

History of the Eastern Regional Assembly

R. Stephen Doan, KGC, Grand Recorder

What we know today as the Eastern Regional Assembly started at Galen Hall Golf Club, an 18-hole public course in Wernersville, Pennsylvania, the weekend of October 17th to 19th in 1958. It began as a social gathering of Knights

Companions and their ladies from the Conclaves which had been part of the old Empire of the East. They wanted to continue the social get together they had enjoyed at the Annual Assemblies of that jurisdiction which had been held in the most recent past during a weekend in the second half of October of every year. The Empire of the East and Empire of the West had disappeared just eight months before when they merged to form the United Grand Imperial Council on February 18, 1958. October 1958 would have been the first such month without an Annual Assembly, and the weekend at Galen Hall Golf Club was planned to continue the social aspects of that annual meeting. The second such fall gathering was also held at Galen Hall, this time immediately after the 1959 session of the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction.

Starting in October of 1960, the meeting was held at the Inn at Buck Hill Falls, a private resort community in the Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania, returning to the location of the 1953 Annual Assembly of the Empire of the East. The Inn at Buck Hill Falls was a popular resort through the early 1980's. By the time of its closure in October of 1990, the Inn had over 400 guest rooms along with resort amenities, including an indoor swimming pool with a retractable glass roof, several lobby spaces and a white linen dining room. It began its decline in the 1980's





as reduced costs of air travel allowed vacationers from New York and Philadelphia more convenient options than the long drive into the Poconos.

Because of the deteriorating conditions at Buck Hill Falls, the Eastern Regional moved to the Hershey Pocono Resort in White Haven, Pennsylvania (also in the Poconos) for its November 7 – 9, 1986 assembly. Originally the LeChateau Inn and Country Club, the Hershey Pocono Resort later became the Mountain Laurel Resort. The Eastern Regional moved from the Mountain Laurel Resort to what is now the Holiday Inn in Grantville, Pennsylvania for the 1998 assembly and has met there ever since.

The Eastern Regional is the largest Constantinian gathering in the United States after our UGIC Annual Assembly. It has for many years offered all the Red Cross Orders and chair degrees in addition to superlative social enjoyment. It has been the model for all the other regional assemblies we now enjoy.

Knight Companion William E. Yeager, Jr., K.G.C., was Chairman of the Eastern Regional Assembly from 1985 through 1994 while he served as Intendant General for Pennsylvania Central. Many Eastern Regional traditions originated with Bill. Our late Past Grand Sovereign, Bob Finley, carried on the traditions during the many years that he chaired the event after Bill.

