

SUBLIMIS

In Latin, referred to something high, lofty, exalted, like a city set on top of a hill, or an eagle's nest atop some lonely crag. It refers to that which is eminent, of superlative degree, moral grandeur, spiritual exaltation. Inasmuch as the Third Degree is at the top of the system of Ancient Craft Masonry, it is known as The Sublime Degree.

Issue 1 | January 2022 | Vol. 2



Message from the East

Mother Nature Springs a Surprise

2022 Installation Rescheduled Because of Snow

WM-Elect Lance Orloff

It is said that no plan survives contact with the enemy, and recently that enemy was a combination of the Pandemic and the Weather. Our scheduled Installation of Officers for 2022 was defeated by a Winter Storm but our Lodge and Freemasonry, not withstanding, still survives, for the bonds of Fraternity are stronger than the ice.

I had hoped to offer the Installation Ceremony as an enjoyable evening for all concerned and endeavored to provide a bit of pageantry that I hoped would support that goal. That did not happen.

On January 14th, we will still have our installation but closed, subdued, and we will immediately get to work with our new year. I am not really big on holding to past missed opportunities as I prefer to look forward to future successes.

However, as part of the public ceremony, I had intended an opening speech as a way of introduction. I feel that the message is important for setting the tone for 2022 and so I address you here.

-continues



08 Snowed Out!

Congratulations to our 2022 Lodge Officers even though our Installation was delayed.

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WM Lee R. Webb II belongs to how many Lodges?

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VWB Jeremy Yielding ponders this epic tale and its relevance to Masonry



The Will & Pleasure of the Worshipful Master is a statement of Masonic etiquette that is re-implemented each year. It is with some trepidation & relief that each Master relinquishes the top hat & gavel to his successor.

The trust you invest in each years elected officers is a sacred duty to uphold the personality and continue the traditions of a Lodge, all while having fun for which I will rely on your participation

This trust includes:

- The constitutions & regulations of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge
- The bylaws & established customs of Steilacoom Lodge
- & The focus on Faith, Hope, and **Charity** which is integral to all Masonic bodies,
- These are the trusts you invest in your elected officers
- & are, to me, a Gospel.
- Propriety in our Stated Meetings is vital to this.

Yet within our core, we are a Fraternity of Brotherly Love and Friendship.

Within that vein, it is my Will and Pleasure that within an atmosphere of **Civility** and respect, where none need worry about being labeled or ignored we should enjoy the year 2022 & that each of us is afforded the opportunity to be part of a Lodge of Equals In the coming days, weeks, & months, you will see a much fuller statement of my personality, as I intend to increase and edify our **Communications**.

As an appointed or elected officer of this Lodge, I always saw it as my duty to subdue my passions to within due bounds, to support and defend the customs of the Lodge, & to learn as much as possible, which is in Accord with the Will and Pleasure of our current Grand Master;

...MW Cameron Bailey's

.....focus on Masonic Education.

& going forward, I intend to continue to maintain our Lodge **in the manner in which it has been established.**

These are my core value for the coming year, never forgetting the 1st rule, 2nd, and 4th Rule of Freemasonry as taught to us by past Grand Master **MW Jim Kendall**, "Have Fun".

The trust you invest in each years' elected officers is a sacred duty to uphold the personality and continue the traditions of a Lodge, all while having fun for which I will rely on your participation

-Lance Orloff



FROM THE WEST

Guarding the West Gate

Bro. Ken Gibson
Senior Warden

Happy New Year!

New beginnings for a new year and many are interested in joining our Fraternity. This is good news and means we may have the pleasure of conducting many initiations and degrees over the next several months.

Guarding the West Gate as a concept can sound like a downer. Here we are, all these excited, interested new people, and Ken is going to try to shut the door.

Bummer.

As you read what I write below, I hope that you will think about specific positive things that you can do to both help the prospect along, while also doing your part to guard. Think about changing this idea to “cheerfully guarding the West Gate.”

We often hear about the importance of guarding the West Gate, so as I begin my journey in the West for the next year, I thought I'd share my thoughts on what this means to me in a role that I take very seriously.

Our strength and support is derived from a harmonious environment. It is exciting to see interested prospects and to get them into the Lodge, but we've got to also buy a “harmony insurance policy” up front. Before I get into that, I'll define how I look at harmony.

What does a harmonious environment look like to me? There are several key items, all of which are contained in our obligations and the lessons of our degrees and working tools. However they fundamentally boil down to being respectful, courteous, and civil; they include giving and doing the best you are capable of doing, doing what you can when called upon, being collaborative, and working together for the good of the Lodge and humanity.



It means being a mature adult when one disagrees with an individual or the group.

This last one is very important to me, and all Master Masons should understand this – it means having difficult discussions with a Brother Mason one on one. It also means, as our charge admonishes, aiding in a Brothers reformation and defending his character.

We are human, and from time to time our ashlar may need a little smoothing. Nonetheless, there are things we can do to get off to a good start.

In my mind a harmonious environment starts with our candidate information, investigation and selection processes. While we certainly must trust our investigation committee to do its job, we, as Masons, must also develop our own knowledge and sense of the candidate.

-continues

Senior Warden – from previous page

This can and should be fun – this is “getting to know you time.” This is why it is so important to invite candidates to our study sessions, fellowship dinners before stated meetings and other activities. This is our chance not only to seek out and have a conversation with an individual, but to really set the stage when it comes to character expectations.

