The history of the Tremont Grand and the history of the City of Baltimore are intertwined. Built by the Freemasons as the Grand Lodge of Maryland Masonic Temple in 1866, the building was the headquarters for the Maryland Freemasons for over 130 years.

Acquired by the Tremont Suite Hotels in 1998, the building was carefully restored to its original grandeur and reopened to the public as the Tremont Grand in 2005.
Established as a town in 1729, Baltimore was a point of departure for ships sailing all over the world. Roads connected Baltimore to important cities to the north and to the south. In 1770, a group of sailors became a part of the Philadelphia Freemasons and formed the first Masonic lodge in Baltimore at Fells Point.

Independence from England in 1776 created a new nation and the State of Maryland. In 1787 the Freemasons in Maryland gained their own independence, establishing the Grand Lodge of Maryland.

The end of the 18th century brought growth and prosperity to Baltimore and the Freemasons. In 1793 the Grand Lodge of Maryland presided over the laying of the cornerstone for the nation’s Capitol in Washington, DC. That same year, the Fells Point Lodge was granted a charter and renamed Washington Lodge No. 3.

Rooms in the Exchange Coffee House were used as the first Grand Lodge of Maryland. Twenty years later, the Grand Lodge moved to the second floor of the Baltimore Watch House on Guilford Avenue.

In 1812 Baltimore’s growth was interrupted by a second war with England. Baltimore played a crucial role in the War of 1812 when soldiers stationed at Fort McHenry successfully held off a British attack. That 1814 victory was commemorated in a poem by Francis Scott Key, and became the national anthem in 1931. Many Freemasons played important roles in the war, among them General Samuel Smith, in charge of the city’s defense, and Grand Master Levin Winder, the Governor of Maryland from 1812-1814. By the end of the war in 1815, Baltimore was the second largest city in the United States.

| 1729 | Bill establishing Baltimore as a town is signed into law on August 8. |
| 1743 | The Maryland Jockey Club becomes the first professional sporting organization in the United States. |
| 1750 | First Masonic Lodge in Maryland is established in Annapolis. |
| 1770 | First Masonic Lodge in Baltimore is established at Fells Point by sailors belonging to the Philadelphia Freemasonry. |
| 1773 | First United States stage coach route begins running between Baltimore and Philadelphia. |
| 1775 | Revolutionary War begins. |
| 1776 | United States declares independence from England. |
| 1782 | First U.S. monument to Christopher Columbus is built in Baltimore. |
| 1783 | Revolutionary War ends. General George Washington, a Mason, resigns his commission in Annapolis. |
| 1787 | United States Constitution is adopted. Maryland becomes the 7th state to ratify the United States Constitution. Grand Lodge of Maryland is established at meeting in Easton, Maryland. |
| 1792 | First U.S. monument to Christopher Columbus is built in Baltimore. The Baltimore Water Company, first in the U.S., is chartered. |
| 1793 | Fells Point Lodge is granted a charter and renamed Washington Lodge No. 3 (the oldest lodge still in existence in Maryland). |
| 1796 | First sugar refinery in the U.S. is founded by Garts and Leyboldt in Baltimore. |
| 1797 | “USS Constellation” designed by Mason David Stoddard, becomes the first United States Naval war ship to capture an enemy vessel. |
| 1800 | Construction begins on first federally funded “National Road” to connect the Port of Baltimore to Wheeling, WV and the Ohio Valley. |
1. Watch House, site of second Baltimore Grand Lodge 1813-1869, print c. 1885
2. George Washington with letter to Maryland Masons, print c. 1885
3. Map of the City of Baltimore, c. 1792
4. Francis Scott Key witnessing siege of Fort McHenry, 1812
5. View of Baltimore from Federal Hill
6. First Maryland Grand Lodge in Easton, Maryland, photograph c. 1970
7. General Samuel Smith, defender of Baltimore in War of 1812
The Masons, like the City of Baltimore, continued to prosper. In 1822 they dedicated their first permanent Grand Lodge of Maryland on St. Paul Street and Lexington Avenue. The two-story structure was based on classical architecture and would be their home for 44 years.

The American frontier pushed west in the 19th century. Transportation in the form of the new Baltimore and Ohio Railroad made the city an important trading hub. Established in 1828, the B&O provided efficient and popular transportation of goods and people between the Port of Baltimore and the Ohio Valley.

Attracted to the city’s growing stature and prestige, the Freemasons held their national convention in Baltimore in 1843 to standardize ritual and procedures.

In 1861, the growth of the city was once again interrupted by war. The American Civil War almost ripped the nation apart, and Maryland was split between the North and the South.

During these years the Grand Lodge served as a federal court house for U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger B. Taney. Despite the difficult days and divided loyalties, after the war ended, Baltimore’s economy returned to its economic focus and continued to expand.

