

**Sandwiching in History**  
**Albert Pike Memorial Temple**  
**712 Scott Street, Little Rock**  
**December 4, 2015**  
**By Rachel Silva**



**Intro**

Good afternoon, my name is Rachel Silva, and I work for the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program. Welcome to the “Sandwiching in History” tour of the Albert Pike Memorial Temple. I’d like to thank the Scottish Rite and the Grand Lodge of Arkansas for allowing us to tour the temple, and I’d especially like to thank Mitch Hensley, executive secretary of the Scottish Rite in Arkansas, for his help!

This tour is worth one hour of HSW continuing education credit through the American Institute of Architects. Please see me after the tour if you’re interested.

Completed in 1924, the Albert Pike Memorial Temple was designed in the Neoclassical style by the Little Rock architectural firm of Mann and Stern. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on November 13, 1986.

## What is Freemasonry?

Freemasonry traces its roots back to craft guilds of the Middle Ages. Artisans like stone masons assembled guilds for mutual aid and the protection of wages and overall welfare. Stone masons became closely associated through lodges set up near construction projects. While skilled master masons were free to travel for work, apprentices and journeymen were not, and through this distinction, a hierarchy developed. These Masonic lodges emerged as a society of aristocrats among other workmen. By 1600, societies of operative masons granted honorary memberships to bishops, nobles, and those interested in the craft, who then became known as “gentlemen masons.”

In 1646 Masonic lodges began admitting “Accepted Masons” to their membership rolls based on the payment of a fee. “Accepted Masons” soon outnumbered the operative masons. Accepted or Speculative Freemasonry was formalized in 1717 with the establishment of the Grand Lodge of England. This is the type of Freemasonry that we know today.

Freemasonry focuses on morality, friendship, and brotherhood. Emphasis is placed on spiritual philosophy, rather than building trades or trade secrets. The working tools of operative masonry are used as symbols of important ethical and moral lessons. In its simplest form, Freemasonry is a fraternity. It is a gathering of like-minded men from all walks of life. It is not a religion, but members must believe in a supreme being and the immortality of the soul. According to a report prepared by Dr. Francis J. Scully for the Arkansas Committee on Masonic Education, “The Freemason is urged to seek for the light, that he might know the truth, that he might solve the mystery of the spirit of many, that he might know man’s relation to his Creator, and ultimately realize the meaning of life itself.”

The Scottish Rite is an appendant body of Freemasonry that Master Masons may join for additional exposure to the principles of Freemasonry. Being a Mason does not automatically make you a part of the Scottish Rite, but you have to be a Mason to join the Scottish Rite.

## **Brief History of Freemasonry and the Scottish Rite in Arkansas**

The history of Freemasonry in what is now the state of Arkansas dates to December 1, 1819, when the Grand Lodge of Kentucky granted a charter for the establishment of a Masonic lodge at Arkansas Post, the territorial capital. In 1821 the territorial capital moved to Little Rock. The following year, the lodge at Arkansas Post surrendered its charter, and Freemasonry remained dormant in Arkansas until 1835, when the Grand Lodge of Tennessee granted a charter for a Masonic lodge at Fayetteville. According to the rules of Freemasonry, in order for a Masonic lodge to form, it must have a charter from a recognized Grand Lodge. And at that time, there was no Grand Lodge in Arkansas. This would soon change.

In 1837 three additional lodges were established at Little Rock, Arkansas Post, and Washington, bringing the total number of lodges in the state to four. Because Masonic law allowed four chartered lodges to unite and form a Grand Lodge in an area not governed exclusively by an existing Grand Lodge, Arkansas's four lodges united in November 1838 at Little Rock to form the Grand Lodge of Arkansas. The ruling body of Arkansas Masons is the Grand Lodge of Arkansas, now located in the north end of the Albert Pike Memorial Temple.