Questions shouldn’t only be about why an individual is interested in joining but should also get to the point of learning about a person’s character and philosophy of being with and working with others. What makes them tick? What don’t they like? What sets them off?

Masonry is a two-way street – we provide each other an awesome environment of fellowship and opportunity, but in return we need participation and not just good behavior – best behavior.

Does the candidate value collaboration? Do they really plan to be active, or are they in it for some other reason? Can they demonstrate times when they’ve been a good collaborator? What about times when they have disagreed with people how did they handle the situation and themselves? What would they have done different if given a second chance?

We should be asking about and looking at candidates’ social media. We should be talking with others who we know the candidate and get their opinions and sense of the person.

I’ll stop for a moment and ask a question: isn’t getting all these interested men into the pipeline and through the degrees the most important thing we should be doing right now, whatever it takes?

We need to be efficient, but also effective. We need to be serious, and we need to look to the good of Masonry. It ought not simply be getting three signers before a meeting. Signers, in my opinion, have a special responsibility to actually know the candidate.

This fraternity is ancient. Think for a moment again about harmony. It is what to all institutions? Is it more or less important to ours than all the others?

When we bring a man in who we don’t know and haven’t fully vetted, we risk the creation of a disharmonious environment not only in our Lodge, but in the Fraternity as a whole.

Remember, a new Mason may or may not stay affiliated with our Lodge, but they will be affiliated the Fraternity and be known to all Masons. Whatever their character and behavior, they will be known to have entered through our West Gate, so they also become a reflection on us too.

So yes, we must guard the West Gate, but we also must take responsibility as individual Masons for getting to know the candidate a little before we cast our ballot. We ought to be welcoming and create a comfortable environment and situation for the candidate so they will open up and share with us so that we can learn.

When we ballot on the candidate, we should be excited about it, because we truly *know* that they will make a great Mason.





No petitioner is so important and no increase in numbers is so urgent that we cannot take time to thoroughly investigate all who knock upon our doors. Guard well the west gate. Our reputation is at stake.



FROM THE SOUTH

What color is your apron?

TomaHawk Pearson

Junior Warden

What kind of apron do you think is the most valuable in Masonry? Is it the one you wear when you are in the officer's line? Is it one you wear when you finish your term as Worshipful Master? Or is it one you wear when you are selected for office in the Grand Lodge?

We have a brother who's an occasional visitor from another jurisdiction that catches my eye. He has the sash, the apron and some cuffs that speak to his high position.

I would submit, the plain white apron is the most valuable. It is ours when we enter our spiritual journey in this Lodge. It will be buried with us when our time to move to that place not made with hands.

Albert Mackey wrote in the Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, "the apron is the first gift a Mason receives, the first symbol explained to him and the first evidence of his commitment to the Fraternity."

Due to its symbolic character, the color of a Mason's apron should always be pure, unspotted white, and always made from lambskin. Today, the apron remains the symbol of a righteous person — purity of life and rectitude of conduct is essential to the life of a Mason just as it is to genuine faith.

The white lambskin, we are reminded in the first degree, is pure and spotless, an emblem of innocence and the badge of a Mason. It is ours to wear, we hope, with equal pleasure to ourselves and to honor to our fraternity.

Should you ever bring disgrace on this apron and this lodge, that disgrace will be multiplied a thousand times in your mind, by the knowledge that within the walls of this lodge, you have been taught the principles of an upright life.



“The apron is the first gift a Mason receives, the first symbol explained to him and the first evidence of his commitment to the Fraternity.”

-Albert Mackey



Bro. George Washington wore a rounded apron



A Master Mason's Apron



"A white lambskin apron more ancient than the Golden Fleece or Roman Eagle, and when worthily worn, more honorable than the Star and Garter or any other Order that can be conferred upon us."

The Mason's apron comes from those worn by craftsmen that were made from the skin of an animal, worn to protect the workmen and their clothes from injury and damage from the rough stones with which they worked; it also was a vessel in which to carry tools.

Eventually, these gave way to smaller, "token" aprons made of white lambskin. They became associated with innocence largely because white is universally understood as the color of innocence, and lambs have likewise been recognized as symbols of innocence.

The Mason's apron reminds us of an important lesson that derives from the simple apron of the craftsman: the dignity and worth of labor, the honor that comes with being a workman, and the glory attached to life and living for one's purpose.

We understand the real value of the apron when we acknowledge it as a badge signifying the honor behind doing constructive work.

Similarly, the apron of the worker has come to represent service as well.

The apron of the laborer reminds its fraternal wearer to labor for the good of others, especially his brethren.

One of the earliest mentions of a ceremonial apron appears in the Old Testament book of Genesis. Melchizedek was styled as "the Highest Priest" and wore the apron as a badge of religious authority.

The apron has become one of the most recognized symbols of our craft. Even the most ornate one a brother might receive as a gift for his service remains, underneath, a symbol of labor, service, and purity of life and thought.

Every Mason cherishes his apron and remembers fondly the moment when he first wore it.

When we turn to ritual...we find the Apron to be an inheritance from the past...and so it is a badge of antiquity. In our modern age today and in our humble Lodge, the apron was and remains a badge of honor.





