland

*"I am a Freemason and as
long as I live I shall be one."*

— Jack Johnson



Ringing the Dinner Bell

When the dinner bell rang it meant it was time for hearty food and a few moments of relaxation for cowboys of the old West and cowboys of the silver screen.

Some "Old West" Freemasons included: Buffalo Bill Cody, Kit Carson, Lewis and Clark, Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, Pat Garrett and Sam Houston. Texas Ranger legends Jim Gillett, John B. Jones and Jack Hays.

"Cowboys in Costume" like Tom Mix, Gene Autry, Roy Rogers, and John Wayne enjoyed the sound of the bell as much as the "Cowboys of old" who they portrayed on set or on location.

"Just a cup of coffee and a plate of beans"



Calling Students to School



Freemasons have always emphasized the importance of education. They believe in pursuing knowledge and self-improvement.

In California, Masons started the first public school system and have continued to encourage lodges to be an active part of our communities and school programs.

In early Los Angeles,

Dr. Thomas Foster was a physician and responsible for the first school-house to be built at Spring and Second Streets. Foster served as the 6th Mayor of Los Angeles. Thomas Foster was a member of Los Angeles Masonic Lodge No. 42.

Jean Louis Vignes (1780 –1862) He also contributed to the founding of the first Los Angeles public school. At his El Alizo winery he was the first commercial wine maker in California. Jean Louis Vignes was a member of Los Angeles Lodge No. 42.

Dr. Walter Lindley (1852 –1922) He oversaw development of early medical and educational institutions. Lindley became the city health officer in 1879. Established the first system of births and deaths and set up a free vaccination program. Dr. Lindley was a member of Signet Chapter, No. 57, Royal Arch Masons.



Spring Street School - First Public School in Los Angeles

Symbol of American Independence – The Liberty Bell



"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

- Preamble of the Declaration of Independence

George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Paul Revere, and John Hancock were all Masons.



George Washington –
member Fredericksburg
Lodge in Virginia



Benjamin Franklin –
member St. John's Lodge
in Philadelphia



Paul Revere –
member of St. Andrew's
Lodge in Boston



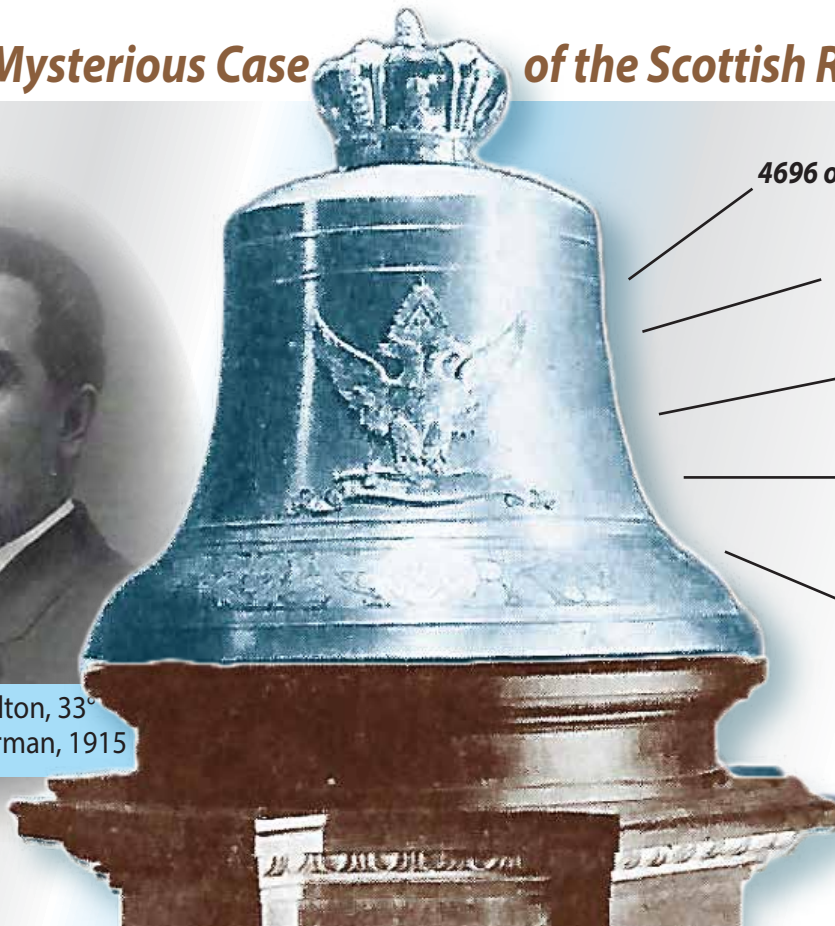
John Hancock –
member of St. Andrew's
Lodge in Boston

Signers of the Declaration of Independence included eight who were Freemasons.
The United States Constitution was signed by thirteen members of Masonic Lodges.
33 Generals of the Continental Army were Freemasons.

The Historic & Mysterious Case of the Scottish Rite Silver Bell



Charles Strong Walton, 33rd
Bell Committee Chairman, 1915



4696 oz.Troy

Huge size and weight
over three feet tall

2,350 contributors

Priceless, historic
items melted to
form this bell

Ornate workmanship
by Gorham Silver Co.

While this month we are ringing in the New Year of 2025, let's take a moment to commemorate the generosity of Scottish Rite Masons in California who, more than a century ago, worked tirelessly to raise money to create a silver bell to symbolize the unity and brotherhood of mankind.

Inspired by Albert Pike's dream of expanding the Scottish Rite in the West, an organizational meeting took place in 1885 at 125 North Main Street in Los Angeles which today is just steps away from LA's iconic City Hall. Within two years, the Scottish Rite Bodies relocated to a new temple at First and Spring Streets for the next decade. Through the decades the bell was installed in various LA Scottish Rite buildings and eventually was placed in the Los Angeles Scottish Rite's current location in Santa Monica where it was tragically and mysteriously stolen.

"...from 2,350 contributions of silver of much sentimental and historical value, donated by the Brethren of the Scottish Rite Bodies in the Valley of Los Angeles, Orient of California, and is intended to be permanently used in their cathedral..."



Support the GDM Museum as we turn the page to begin a new year.



1 – Become a GDM Museum Member

An annual membership is only \$35.

2 – Join the “Founder’s Circle”

Your donation of \$1000. will open wider opportunities for participation.

3 – Donate to our “Building Fund”

We need more space to display our ever-growing Masonic collection and your donation will make a positive impact on the future of Freemasonry.

With your support we can continue to provide:

A – Free videos on Masonic history.

B – Free guest speakers to your group

C – Free bi-monthly newsletters

Start the New Year by making the Grace Dee May Museum part of your legacy.

Talk with the Museum Curator, Sean Foran, about ways you can leave a lasting gift to support the work of the Museum in sharing the principles and history of our Fraternity.

Contact Sean at: 818-620-2058 or by email at: info@gracedeemay.org

Our Vision:

The Grace Dee May Museum will seek to present a thematic look at the American West by utilizing its extensive collection of Western Art, and incorporate California history to broaden and deepen the public knowledge and appreciation of the men and women that settled the western part of the United States.

Our Mission:

The Grace Dee May Museum is committed to advancing the public knowledge and understanding of the American West and the contributions that Freemasonry has played in its development.

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Sean Foran, BOARD PRESIDENT AND CURATOR
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