### *Albert Pike*

Although many leaders in all aspects of society have been a part of the Masonic fraternity over the years, the most well-known Mason is Albert Pike. Boston native Albert Pike was a prominent 19<sup>th</sup> century writer, poet, newspaperman, attorney, Confederate general, and Mason. He moved to Arkansas in the early 1830s and lived here until the mid-1860s. Pike became a Mason in 1850 and became associated with the Scottish Rite in 1853. In 1859 Pike became the Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction of the United States. He held this position until his death in 1891. The Southern Jurisdiction is one of two administrative districts for the Scottish Rite in the United States and includes the 35 states (called "Orients") west of the Mississippi River and south of the Ohio River. Albert

Pike's name is revered by Masons around the world because he wrote formalized lectures and rituals for each degree in Scottish Rite Masonry and published them in 1871 under the title *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry*, which remains an important reference book for the Scottish Rite. This explains why Little Rock's Masonic temple was named in his honor.

### *Scottish Rite in Arkansas*

In spring 1857 Albert Pike instituted the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry at Little Rock. All Masonic organizations of the city were housed in the Kramer, Miller & Company Building at the corner of Markham and Commerce until December 19, 1876, when it was destroyed by fire, including all property of the various Masonic bodies and their records. The Scottish Rite became inactive in Little Rock after the 1876 fire and was not reestablished until 1891, when a new Masonic Temple was under construction at the northeast corner of 5<sup>th</sup> (Capitol) and Main.

In March 1892 the seven-story, Romanesque Revival-style Masonic Temple was completed at 5<sup>th</sup> and Main. The lower floors were rented to businesses, and the upper floors were occupied by local Masonic bodies, the Grand Lodge of Arkansas, and the Scottish Rite.

In 1895 the Scottish Rite purchased the building formerly occupied by Temple B'nai Israel on the east side of the 300 block of Center Street and remodeled it at the cost of \$12,000. Renamed the Albert Pike Cathedral, the building was ready for occupancy by October 1896.

The Scottish Rite remained on Center Street until September 1902, when the Albert Pike Consistory was completed at the northwest corner of 8<sup>th</sup> and Scott. The Scottish Rite outgrew the first consistory in just ten years, and Little Rock architect Charles L. Thompson was hired to remodel and enlarge the building. The second Albert Pike Consistory was dedicated in 1913. It incorporated the 1902 consistory but featured a projecting front bay and a triangular pediment supported by four fluted Ionic columns.

Membership in the Scottish Rite continued to increase in the 1910s, causing the second consistory to become quite crowded. The dining room would only accommodate the candidates (for degrees), while the brethren (current members) had to be fed under a huge tent on the property north of the consistory. Despite the crowding, it is doubtful that the facilities would have been further enlarged had it not been for the fact that in the early morning hours of August 27, 1919, the seven-story Masonic Temple at 5<sup>th</sup> & Main was destroyed by fire. The Grand Lodge and local York Rite bodies were left without a meeting place.

### *Albert Pike Memorial Temple*

In August 1920 a booklet called “A Dream or a Reality?” was mailed to the local Scottish Rite membership, setting forth the tentative plans for a future Albert Pike Memorial Temple that would accommodate the Scottish Rite, Grand Lodge, and other local Masonic bodies. The response was favorable, so on June 1, 1921, the leadership issued another booklet called “A Little Journey Leading to the Light,” which was well-illustrated, containing numerous views of the proposed interior and exterior. Donations then came freely, so they decided to complete the plans and specifications.

Charles E. Rosenbaum, who served as president of the Scottish Rite board of trustees and was an active member of the Supreme Council for the Southern Jurisdiction, worked closely with fellow Mason and architect George R. Mann and his partner Eugene John Stern to design the Albert Pike Memorial Temple. Rosenbaum owned a successful machinery company in Little Rock and had been selected in 1911 to superintend the construction of The House of the Temple of the Scottish Rite in Washington, D.C., which was regarded as the finest Masonic building in the world. So Rosenbaum and the architectural firm of Mann and Stern had been working on the design of the Albert Pike Memorial Temple for a couple years before ground was broken on December 3, 1921.