*Due to dangerous weather conditions,
the formal Installation of our
Lodge Officers will be rescheduled to
our January stated meeting.*

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2022 LODGE OFFICERS

Worshipful Master – Lance Orloff
 Senior Warden – Ken Gibson
 Junior Warden – TomaHawk Pearson
 Secretary – RW Don Campbell
 Assistant Secretary – WB Bruce Everett
 Treasurer – Ken Woo
 Senior Deacon – VWB James Nero
 Junior Deacon – VWB Jeremy Yielding
 Marshal – Chris Hadley
 Senior Steward – WB Natural Allah
 Chaplain – WB Joseph Allen
 Tyler – Jeff Green
 Musician – Gary Emmons

*“Always do right. This will gratify some people and
astonish the rest.”*



Olympia #1 Installation

Did you know that **Steilacoom Lodge's first Worshipful Master, RW William H. Wallace**, installed Olympia Lodge's 1st Worshipful Master (and later Grand Master), **MW Thornton F. McElroy?** On December 4th, members of Steilacoom Lodge installed the officers of Olympia #1.



VWB Jeremy Yielding presided as the Installing Master at Olympia #1

Photo Courtesy WM Lance Orloff



Olympia Lodge #1 along with Steilacoom #2 and two other Lodges helped establish the Grand Lodge of Washington F&AM

Olympia Lodge #1 was formed in 1852 under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of the Territory of Oregon. It was the first Lodge created North of the Columbia River and the first Lodge created within what are now the boundaries of Washington State.

The first meeting hall for Olympia Lodge #1 was erected in 1853 on land that was donated to Olympia Lodge #1 by one of its earliest members, **Edmund Sylvester**.

As the principle founding lodge of the Grand Lodge of Washington, Olympia Lodge #1 has a rich history that encompasses not only Masonry, but also, many prominent members who have been instrumental in shaping and supporting our local community, the State of Washington and beyond. In 1858, the members of Olympia Lodge #1 together with **Steilacoom #2** and two other lodges in what is now Washington State, obtained a charter and established the Grand Lodge of Washington.

Masonic Education

VWB Jeremy Yielding will be delivering the January Education Lecture for St. John's #9 Lodge in Seattle on January 26, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. . His topic will be "The Morgan Affair."

-more news continues



*Names in the News Continues***Steilacoom set to sponsor Rainbow**

At our December stated meeting, members voted to support sponsorship of Rainbow at Steilacoom Lodge #2.

Royal Arch Masons

VWB James Nero has been elected High Priest of Tacoma #4. **Bro. Ken Woo** has been appointed Royal Arch Captain.

From the Quarry

You missed a lot if you didn't attend our December stated meeting. Thanks to **WM-Elect Lance Orloff** for the following news items.

Jack Bennett, who has been a Mason for nearly 50 years, was honored with the Hiram Award for his dedication to Steilacoom Lodge and Freemasonry. Jack's caretaking of our cemetery and its history is an honor to us all and an example of the true spirit of our craft.

Regarding our new Membership Committee, and with special thanks to our brother, **TomaHawk Pearson** for his guidance in the importance and benefit of this committee.

Special shout out to our Brothers of Other, WM-Elect for Mt Tahoma #190 **Paul Leech** and WM-Elect **Al Luberts** for Corinthian for visiting us. Thank you for sharing the BL&F.

Our District 15 Deputy Grandmaster **VWB Mark Conlee** complimented the Lodge on how we dispatch business efficiently during our meetings. VWB Mark says he has to contend with railroad noise at his home Phoenix Lodge.

2022 Budget

The 2022 Budget was handed out at the stated meeting with a brief discussion from **VWB James Nero**. A formal vote will be conducted at our January stated meeting.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS

WB Lee R. Webb II



It was at the Puyallup Fair when Masons had a booth to promote and take slips with names of anyone that might be interested in knowing more about Freemasonry or becoming a Mason. I talked to **WB Dick Storholt** for a good period of time and did put my name in the box.

After the fair was over, he called me and asked if I had any more questions or if I wanted to become a Mason. I told him I wanted to think about it more and he said he would call back in about 2 months. I really didn't think about it anymore till he called 2 months later. I said the same thing and he said he would call back in about 2 months again. And he did and I said I still was thinking about it so he said he would call back in 2 more months. When he did, I was really impressed with his tenacity to keep trying and so we talked and I was given a petition for Tacoma Lodge #22.

I petitioned the lodge Aug 6, 1991 and was investigated by 3 Masons, one of whom was **VWB Marion Hatch**, and accepted September 3, 1991.

I was Initiated September 9, 1991, Passed November 16, 1991, Raised January 14, 1992, and did my Proficiency February 4, 1992.

VWB Marion Hatch was my mentor and he really worked me on knowing the Posting Lectures that were done in lodge! When congratulated and asked to speak, I said I wanted to be as great a ritualist as Brother Marion which drew several gasps, for Everyone knew how great a ritualist he was/is!!

I was immediately installed as Senior Steward!

-continues

The next meeting, a sweet, elderly Masonic known as "**Cotton Tops**" for his pure white, curly hair gave me my first words of wisdom. He said if you really wanted to enjoy what Masonry is all about, become a Rainbow Dad and work with the youth, as he was for so many years.

I took it to heart and once able to attend meetings regularly, I was installed as Rainbow Dad for Tacoma Assembly in 1995 till 1999. Tacoma Assembly later merged with Tyler Assembly and I continued to be Rainbow Dad from 1999 to 2002.

And since I was a Master Whittler, I made each of my Worthy Advisors her own Personalized gavel and sounding block. Believe me, these girls had some very unique requests, usually supporting their theme. I also decided to be on the Assembly Board from 1995 to 2002.

