

Skip Trahey: The Man Behind The Lens

By MARK STOUGHT AND TOM FRIBERG

SKIP Trahey's photos always grace the pages of the Aleppo News, and his presence is always noted at many a Masonic function. However, what do we really know about Skip? This revealing interview will serve to shed some light on a subject who with his camera is often the one shedding light on subjects. Skip was born in New Jersey on Feb. 7, 1938, and lived in Hoboken until the age of three. His formative years, however, were spent in Brighton and North Cambridge. After graduating from Rindge Tech in 1958, where he took courses in printing, Skip worked in the printing industry until he enlisted in the army at the age of 22, on Dec. 29, 1959. As he relates it, "I was going to get drafted anyway."

Skip started the New Year off right, leaving for basic training on January 1, 1960. He worked as a printer in the Army, completing his basic training at Ft. Dix, attending offset printing school at Ft. Belvoir, installation management command at Ft. Huachaca, AZ, and spending two years in Germany



At the Middle Eastern Night in 2006, Ill. Alexander D. Campbell and Recorder Harvey J. Waugh presented Skip with his Photographers Fez.

(one in Frankfurt and one in Heidelberg). For those of you who might think that printing is not terribly glamorous, it might interest you to know that Skip worked printing manuals and top secret encrypted and unencrypted documents. So, if one happened to be out on a top secret maneuver, those orders might have come to one's hands thanks to Skip. He also was responsible for making sure the remnants of said documents were totally destroyed after they were printed.

Skip was honorably discharged in 1963, and after serving his country proudly, he returned to civilian life working in the print industry. He started out running a press, then worked for Raytheon doing printing and collation. He was later promoted to the photo lab, where we ran the process camera, did studio work, portraiture, and development of slides and film. While at Raytheon, Skip attended the Franklin Institute to learn Industrial Photography for two years, learning how to develop film, mount photos, and setup lighting. He then worked in Kendall Square for 10 years, went to Burlington for another 12, and then (as he colorfully puts it) "I got a buyout offer I couldn't refuse for early retirement in 1995."

Skip's Masonic career started when he was raised on November 24, 1975. Both of his grandfathers were Masons, as was his uncle. Skip affiliated with King Solomon's Lodge in Somerville on March 18, 1976. He is a life member of Somerville Lodge and also the Grand Lodge of MA. He served as a District Service Officer for the 3rd district, and Marshal for the #rd Lodge of Instruction. He also takes photos not only for Grand Lodge, but also does cast photos at Scottish Rite degrees.

His cousin is Noble Douglas Peters, with whom he became an Aleppo Shriner in 2003. Douglas is perhaps better known as "Homer the Clown."



Skip was caught on film taking pictures at the NSA Field Days in Manchester, NH in 2008.

Apparently when Skip and Doug were at the ceremonial, Doug saw "Lefty," and Skip saw someone with a camera. The rest, as they say, is history. Skip soon met **Joe McKertich**, who taught him a lot, and has since transitioned from film to digital cameras. "They're simply more cost effective, versatile, and can take more photos," he says.

Now Skip has two Canon Rebel XTs, two strobes and battery packs, 28-300mm wide-angle lens, and 18-55 lens, 70-200 2.8 telephoto lens in his photographic arsenal. Skip attended his first Imperial Session in St. Louis, and now he has the bug already making plans for San Antonio and Toronto, Canada. Skip also joined the Aleppo Clowns in 2007. His clown name is "Braveheart." Skip has always taken many photos of the Clowns and they have been very receptive to having him attend functions and cover them. Skip has attended Clown College for two years now, and only needs three more years to graduate.

In other Masonic arenas, Skip participates in local MYCHIP Programs, playing the tapes back for the parents to make sure they are working and correct, and taking photos of the event volunteers. Right know, Skip says he "can't wait" to use the new system. His favorite memory from working at a CHIP event is a 12-year-old girl who told the interviewer her favorite thing to do after school was homework. Skip told the mother, "make sure you keep this handy when she gets older." To Skip, MYCHIP is all about "keeping the next generations safe."

Skip is in demand nowadays, with phone calls requesting his attendance at numerous events. However, he still has time for fun. He attends the Highland Games in New Hampshire, and various Indian Powwows, where he always has his camera handy. He also has season tickets to the Boston Cannons lacrosse games. For Skip, though, taking photos is his fun - he always has his camera on him. He says of his photographic coverage, "as soon as it's not fun, I'm not doing it anymore. The day it becomes work you won't see me doing it anymore."

Another Year and Another \$300,000

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The children this year ranged in age from 14 months to 15 years old while the severity of their burns ranged from 20% to 60%. Often times, the smaller percentage burn victims still were required to come via air ambulance. This is usually due to inhalation injuries which cause them to be in critical condition.


The patients this year were burned a number of ways. Flame injuries due to house fires, candles falling into cribs, match play, motor vehicle accident, electrical injury from high tension lines and scalds from large pots of soup or hot water.

Illustrious Eriksen also pledged \$20,000.00 to Springfield Hospital for flights from the Dominican Republic. These flights are less expensive as they can be scheduled and do not require additional Hospital personnel on the flight.

\$1,000.00 was also contributed to the Ronald McDonald House in Springfield for its intimate and helpful relationship with Springfield Hospital.

Finally, approximately \$5,000.00 was used to transport Children to Erie Hospital in Pennsylvania. While this is also an Orthopedic Hospital like Springfield, some of the treatments they specialize in were need by Massachusetts Children.

Illustrious Steve, as well as all of the Nobles and Friends of Aleppo, can be proud of the accomplishments of the Transportation Fund this year. To be a part of the force that helps, cures and returns normalcy to so many Children is the real reward of being a Shriner.



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