The cornerstone for the current temple was laid on May 11, 1922, at the southwest corner of 7<sup>th</sup> and Scott. The design for the Albert Pike Memorial Temple incorporated the second Albert Pike Consistory, which stood at the northwest corner of 8<sup>th</sup> and Scott, and skillfully weaved it into the new building. The Albert Pike Memorial Temple, proclaimed to be “the most handsome and conveniently arranged consistory in the United States,” was formally dedicated on May 12, 1924 [AR Gazette, 11 May 1924, p. 23]. It required two years of steady work to construct and was built and furnished at the cost of \$1.5 million.

The Albert Pike Memorial Temple was designed in the Neoclassical style of architecture, which was frequently used by its architect, George Richard Mann. The style was based on the Classical forms of ancient Greek and Roman architecture and was often used on public buildings as a symbol of democracy. It again gained popularity after the Chicago World’s Fair in 1893.

The temple stretches a length of 300 feet along Scott Street between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> and is 140 feet deep from Scott Street to the alley. It is truly one of the most impressive buildings in Little Rock. The three-story temple has a smooth limestone exterior. The façade is dominated by a row of 19 Ionic columns, each of them 40 feet tall and 4 ½ feet in diameter. The words “Albert Pike Memorial Temple Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry” are carved in the frieze. A decorative parapet centered above the main entrance bears the inscription “Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam,” which is Latin for “To the Greater Glory of God.” Two double-headed eagle statues guard the temple’s front entrance—the double-headed eagle is the emblem of the Scottish Rite. The exterior doors are bronze, and windows on the Scott Street elevation are protected by decorative bronze grilles. Interestingly, the south elevation features a second-story balcony, which was a hold-over from the design of the 1902 consistory that was incorporated into this building.

The temple was originally divided into two sections—100 feet at the north end was for the Grand Lodge hall, its offices, library, and lounge room on the ground floor, while the second floor had two lodge halls (occupied by Western Star Lodge

No. 2, Magnolia Lodge No. 60, and Trinity Lodge No. 694) and a Chapter room (occupied by Union Chapter No. 2, R.A.M. [Royal Arch Masons] and Occidental Council No. 1, R. & S. M.—both are York Rite bodies—as well as the asylum of Hugh de Payens Commandery No. 1, K. T. [Knights Templar]).

190 feet at the south end of the building was for the Scottish Rite Bodies. The kitchen occupied the former dressing room (from the second consistory). The robing room was located in what was formerly the stage, and the old auditorium was used for business meetings. The new (1924) auditorium was designed in an oval, departing from the square shape of most theaters. Light in the auditorium was provided by a huge chandelier composed of hundreds of pieces of prismatic glass.

### *1952 Fire*

On May 7, 1952, a fire destroyed the south end of the temple, which included the old consistory, and heavily damaged other parts of the building as well. Little Rock architect Bruce R. Anderson, who was a Mason and a member of the Scottish Rite, was hired to design the building's remodel after the fire. The temple's exterior was restored to look just like it did before the fire. The south end of the building was rebuilt using concrete and structural steel. Rooms on the south end of the building were reconfigured, and two elevators were installed. The remodeled building was dedicated in 1956.

The Albert Pike Memorial Temple still houses the Scottish Rite, the Grand Lodge of Arkansas, two Masonic lodges (Western Star No. 2 and Pulaski Heights No. 673; meet in blue lodges), and three York Rite bodies (Commandery room with cross suspended from ceiling). Portions of the temple are available for rent for special events.

The temple has three floors and a basement. We will not see the third floor, which has two large barracks areas for visiting Masons; mostly used by Scottish Rite members from around the state during multi-day events. And we will not see

the basement, which houses mechanical systems. But we will see most of the first and second floors!

### **Individual room details:**

Dining Room:

Ornate plaster molding

Stained glass—the two largest windows were originally installed in the second consistory (1913) and were moved to this location when the temple was built in 1924.

South window (with Knight Templar for York Rite degrees) was given in memory of William Jones, who died in 1917.

North window (with Goddess of Liberty) was given in memory of M. J.

Ringelhaupt and the Class of November 1918 (Masonic Class—those entering the Masonic order or Scottish Rite).

Albert Pike in the central window.

### **Walk through the building and provide more info, but before we begin...**

Next tour is Friday, January 8 at Lakewood United Methodist Church, 1922 Topf Road, NLR. Any questions before we look around?