There were many traditions that I was very proud to continue and help with. We really took care of our widows with a Valentine's dinner where **Brothers, Laird, Bruce**, and I would serenade and give them roses, take them to the Memorial Day event at Mt. Tahoma cemetery and dinner afterwards, have a Fourth of July BBQ, put on a big Thanksgiving meal and Christmas meal and gave each one a gift from the lodge.

Another was that Tacoma Lodge #22 was a sister lodge to Vancouver Lodge #68 in B.C. and they had a legacy of visiting back and forth for over 60 years before I was a member of Tacoma Lodge #22.

My career was a CNC machinist working in Kent on swing shift made attending lodge, in the early days, impossible till there would be the typical 2 weeks to 2-3 months layoffs.

I would then attend every meeting till I was called back to work. This went on for about 4 years. But I still wanted to go through the lines and was installed as Senior Deacon and then Junior Warden with the understanding that work was my limit for attending regularly.

A year later, I was put on day shift and started back as Senior Deacon and continued through the lines till I was installed as Worshipful Master in January 1, 1999 to December 31, 2000.

Tacoma #22 had consolidated with William P. Daugherty Lodge #224 December 31, 1996 and we moved to from Clover Lodge building to their lodge off of Proctor in the Defiance district.

We later agreed to shorten William P. Daugherty/Tacoma #22 to Defiance Lodge #22 but not without a lot of denials by 4 Grand Masters who thought we were wanting to be "defiant" when we only wanted to be more recognized as the lodge in the region's District. Then finally it was granted by **MWB Bill R. Wood** in 1999. (This allowed me to be the first Worshipful Master of Defiance Lodge!)

Three of us in our lodge, **WB Laird Brown, WB Bruce Gardner**, and myself took it upon ourselves to re-establish that tradition. For 6 years, we would go up for every meeting, degrees, and attend their Installations. Sadly, WB Bruce passed shortly thereafter and WB Laird became involved with a new business but I kept up with the visitations for many years, still attending every meeting and participating in their degrees and Installation. At which they made me an Honorary Member till I then became a dues paying member from December 2012 for 4 years after which they made me a Life Member.

But with so much involvement "down here", I was not going up North as much as I liked and then the Covid-19 stopped it dead in its tracks. I continue to call regularly to several dear Brothers/Friends up North and kept in touch. I remembered how they would Always treat us with such graciousness and extensive hospitality. I even whittled their Peace Arch, in which WB Bruce and I presented to them and they proudly displayed it at Every meeting!

On July 7, 1999, I Affiliated with Steilacoom Lodge #2 and then Demitted from Defiance Lodge #22 in November 19, 2003.

-continues

Then I Affiliated with Cedar Lodge #104 on August 4, 2004 and immediately become a life member. Shortly thereafter, Evergreen Lodge #68 consolidated with Cedar Lodge on November 1, 2004 and became Fern Hill Lodge #80 and, also, became a Rainbow Dad there from 2004 to 2016 and on their Assembly Board many times.

I visited a lot of lodges during my time as a Mason and enjoyed and but was impressed with a couple that I wanted to be a part. Corinthian Lodge # 38 was the first. I attended regularly and was made an Honorary member and then I became a Plural Member on February 15, 2018. They then Permanently Waived my dues on December 19, 2019!! I became a Rainbow Dad from 2007 to 2017, and, again on the Assembly Board several times. Fairweather Lodge #82 also impressed me and I attended regular, later being honored as an Honorary Member then petitioned for Plural Membership on July 10, 2018 and became an Affiliated Member on August 14, 2018.

I was Worshipful Master a total of three times. As Worshipful Master in Defiance, I was able to accomplish only three of the several things I had planned in my year. I learned quickly that one is able to successfully achieve one to maybe three things as planned. Now, I know that to do one thing successfully and lasting is the best to strive for. As for when I was Worshipful Master of Lincoln Park Lodge #80, it was a challenge for if you don't have support of your Officers, it is almost too much to bear and disheartening. Nevertheless, I persisted.

Here are the official offices I held thus far in my Masonic career:

- At William P. Daugherty/Tacoma Lodge #22 then Defiance Lodge #22-Senior Deacon January 1, 1994 – December 31, 1994, Junior Warden January 1, 1995 – December 31, 1994, Junior Warden January 1, 1998 – December 31, 1998, Senior Warden January 1, 1999 – December 31, 1999, Worshipful Master January 1, 2000 – December 31, 2000;

- At Steilacoom Lodge #2-Chaplain January 1, 2000 – December 31, 2000, Secretary 2003, Chaplain December 27, 2014 – December 27, 2016;
- At Fern Hill Lodge #80 Marshall January 1, 2003 – December 31, 2003, Senior Deacon May 19, 2010 – November 27, 2010, Junior Warden November 27, 2010 – November 26, 2011, Senior Warden November 26, 2011 – November 24, 2012, Worshipful Master November 24, 2012 – November 23, 2013, Junior Warden November 23, 2013 – November 27, 2014, Senior Warden November 27, 2014 – November 28, 2015, Worshipful Master November 28, 2015 – November 26, 2016;
- At Fairweather Lodge #82-Chaplain December 16, 2016 – December 2, 2017, Junior Deacon November 18, 2018 – November 16, 2019, Senior Deacon November 23, 2019 – November 20, 2021; at Corinthian Lodge #38-Chaplain January 11, 2020.
- Grand Lodges Offices/Committees held- Senior Grand Steward June 6, 2016 – June 10 2017, Credentials June 13, 2020 – September 9, 2020.
- Concordant Bodies-Cedar Order of Eastern Star-1996 – 1998; Lincoln Court Amaranth-November 16, 2000 – 2009 (Warder and Prelate)
- President of LOMA for Districts #14 and #15-2003 – 2006
- Awards: Hiram Award-February 11, 2014 – Lincoln Park Lodge #80, November 18, 2015 – Steilacoom Lodge #2; Service Award 10yrs. June 24, 2016 –
- Steilacoom #2, Service Award 25 yrs. September 30, 2017 –
- Lincoln Park Lodge #80; Grand Master Award April, 13, 2019 by MWB James H. Kendall; International Order for Rainbow Girls- Grand Cross June 17, 2017.

