

# A Walk Through History

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The information available for 1964 is somewhat scant, but it does offer up a few important items. One is that there were two Shrine Nights at the Carousel Theatre, an outdoor theatre in Framingham, to see **John Raitt** in "Oklahoma." On either night, you could make a reservation with Noble **Nick Sculos**, owner of the Maridor in Framingham to enjoy dinner with Mr. Raitt prior to the show. In much more momentous news, the announcement of the construction of three new Shriners Burns Institutes was made by Imperial Sir **Harold C. Close**. One of the new facilities is to be located adjacent to Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. Perhaps coincidentally, the Aleppo Shrine Medical Corps was organized this year.

In 1969 (though it was probably published earlier) there was a list of the current Shrine Clubs, along with their foundation dates and current membership (in parentheses, where listed). In order of precedence, they are: Shrine Club of Southeastern MA, Sept. 14, 1927 (640); Worcester County Shrine Club, April 12, 1932, (310); Gardner Shrine Club, June 6, 1937 (97); Merrimack Valley Shrine Club, February 3, 1949 (640); Newburyport Shrine Club, May 1, 1951; North Shore Shrine Club, October 9, 1953 (503); Fitchburg and Leominster Shrine Club, September 20, 1954 (263); Charles River Valley Shrine Club, October 24, 1955 (368); South Shore Shrine Club, May 9, 1961 (261); King Philip Shrine Club, October 10, 1961 (190); and Cape Cod Shrine Club, February 1, 1963 (281). In the summer of 1969, Ill. Potentate **Stanley F. Maxwell** inaugurated the 25th volume of "our new public relations media, *The Aleppo News!*" In that same issue, it was reported that Dr. **John F. Burke**, Chief Surgeon, Shriners Hospitals, Boston Burns Institute, had developed a new portable isolation unit for the care of patients with not only infectious diseases, but also those with lowered resistances to infection. Dr. Burke was soon after promoted to Chief of Staff at the Boston hospital. As we are now getting to the recent history portion of Aleppo, it might be prudent to mention that Noble **Harvey J. Waugh** was appointed Assistant Recorder in September of 1969.

As there appears to be no materials available for 1974 at the time of writing, we must assume that things went reasonably well for Aleppo. The Aleppo

website helps to fill in here, as the Minutemen were organized in 1974. One of their charter members was Noble **John C. Raymond**, father of current Second Ceremonial Master Noble **David Raymond**.

Where 1974 was relatively unexciting, 1979 was the exact opposite. It was the second year of the existence of the HONS. **Thelma Shallah** presided, having been installed by retiring president **Natahlie Lavin**. 1979 also marked the first year the Potentate's Ball was held at the Shrine Center in Wilmington (which was still called Turner Auditorium at that time). Circus tickets cost \$2.50 for adults, and \$1.25 for children. The Boston hospital was named one of the outstanding units in the Shriners Hospital system, and received a new electron microscope. The Neponset Valley Shrine Club was chartered November 18, 1978, and held their first meeting Feb. 1, 1979. Legendary composer **Arthur Fiedler** was made an honorary Shriner at a concert in his honor put on May 28, 1979, in Lowell, which was also declared "Arthur Fiedler Day." 1979 also marked the first time citizens of the Dominican Republic were initiated as members of Aleppo, and also when the decision was made that the 1984 Imperial Session would be held in Boston. It also marked an age change for admission to the hospitals from 15 to 18. Also, at the tail end of 1979, Ill. **Donald Vose**, P.P., was named as the chairman of the 250th anniversary committee for the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, which would take place in 1983. There was also an explosion in units in 1979 - the Rag Tops, Pipe Band, Transportation Unit, and Lighting Unit were all organized in 1979.

The year of the Imperial Session in Boston was marked by a lot of enthusiasm and energy on the part of the Potentate for that year, Ill. **Richard F. Norris**. Aside from the Imperial Session, WSBK-TV 38 showed Shrine PSA spots on their network, reaching an estimated six million viewers.



The Imperial Session is an event worthy of its own article, so I will not go into detail on it here, other than to say that the effort expended by Aleppo was evident in the quality of the proceedings, and the June 2nd Ceremonial that year saw 285 new members "cross the sands." **Doug Flutie** was in attendance at the All-Star Classic, as his brother **Darren** was playing for the South squad. The Fez Room was totally remodeled, but the same could not be said for the Divan's jackets.

When Noble **Salvatore P. Russo** became Illustrious Potentate in 1989, he had the distinction of being the first administrator of the Shriners Burns Institute to be elected to the office of Potentate. This was also another membership drive year for Aleppo. In the historical scheme of things, the need for a membership drive seems to reassert itself every ten years or so. This year also marked the appointment of Colonel **Charles F. Rivers** to the position of Commander of the Uniformed Units.

As we move another five years into the future, 1994 is an interesting snapshot. Illustrious Potentate **Bill Alboth** encouraged family activities. An interesting fundraising opportunity for the year was to sell Vidalia onions. This same year, we first issued jeweled fezzes to the Heads of Units. Our Recorder Emeritus, Harvey Waugh, was roasted for his efforts.

Five years later, and Aleppo is looking to the 21st century. Proctor & Gamble ran a two-page promotional ad for the Shriners Hospitals to promote holiday safety and donated \$100,000 to the hospital system. More locally, the dedication ceremony for the completion of the Phase II construction at the Boston Hospital took place on May 1, 1999, with then-Grand Master **Fred Kirby Bauer** performing the cornerstone laying ceremony. **Don King** even came to the Auditorium to stage a WBA heavyweight fight. The majority of efforts went towards renovations of the Auditorium - the Wilson Room was renovated, the Auditorium seats were refurbished, and a new phone system was put in.

Moving on yet another five years, we come to 2004. Ill. **Robert D. Levinson** was the Potentate, and our current Potentate was 1st Ceremonial Master. His Lady **Phyllis** made history as the first First Lady of Aleppo to preside over Oppela Temple, Daughters of the Nile, which celebrated its 75th anniversary this year. The "Standing Tall" statue outside of the Shrine Center was dedicated Jan. 24, 2004. The *Aleppo News* celebrated its 11th Dromedary Award.

So here we are at 2009. I don't know what's going to happen, because it hasn't happened yet. However, if the history of Aleppo has anything to show for itself, it is that Aleppo has always done historic things without the membership necessarily realizing it. Only time will tell what 2009 will bring, but hopefully this article has shown everyone what Aleppo Temple was, what its members made it, and what we can in turn make it as we move into our 127th year as a progressive and vibrant example of Shrinedom.



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