Kitchen

Lobby:

Pink and gray marble

Murals painted by artist Thomas G. Moses, who also painted more than 100 stage drops for the temple (in auditorium). Moses painted in theaters, opera houses, and many Scottish Rite temples across the country.

Casket elevator—when someone in the leadership of the Scottish Rite or a Grand Master of a Masonic Lodge died, their body was brought to the temple for a special Masonic service in the auditorium upstairs.



Corridor:

Bust of Albert Pike

South end of hall--Caps of the Scottish Rite (Mitch will explain)

Albert Pike Museum:

Pike's furniture and items from the ca. 1840 Pike-Fletcher-Terry House at 7<sup>th</sup> & Rock.

Second Floor—

Lounge:

Portraits of current officers and prominent members of the Scottish Rite S.G.I.G. (Sovereign Grand Inspector General) for the Orient of Arkansas is currently James Graham.

Lodge of Perfection:

Constructed during the 1950s remodel and features limestone block walls from Corpus Christi, Texas, and oak from North Carolina.

Monthly business meetings are held here.

Stained glass depicts the construction of King Solomon's Temple—shows workmen cutting stone and harvesting the cedars of Lebanon. King Solomon is in purple and Hiram of Tyre is in red.

Robing Room:

Robes for the various degrees. Robes are worn in moral/ethical plays that are associated with the conferring of degrees. Mostly the reenactment of Biblical stories.

Camp Guard locker room:

Marching and militaristic group. When President Theodore Roosevelt visited Little Rock in 1905, the Camp Guard served as his security detail.

### Stage controls:

Replica of the stage controls that were installed at the Metropolitan Opera in NYC. This system cost more than \$20,000. It is the only one like it left in operation.

### Auditorium:

104 hand-painted canvas stage drops. Painted by Thomas Moses in the floor of the auditorium and hung.

The Scottish Rite in Little Rock were the first to use a stage and reenactment as part of the ritual to confer degrees. Charles Rosenbaum was a big proponent of this. I already told you that Rosenbaum was a major figure in the Scottish Rite and superintended the construction of this building in the 1920s—see his shrine and portrait in auditorium. His sound judgment and capacity for leadership earned him the affectionate title of “The Boss.”

### Shrine to Albert Pike

Chandelier—original to building; cost \$25,000.

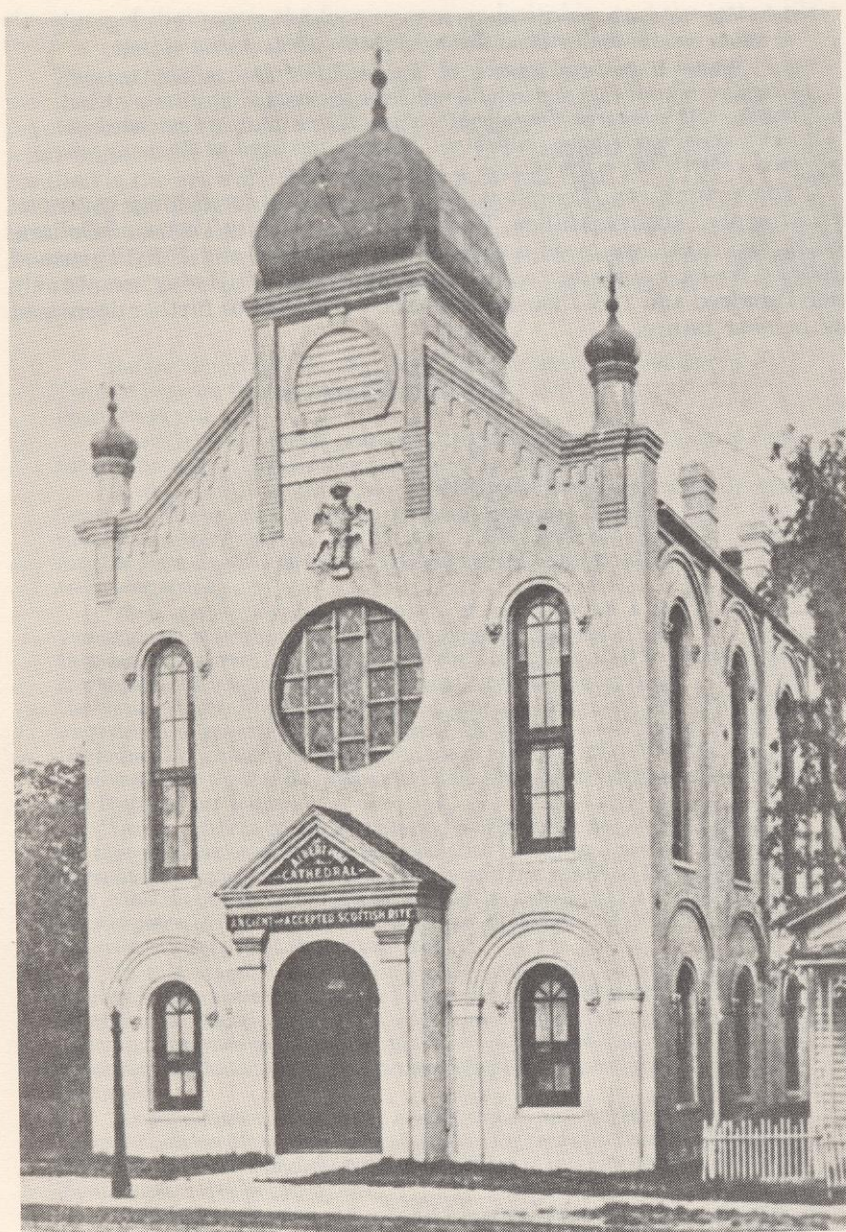
Current seating in auditorium is 774.