Now I am sure you are asking why so much and How in The World Did You Find The TIME?!?

-continues

It was because I discovered something I found enlightening, very satisfying, with community involvement, a way to improve myself morally, and the sheer delight to dwell together with BROTHERS in unity that would become FRIENDS!!!

And if one wants to be involved with something like that, you must MAKE the time.

Always remembering Faith, Family, and Employment come first.

I found it was amazing that I could do this, in spite of that.

It takes a sincere desire for dedication. True, I have made some sacrifices and some I would have handled differently, but NO REGRETS.

For what I have gained is priceless and presses me to continue. It is a lifelong journey full of memorable treasures of Friendship and Brotherly Love. Freemasonry is in my heart. And this is Me!

Fraternally submitted,
WB Lee Randall Webb II



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FRIENDS!!!*



News of Masonry Around the Country



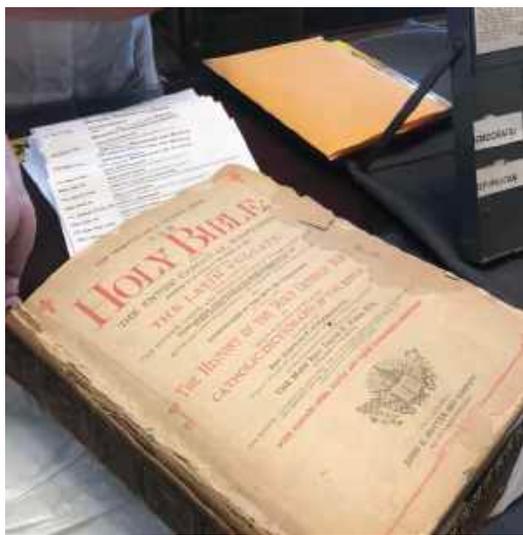
“This is the way we have always done it”: Phoenix Scottish Rite audit leads to 18-month police investigation

In the Phoenix Scottish Rite’s federal tax returns in 2016 and 2017, the chapter claimed some of its members and employees helped themselves to its assets. Without apparent board oversight the chapter’s net assets plummeted from \$9.2 million in 2010 to \$5.3 million by 2016. [Click here](#) to read more in the Arizona Republic newspaper.



Flat Earthers Conspiracy Against Masonry

The Vancouver man who was arrested for arson fires at three Masonic Lodges in British Columbia is not the first conspiracy theorist to try to damage Freemasonry. A group known as the “Flat Earthers” has had it in for our fraternity. According to an article in [The Daily Beast](#), Mark Sargent, a prominent flat earther who does not advocate arson says Freemasons had attracted some flat earthers’ attention because the group had the reputation of being a secret society, while still maintaining a public presence.



Biden family Bible used during his oath is historically Roman Catholic, not connected to Illuminati or Freemasons as posts claim

In the days following U.S. President Joe Biden’s inauguration on Jan. 20, posts on social media claimed that the Bible he used during his swearing-in ceremony is connected to the Masonic Order or the Illuminati, according to the [Reuters News Service](#). A family heirloom from the late 19th century, Biden’s Bible is a Douay-Rheims edition, used by English-speaking Roman Catholics around the world. Claims of Masonic or Illuminati links to this Bible edition are baseless and, similarly to QAnon, relate to the classic conspiracy theory that a secret organization of elites is seeking to establish a new world order.

The Biden Family Bible is not related to Masonry

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Masonic artifacts were found in a time capsule at a statue/monument of Confederate General Robert E. Lee in Virginia. Some of the artifacts include a wood Masonic symbol and a booklet called the *1886 Annual Convocation of the Grand Chapter of the State of Virginia*. You can read about it on National Public Radio's [website](#).

Jewish Masons Adapt to Keep Fraternity Alive. Shlomo Bar-Ayal, an Orthodox Jew and former master at the James W. Husted-Fiat Lux Lodge in Manhattan, and Sean Rothberg, a Mason from the Richardson Masonic Lodge #1214 in Dallas created respective Facebook groups for Jewish Masons. Details in the [Jewish Exponent](#) newsletter in Philadelphia.

The original home of the civil-rights group led by Martin Luther King Jr. is getting a \$10.2 million facelift, thanks to the Prince Hall Masonic Lodge in Atlanta. Details in the [Atlanta Constitution-Journal](#).

A Black Man Killed by a White Mob in 1898 Finally Receives a Masonic Funeral. The story is in the [New York Times](#).

B.C. arsonist who believed Freemasons were using 'mind control' sentenced to 40 months in prison. The story is on the [CTV News website](#).

-more news on next page



Virginia conservators unpack a box left in the pedestal at the former site of a statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee, in Richmond, Va.