In 1867, the City of Baltimore acquired the Grand Lodge for a permanent extension of the Court House, and the Masons began construction on their second Grand Lodge. On November 20, 1866, the cornerstone was laid for the new Grand Lodge on Charles Street. United States President and Mason, Andrew Johnson, traveled from Washington, DC, to speak at the ceremony.

In 1887, 100 years after the Grand Lodge of Maryland was established, the Masons celebrated their Centennial.
1. Grand Masonic Lodge on St. Paul Street, c. 1822
2. “Grasshopper”, the B&O Railroad’s first engine, c. 1820
3. Map of the City of Baltimore by Thomas Poppleton, c. 1823
4. Attack on the 6th Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers in Baltimore, April 19, 1861
5. Frank Leslie’s Newspaper showing St. Paul Grand Lodge, proposed Charles Street Grand Lodge, and laying of cornerstone, 1866
6. Medal from Maryland Masons Centennial, 1887
7. Dedication program from unveiling of Baron De Kalb statue, 1886
8. Reception invitation to Maryland Masons Centennial, 1887
9. Grand Master Thomas J. Shryock, c. 1886
10. Postcard of the Grand Lodge, c. 1889
11. Grand Lodge furnace room, c. 1890
On Christmas Day in 1890, a fire which started on the ground floor nearly destroyed the Grand Lodge. Except for the records of the Washington and Concordia Lodges, most of the Masons’ records were lost. The Masons quickly regrouped, and on September 12, 1893, the newly rebuilt Temple designed by the architectural firm of Carson & Sperry was dedicated.

In 1904, fire struck again. On February 7, the Great Fire of 1904 started in a warehouse at the harbor and quickly swept through Baltimore’s business district, threatening the Grand Lodge. The Masons removed all of the records and other items of value. Fortunately, the building was spared when the winds shifted the fire away from the building. However, in 1908, fire struck and destroyed the third and fourth floors of the Grand Lodge, with the lower floors suffering smoke and water damage. Once again it was time to rebuild.

On November 16, 1909, a newly restored Grand Lodge designed by Carson & Sperry, with an added fifth floor, was dedicated. That impressive structure was the Grand Lodge of Maryland until the mid 1990s.

Baltimore rebuilt after the Great Fire of 1904, and the renewed city saw periods of stability and change during the early 20th century. In 1914, when Baltimore celebrated the centennial of the Star Spangled Banner, the entire block in front of the Grand Lodge was decorated by the Masons with an illuminated arch spanning Charles Street.

1917 marked the beginning of World War I for the United States. Baltimore was heavily involved in the war effort and prospered as a manufacturing and transportation center.

### United States and Maryland history
- **Baltimore history**
- **Masonic and Grand Lodge history**
- **Tremont Grand history**
1. Aftermath of the Great Baltimore Fire, 1904
2. Veterans Association medal, 1892
3. Grand Lodge fire, December 25, 1890
4. Interior of Commandery (now the Edinburgh Room), 1909
5. Interior of Roman Room, 1909
6. Dedication Program, newly rebuilt Grand Lodge, 1909
7. Overview of Baltimore, 1914
8. WWI dance ticket, 1918
9. Masonic Star Spangled Banner Centennial cups, 1914
10. Masonic decorations, Star Spangled Banner Centennial, 1914
The Masons Move On
(1920-1997)


In 1941 the United States entered World War II and Baltimore rebounded by contributing to the war effort through shipbuilding, aviation, and armaments. The Grand Lodge was turned into an air raid shelter, and Masonic services were established for the welfare of Masons in the defense of their country.

After the War ended in 1945, Baltimore’s economy expanded and thrived. As their standard of living increased, Baltimore City residents were attracted to new housing developments beyond Baltimore’s borders, and many people moved to the suburbs. The city, which had grown in popularity every year since the mid-19th century, actually began to shrink as adjacent counties experienced tremendous growth.

This shift to the suburbs, coupled with the physical limitations of its downtown building, caused the Masons to consider a move of their own. After the 1987 Bicentennial Celebration of the founding of the Maryland Freemasons, the Masons decided to make use of a large parcel of land they owned north of the city for a new Grand Lodge. In 1993, construction of a new complex in Cockeysville began, and the new Grand Lodge of Maryland was dedicated there in 1996.

**1920**
- First factory to manufacture stainless steel, Rustless Iron & Steel Company, is established.
- Walters Art Gallery opens.

**1925**
- First triple combination fireboat is put into service by Baltimore City Fire Department.

**1929**
- American Stock Market crashes.
- Baltimore Museum of Art opens new home on Museum Drive.

**1931**
- Cornerstone is laid for Masonic Homes, “Bonnie Blink,” in Cockeysville, Maryland.

**1932**
- Eastern Venetian Blind Company becomes first producer of Venetian blinds in United States.
- Walters Art Gallery opens.