See old group photos in hallway—some of them show the old consistories and the current temple under construction.

Old fire door

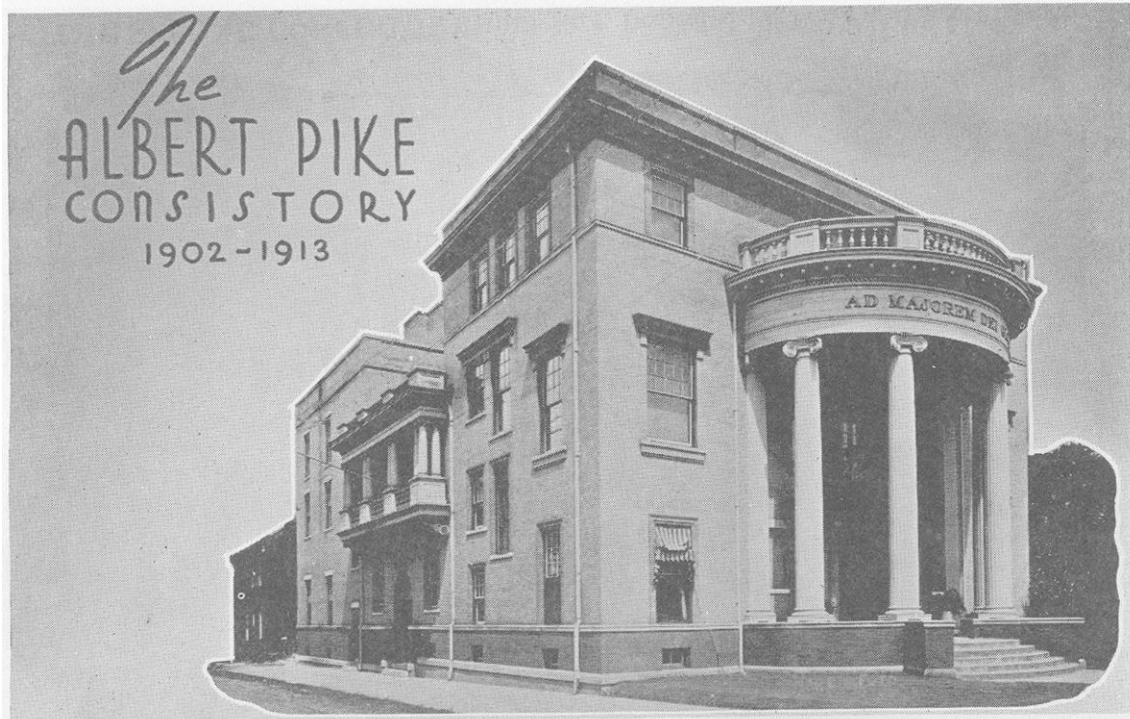
North end of the temple—

Led by Mitch.