Freemasonry began admitting Jews as members in the mid-eighteenth century, first in England and then later in the Netherlands, France, Germany, and other countries.



Freemasons from the Grand Lodge of South Carolina took soil collected in honor of Joshua Halsey to his grave site in Wilmington, N.C. Mr. Halsey was buried in an unmarked grave in 1898 after he was shot 14 times by a mob.



Charred remains of the Masonic Temple in Lynn Valley, British Columbia

BREAKING NEWS

OH BLOODY HELL, NOW WHAT ?

History Channel Tells How to Join Illuminati

Who were the Illuminati, and do they really control the world? Here's what we know about one of history's most alluring secret societies, including how you became a member. [Click here](#) to read more.

Freemasons make no secret of need for younger members

Set in their ways for 300 years, the Freemasons are opening a lodge aimed at young people to combat a slump in membership. [Click here](#) to read more in The Times of London.

Life-Changing Benefits Of Becoming A Freemason

Having that sense of togetherness and community is vital when you are pushing and striving to be the best you can be, getting to know other Freemasons, possibly from locations all over the country, or all over the world. The sense of community and feeling of community is something that cannot be underestimated and is just one of the [benefits of being a Freemason](#) – meeting others and getting to know new people will open your eyes and give you the chance to feel that community relationship in real life and person. Being part of a community will help you improve yourself and help you to help others too. [Read more](#) on a California radio station's website.

Letter From France

Notes about the letter "G" in French and American Freemasonry and a discussion on Sumerians as forerunners of Masonic legends. Click [here](#) to read more.

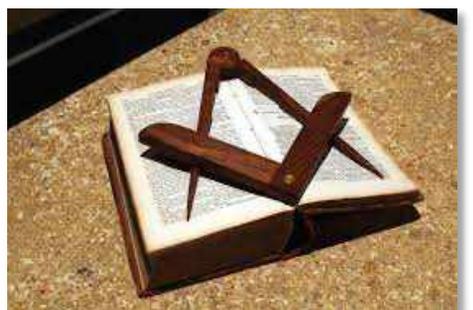
-more news continues



The Illuminati is a name given to several groups, both real and fictitious. Historically, the name usually refers to the Bavarian Illuminati, an Enlightenment-era secret society founded on 1 May 1776 in Bavaria, today part of Germany



Amandeep Bansel, 21, said the Freemasons had filled an "existential gap" that he felt as a student



NEWS



Exterior of the Masonic Temple (the Springer-Van Braemer) building, 309 West Cordova St., in Vancouver in 1888. PNG

Freemasonry in British Columbia

The first B.C. Masonic lodge opened in Victoria in 1860, when Vancouver Island was a separate colony from the mainland. By the time B.C. joined Confederation in 1871, there were nine lodges in the province, including New Westminster, Nanaimo, Barkerville and Hastings, the tiny settlement that evolved into the City of Vancouver in 1886. [Read more here at the Vancouver Sun.](#)



Chehalis Masonic Temple at 123 W. Main St. is sold

Lewis County Buys Chehalis Masonic Temple

With \$435,000, Lewis County has purchased the Masonic Temple in Chehalis, located at 123 W Main St., along with its parking lot across the street. But the building will likely be surplused and put back on the market, according to Facilities Manager Doug Carey. Details in [The Chronicle.](#)



The Mill Creek Lodge moves to Mountlake Terrace.

Mill Creek Masonic Lodge moves to Mountlake Terrace

The Freemasons of Mill Creek Lodge No. 243 have moved to the Nile Shrine Center at 6601 244th St. S.W. in Mountlake Terrace, relocating from their previous meeting place at the Edmonds Masonic Center on Dayton Street. The lodge will continue to meet on the third Tuesday of each month. [Click here](#) to read more in "My Edmonds News."

-one more news item on next page





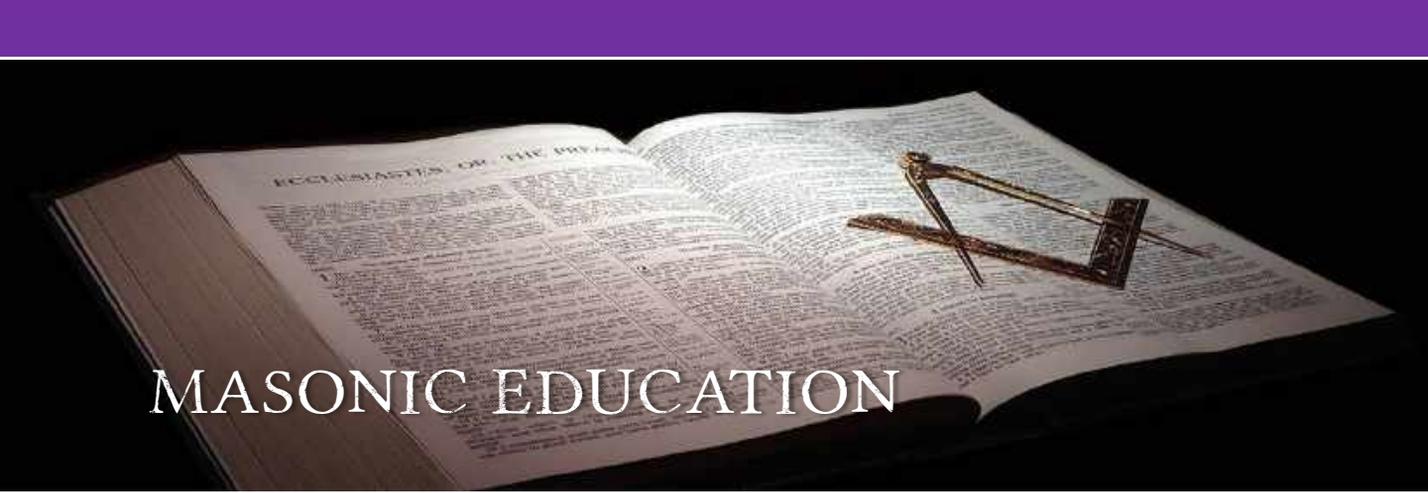
HAPPY NEW YEAR 2022



And finally in the news...

