

Grand Master's Gala to "Remember the Ladies"

March 15, 2026
The Liberty House, Jersey City, New Jersey



A distinguished black-tie event was presented by Most Worshipful Omar S. Morris and the Square and Compassion Foundation in celebration of the many women throughout American history who had made this nation great. These women included Abigail Adams, Harriet Tubman, Eleanor Roosevelt, Clara Barton and Kamala Harris.

As the nation marked its 250th Anniversary, the event also honored the women in the room who had continued that legacy every day— leaders who have strengthened their communities, educated the next generation and caregivers who poured their love into their families.

Lady Brenda Vander Horn, wife of Most Worshipful Leonard Vander Horn, Past Grand Master delivered a deeply moving address that highlighted the countless contributions of women throughout American history. Excerpts include:

In March of 1776, as a new nation struggled to be born, Abigail Adams wrote a letter to her husband, John Adams, who was helping shape the laws of the emerging United States. In that letter, she issued a challenge that still echoes across history: "Remember the ladies."

First, we return to Abigail Adams herself. She was more than a supportive wife to a founding father. Through her letters, she offered political insight, advised her husband on matters of governance, and expressed firm opinions about independence, justice, and education. She believed deeply that women should have access to education equal to men, because an educated citizenry — including its mothers — was essential to the survival of the republic. Her words planted early seeds of women's rights advocacy, reminding the founders that revolution must begin not only in government halls, but in daily life.

One of them was Harriet Tubman. Born into slavery, Tubman knew tyranny not as theory, but as lived reality. When she escaped bondage, she could have chosen safety. Instead, she chose courage. She returned to the South again and again, guiding enslaved people to freedom along the Underground Railroad. Tubman embodied Abigail Adams's warning about unchecked power. Her life declared that freedom must be universal, not selective.

The call expanded beyond national borders through the work of Eleanor Roosevelt. As First Lady, she transformed a ceremonial role into a platform for advocacy. She held press conferences, wrote newspaper columns, and traveled extensively to observe conditions firsthand. She championed civil rights, labor protections, and opportunities for women and marginalized communities. As a delegate to the United Nations, she played a central role in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights — a document affirming that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

Today, we "Remember the ladies." But we do more than remember them. We study them. We follow their example. We honor them. Their courage reminds us that freedom is not a finished achievement, but an ongoing responsibility. Their voices urge us to examine our own systems, our own laws, and our own assumptions.

For when a nation truly remembers its women — listens to them, includes them, and learns from them — it becomes stronger, wiser, and more just. This is the enduring revolution the ladies began and we must continue to follow.

Her remarks were complemented by several prominent members of the Masonic family, who presented flowers during the ceremony in a touching tribute.



Following the ceremony and an excellent meal, the Brethren and their Ladies enjoyed an afternoon of dancing and camaraderie. The occasion brought together 300 Masons and their Ladies for an afternoon of fellowship and recognition.





Special thanks were extended to Right Worshipful Eric Rebels, Worshipful Brother Michael Russell, and the 250th Semi-Quincentennial Event Staff for their dedication and hard work in planning and organizing such a memorable and successful event.