

Knights of Pythias Honor Hero Who Saved Lives

Fraternal & Charitable Order rededicate Monument to Peter Woodland

Saturday, November 5, 2016

The Order of Knights of Pythias, honors a heroic member who died tragically saving many lives at a re-dedication ceremony, Saturday, November 5, 2016 at 11:30 a.m., at Bayview-New York Bay Cemetery, 327 Garfield Avenue, Jersey City, New Jersey. “Peter Woodland, a Pythian and member of Hector Lodge No. 49, of Philadelphia, worked as an assistant supervisor during the building of the Hudson Tubes connecting Jersey City and New York City beneath the Hudson River on July 21, 1880 when he sacrificed his life to save other when blowout (escaping air) during the construction that day, stated Deputy Supreme Chancellor Craig Shink.

This rededication project follows a visit to the cemetery after a group of Pythian brothers read about Woodland story, and finding the Peter Woodland monument in such poor condition, they initiated this project to refurbish and rededicate this monument to our fallen brother. “Brother Woodland, a member of our Order in its infancy, truly lived by our principles of Friendship, Charity and Benevolence,” added Past Deputy Supreme Chancellor Sir David Peltzer, who organized the effort. “Working 60 feet below the surface of the riverbed, Woodland heard what New York Sun reporters called ‘the shriek of escaping air,’ and shouted for fellow laborers to ‘make for the lock!’ Eight men reached the air chamber and safety. Woodland then closed the door. The saved men could only watch at the bulls-eye opening as water and silt rushed in to drown Woodland, who stayed behind and died with the other trapped men. The death toll of 20 would have been far higher if not for the heroism of assistant supervisor Brother Peter Woodland.”

Woodland's heroism and the sacrifices and endurance of other sandhogs were recognized in front page news stories of the period,” explained Supreme Chancellor Sir Alan Krell. “Accounts of his heroism and self sacrifice appeared in newspapers across the country. He was deemed a Martyr.” Following his death a monument was dedicated to his memory by the members of the Knights of Pythias.

Time and unforeseen events took a huge toll on the monument and grave site. A lack of attention left the monument badly damaged. The Grand Lodge of New York initiated the restoration effort with a Woodland Monument Refurbishment Fund campaign

For more information, contact Grand Lodge New York at (516) 739-5000.

Who: Knights of Pythias

What: Rededication of the Peter Woodland monument

When: Saturday, November 5, 2016 at 11:30 a.m.

Where: Bayview-New York Bay Cemetery, 327 Garfield Avenue, Jersey City, New Jersey

{Additional information about the Order Knights of Pythias on next page}

About the Knights of Pythias ---The Order of Knights of Pythias, a great international, non-sectarian fraternity, chartered by an act of the Congress was founded in Washington, DC, in 1864, the fraternal order follows three distinguishing principles: Friendship, Charity and Benevolence. Domains of the Order exist in most states and provinces, and subordinate lodges are located in many cities and towns across the United States and Canada.

The order bases its lessons and builds its ritual largely on the familiar [story](#) of the friendship of *Damon and Pythias*. These historical characters lived about four hundred or more years before the beginning of the Christian era. They were members of a school, founded by *Pythagoras*, who was known as the father of Greek philosophy. Their loyalty to each other, the adventures that beset them, and the outcome of this noble friendship, form the basis for one of the most beautiful stories of history as exemplified in our ritual.