

## A Trip to New York City with Manchester Lodge No. 12

*By Brother Paul Grenier*

Last year, 50 Rhode Island Masons boarded a charter bus in South County and headed off to the Big Apple. We were going to visit Garibaldi Lodge No. 542 in New York City. The trip was arranged by Brother Paul Grenier of Manchester Lodge No. 12. Among those on the trip were two Past Grand Masters and the presiding Grand Master, Brother Carl B. Willi. Sandwiches and soft drinks were supplied on the bus and, although there was a DVD Player on the bus, the conversation was enough to keep us occupied during the trip. One group was trying to name the five boroughs while another group, headed by the one-and-only Brother Edward L. Calamar, Jr., was trying to name the five families. Needless to say, it was a great trip. Brother Grenier has decided to run another trip on April 4, 2008 and since the interest was so great he has arranged for two busses. The cost will be \$50, paid with your reservations.

I think you will find a little history of Garibaldi Lodge No. 542 interesting. The degree we will witness is the First Degree and it is done in Italian. You may be thinking that you don't speak Italian and would not understand what is happening. I do not speak Italian either but I had no trouble understanding what was going on. They will explain things to the visitors from time-to-time, and if you pay close attention, you will know. This degree is very different from anything you have seen in Rhode Island.

During the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century there were Masonic Lodges in New York City which worked in the French Language and one that worked in Spanish.

Attilio Massabo, who was born in Piedmont, Italy and was a tailor by trade, was living in New York City. He was initiated in one of the older Lodges, L'Union Francaise No. 17 and was raised in June, 1853. He was Master of the lodge in 1857, '58 and '59. His popularity increased to the point that he became the center of a group, mostly Italians. This group decided to form a new lodge, working in the Italian language. They decided to name the lodge in honor of



Garibaldi whose service to mankind had immortalized him with a glory akin to that of our George Washington. A request was made to the Grand Master, Brother Clinton F. Paige, to establish a new lodge in the so called Latin District. In 1863, dispensation was obtained, signed by the Deputy Grand Master, Brother J. B. Gates Sommers, and the Grand Secretary. On June 11, 1864, the charter was signed by Brother Paige. Brother Attilio Massabo was the first Worshipful Master of the first Italian speaking lodge in the United States. Giuseppe Garibaldi, who was the Grand Master of the Grand Orient of Palermo thanked the Brothers of the Lodge named for him. Many lodges sprang off directly or indirectly from Garibaldi from 1882 to 1938. Although all these new lodges had been formed over a period of three quarters of a century, Garibaldi has continued to maintain its popularity, prestige and reputation, so much so that it has gained a worldwide recognition. Among the members you will find such names as Right Worshipful Brother Fiorello H. LaGuardia, Congressman and former Mayor of New York City, and Worshipful Brother and Dr. V. Sellaro, founder of the Sons of Italy. Throughout its century-old life, Garibaldi Lodge has been second to none in promptly responding to every call for service and sacrifice in time of great calamities such as earthquakes, floods, fires, etc, both here and abroad. The ritual is also second to none. As was stated in the beginning of this article, you will have no problem understanding what is happening. You will not see a degree like this anywhere else. I hope that you will consider joining us in April. We are looking forward to a wonderful time. You can call me, Brother Paul Grenier, at (401) 392-0138 with any questions. I expect the busses to fill quickly so don't wait.

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