Research has uncovered a Masonic connection to why revelers around the world link arms when they sing Auld Lang Syne at the new year. You can read all about it in the Guardian newspaper by [clicking this link](#).

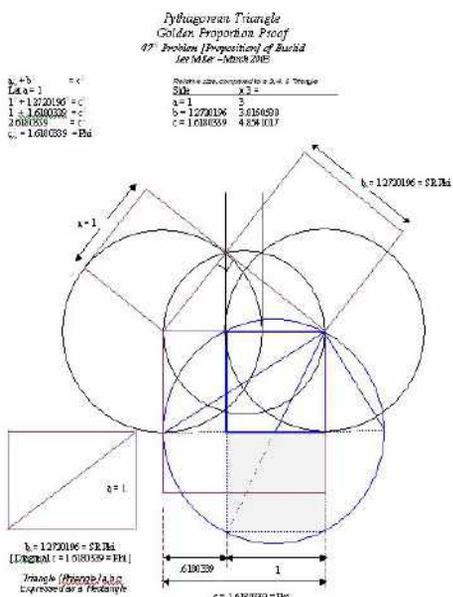




MASONIC EDUCATION

The 47th Problem of Euclid - Why?

WB Brian C. Thomas



The 47th Problem of Euclid is a mathematical ratio that allows a Master Mason to square his square when it is out of square.

In the old days, old wooden carpenter squares had one longer leg because they were created using the 3: 4: 5 ratio from the 47th problem of Euclid.

But carpenters of today use squares that have equal legs.

I have been puzzled by many things, not the least of which is; “Why does Freemasonry use the 47th Problem of Euclid – more commonly known as the Pythagorean Theorem – with such reverence and importance?” Having been in Freemasonry for over 50 years I have more questions than answers but this singular notion has captured my attention. Perhaps, I have recently stumbled upon an explanation. First some background.

Geometry

“Geometry, the first and noblest of sciences, is the basis upon which the superstructure of Freemasonry is erected” Most Masons, having taken geometry in High School, would rather forget that experience. Yet Geometry was the keystone of knowledge in the ancient world. Geometry (Geo =earth, metry= measurement) defined most of the intellectual tools needed to build a structure, define a field, travel to a distant location, contemplate the heavens and define the world.

Recall, the Fellowcraft degree teaches us that Geometry allows us to trace nature and discover the power, wisdom and goodness of the Great Architect of the Universe. An attentive Mason leaves the degree with a notion that through Geometry he will come to better know the Deity through nature. Yet in the Master Mason degree the only mention of Geometry is the 47th Proposition of Euclid with the notion that it merely teaches us to love art and science.

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Pythagorean Theorem

Pythagoras (580 - 490 BCE), a philosopher, mathematician, teacher and mystic, preceded Euclid in describing that, given any right triangle, the sum of the squares of the sides equals the square of the hypotenuse, and he, in turn, received that knowledge from the Egyptians who used ropes knotted in segments to redefine property lines and corners after the Nile River flooded each year. But the rule was not unique to Egypt. It was known by the Sumerians, Celts, and Chinese as well.

Pythagoras established a mystery school. Pythagoras and his students believed that the universe is ordered according to laws and mathematics of the Deity. The main focus of Pythagorean thought was ethics; reality is mathematical, the soul is divine and certain symbols possess mystical significance. Keep that in mind as we journey on.

“Greatest among the rules laid down by the Supreme Architect of the Universe, in His great book of nature, is this of the 47th problem...”. “With it he reduces the chaos of ignorance to the law and order of intelligent appreciation of the cosmos. With it he instructs his fellow-Masons that God is always geometrizing and that the great book of Nature is to be read through a square.”

The question remains, “Why did this commonly known geometrical rule become distorted as to its origin and used so ubiquitously in Freemasonry?” Why does Freemasonry attribute the theorem to Euclid rather than Pythagoras? Is the absurdity of describing Pythagoras as exclaiming “Eureka”, an obvious fiction,

(Archimedes exclaimed “Eureka” after having discovered that he could determine the volume of any object by the displacement of water) used as a pointer to say that there is a deeper meaning here? How does that deeper meaning connect to geometry?

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How the 47th Problem of Euclid is used to Create a Perfect Square

It is important to know how to create a perfect square that has no errors. The 47th Problem of Euclid is used for this. This is something that is very important to know for masons and other people involved in building construction. It has been important right from the time of the rope fasteners or rope stretchers of ancient Egypt who were also known as the Harpedonaptae.

The Harpedonaptae were skilled architects that were often called upon to lay out building foundation lines. They were well-skilled. They used mathematical calculations as well as astronomy to form perfect squares for each building.

There is a historical document that was written in leather in 2000 BC that can be found in the Berlin museum. The historic document talks about how these rope stretchers/rope fasteners or Harpedonaptae carried out their work.