**1937**
- Sesquicentennial of Grand Lodge of Maryland is celebrated, Grand Master Harry R. Wright presiding.

**1941**
- Japan attacks Pearl Harbor. United States declares war and enters World War II.
- Grand Lodge is turned into air raid shelter.
- Blackout regulations are established for all Maryland Lodges.
- Masonic services are established for welfare of Masons among men in military.

**1945**
- World War II ends.

**1946**
- First photograph of earth from space is produced at Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory.

**1950**
- Korean War begins.

**1953**
- Korean War ends.

**1954**
- St. Louis Browns move to Baltimore and begin playing baseball as the Orioles.

**1956**
- Entire issue of Life Magazine is devoted to the Fraternal World of the Masons.

**1958**
- Colts win first National Football League Championship.

**1959**
- Colts win National Football League Championship.

**1961**
- Viet Nam War begins.

**1966**
- Orioles beat Los Angeles Dodgers to win the World Series in four-game sweep.
- Baltimore Orioles Frank Robinson becomes first baseball player to be named MVP in both the American and National Leagues.

**1967**
- Grand Lodge lays cornerstone of South Baltimore General Hospital.
- National Aquarium opens.

**1970**
- Orioles win the World Series for a second time, beating Cincinnati Reds.

**1971**
- Colts beat Dallas Cowboys to win the World Championship in Super Bowl V.

**1975**
- Viet Nam War ends.

**1976**
- American Bicentennial is celebrated. Maryland Science Center opens.

**1980**
- National Aquarium opens on Baltimore harbor.
- Orioles beat Philadelphia Phillies to win the World Series for third time.

**1985**
- Masonic Charities of Maryland is founded to award scholarships to combat substance abuse in partnership with Maryland State Department of Education, Student Assistance Program.

**1987**
- Bicentennial of the Grand Lodge of Maryland is celebrated, Grand Master Joseph C. Bryan III presiding.

**1990**
- Persian Gulf War takes place.

**1993**
- Construction of new Grand Lodge complex begins in Cockeysville, Maryland.

**1995**
- Baltimore Stallions become first American football team to win Canadian Football League Championship.

**1996**
- Cleveland Browns move to Baltimore and begin playing football as the Ravens. New Grand Lodge of Maryland complex in Cockeysville, Maryland, is completed.
1. Launching of Liberty Ship SS Patrick Henry, 1941
2. Blood drive donor station wagon donated by the Knights Templar, 1943
3. War Bonds Drive poster, 1944
4. Knights Templar hat, c. 1920
5. Order of the Constantine Dinner in Grand Lodge Board Room, 1948
6. Masonic Officers in Corinthian Room, 1941
7. Concordia Lodge Dinner program, 1954
8. Masonic Museum, c. 1960
9. October 8, 1956, Life Magazine
10. Masons in Roman Room, 1982
11. Chapter Banquet, 1955
12. New Grand Lodge in Cockeysville, Maryland, c. 1996
Restored and Returned to Grandeur
(1998-2005)

Because of the new Grand Lodge in the suburbs, the Masons had no need for their former home on Charles Street. Attracted by its beauty and recognizing the possibilities for other uses, the owners of the neighboring Tremont Suite Hotels purchased the Lodge from the Masons in 1998.

The firm began planning a renovation of the structure which would honor its grace and historical significance while adapting it for use as a meeting place for business and social functions. However, City of Baltimore officials, unaware of plans for restoration, condemned the building in order to erect a much needed parking garage on the land.

Working with the City and members of Baltimore’s Downtown Partnership, the hotel’s owners crafted an agreement which would save the building and add a parking structure on land directly behind it and adjacent to the hotel. Thanks to that agreement, restoration of the magnificent structure began.

A team of architects, designers, restoration specialists and world class craftsmen was assembled to restore the original interiors and replicate what could not be repaired. Every room and surface was returned to its original grandeur.

After years of work, the doors of the newly named Tremont Grand were opened in September 2005. Nearly 140 years after its original cornerstone was laid as the Grand Lodge of Maryland, the Tremont Grand has been returned to a graceful and elegant state, and a piece of Baltimore’s history has been lovingly preserved.

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- City of Baltimore, Baltimore Downtown Partnership, and Tremont Suite Hotels craft agreement to save the former Grand Lodge from demolition.
- Tremont Suite Hotels hire architectural firm of Murphy & Dittenhafer to redesign the former Grand Lodge.
- Ravens defeat New York Giants to capture their first-ever World Championship in Super Bowl XXXV.
- Terrorists attack New York’s World Trade Center and Pentagon in Washington, D.C., with major loss of life. President George Bush declares “War on Terror.”
- U.S. and allies invade Afghanistan.
- Motion picture “Head of State” is filmed in former Grand Lodge.
- Tremont Suites Hotels begins renovation of Grand Lodge and renames building the Tremont Grand.
- U.S. and coalition countries invade Iraq.

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