**ALBERT PIKE CATHEDRAL** 3rd and Center Streets  
First Reunion October 6, 1896  
1896 - 1902

Albert Pike Cathedral—built in 1872 for Temple B'nai Israel. Occupied by the Scottish Rite from 1896 until 1902.



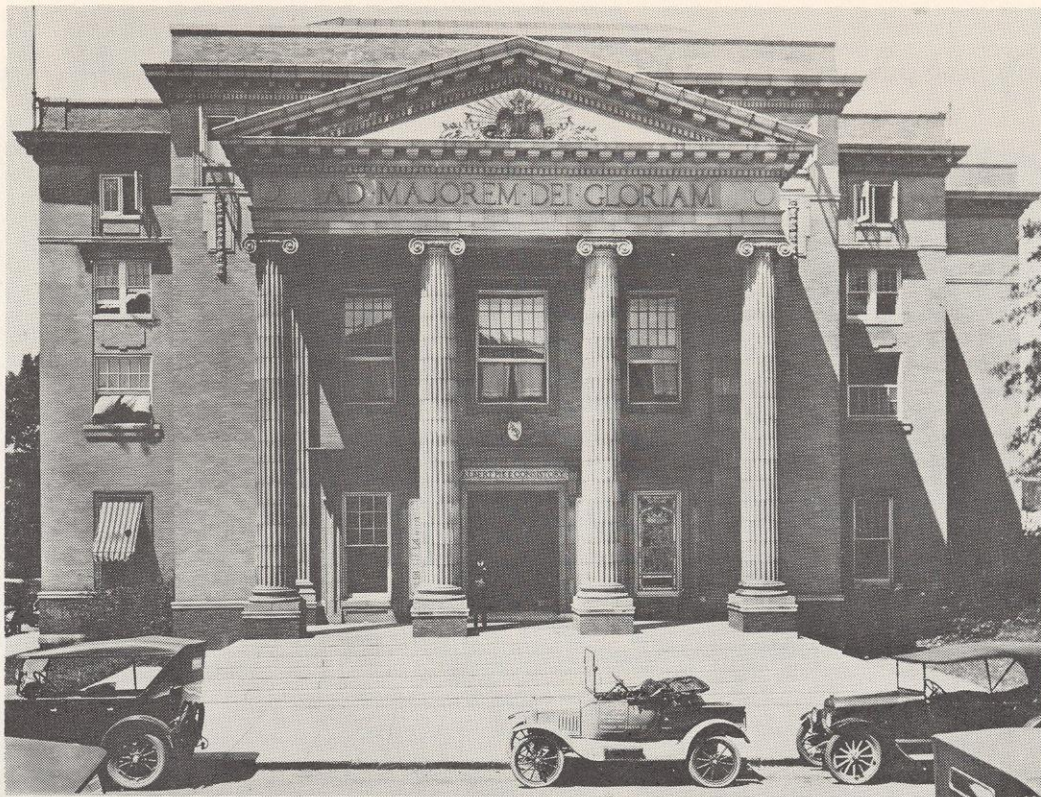
THE ALBERT PIKE CONSISTORY

8th and Scott Streets

Dedicated September 1902

First Albert Pike Consistory at northwest corner of 8<sup>th</sup> & Scott.





THE SECOND CONSISTORY 1913-1924 Dedicated 1913 8th and Scott Streets

Second Albert Pike Consistory at northwest corner of 8<sup>th</sup> & Scott—the 1902 building was remodeled and enlarged in 1913. The 1913 design was incorporated into the 1924 Albert Pike Memorial Temple. Any vestige of the old consistory was destroyed by fire in 1952, when the south end of the temple was damaged and rebuilt.