In those days, the cornerstone of a building was usually at the Northeast corner of the building. To work out the perfect Northeast corner of the building, the Harpedonaptae observed the stars and the sun and used this to lay out the North and South lines. The North Star called Polaris was specifically observed. At that time, it was believed that the North Star was fixed in the sky.

After they had laid out a perfect North and South line, they then used the square to create perfect East and West lines for the foundation of buildings.

The 47th problem of Euclid was used to establish the true East and West lines so the Harpedonaptae could find a perfect right angle to the North and South line that had been established by observing the stars.



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Euclid's Contribution

Euclid (300 BCE) taught in Alexandria, Egypt and was a student of the great Plato. He wrote 13 books, collectively called "The Elements" attempting to logically prove all of the mathematical and geometric constructs of the day. He was so successful that "Euclidean Geometry" was one of the cornerstones of a classic liberal education for over 2000 years. The Geometry you learned in High School and College consisted of the proofs contained in "The Elements".

Euclidean Geometry is really pure logic. Starting from 10 unquestionable axioms, Euclid built a series of proofs based on theorems and derivations.

His first book contained the proof of the Pythagorean Theorem which he calls the 47th Proposition. The actual proof is not as important as the way he approached it. Euclid was one of the first to apply pure logic to both practical and abstract notions, which, in turn, was the basis for the scientific method developed in the Enlightenment. Parenthetically, President James Garfield, a Mason, offered a proof of the Pythagorean Theorem using the point in a circle bounded by two tangent parallel lines. Does that sound familiar?

The 47th Proposition in Masonry

This is all well and good, but Euclid proved many theorems. Why is the 47th Proposition more important than the all the others unmentioned propositions?

Reverend Anderson felt the 47th Proposition so important that he included an illustration of it on the front cover of his "Constitutions," the code of Freemasonry.

His "Constitutions" states; "The Greater Pythagoras, provided the author of the 47th Proposition of Euclid's first Book; which, if duly observed, is the Foundation of all Masonry, sacred, civil, military." The 47th Proposition is the "Foundation of all Masonry!"

As we progress through the years the Preston-Webb Lectures muddle the issue by saying that; "This discovery (47th Proposition) was accepted by our ancient brethren as a key to the nature of the Divine Being. It inspires Masons to be lovers of the arts and sciences." So, we learn in the Master Mason degree that the ancients thought the Proposition was a "key to the divine nature" but we now feel it only teaches us to be a lover of art and science. I side with the ancients.

Perhaps, Albert Pike put it best in when he said; "If the great symbol of Pythagoras, known as the 47th Problem of Euclid, means only... that Masons are great lovers of the Arts and Sciences in general, it should at once disappear from the charts or tracing-boards of our Lodges; for the explanation explains nothing, and makes the symbol no symbol at all of anything." Yet he hints at the real meaning in his book on the symbolism of the 32nd^o mentioning the name of the philosopher, Benedictus Spinoza – more on him later.

Age of Enlightenment

We will now take a leap from 300 BCE to the Enlightenment in Europe which occurred in the mid and late 17th century in an attempt to explain why the 47th Proposition of Euclid became so revered by intellectuals and eventually Freemasons.

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The Age of Enlightenment, sometimes referred to as the Age of Reason, describes a period in the mid to late 1600s where the culture dramatically changed from one of superstition, intolerance, hierarchy and authoritarianism to reason, tolerance and individualism.

Recall that for over 1200 years the church was dictatorial and pedantic. The church controlled culture, society, politics and life in general. Any deviation could be punished by physical and/or social punishment. The Catholic Church declared that no one could reach heaven without the blessing of the church hierarchy. The church controlled the government in most European countries and kingdoms.

Kings and Potentates warred and plundered. Life for most was controlled and fatalistic. Yet a few hardy intellectual souls looked to the East and found more freedom of thought and action. The Orient held knowledge that was forbidden in the West because it was not in accord with scripture. Though books were burned, and intellectuals were killed a determined underground culture existed.

The oral tradition persisted because books were scarce, and education tightly controlled. Strangely, many monasteries possessed books and manuscripts with this secret knowledge unknown to the church hierarchy. New ideas were passed orally and in secret among the intellectual class so that they did not literally lose their heads.

The writings of Francis Bacon (1562-1626), Johnathan Kepler (1571-1630) Rene Descartes (1596-1650), Baruch (Benedictus) Spinoza (1632-1677), John Locke (1632-1704), Voltaire (1694-1778) and others sparked a desire for freedom of action and thought, challenging the church and stirring the people.

At first slowly and later at a furious pace new ideas were dispersed and accepted. Reason and freedom became an accepted goal to the dismay of the church and princes.

Enlightenment thinkers did not necessarily agree on methods but there was a consensus as to results. Immanuel Kant summed it up in his 1784 essay "What is Enlightenment" by describing it as, "Enlightenment is man's emergence from self-incurred immaturity." The Enlightenment was egalitarian, addressed the common concern and was founded on reason.

Many countries and kingdoms sought to suppress Enlightenment thought but these heretical ideas circulated freely in secret organizations and venues until the early 1700s when the threat of harm from the church and government authorities receded.

The predominate means of education was "associationism", which is just another word for memorization. Books were in short supply and many were censored, yet a thriving underground allowed those that did exist to circulate widely. Natural history was the vogue. Revealed Deity gave way to experienced Deity. The concept of nature demonstrating God's work became vogue and the study of nature exploded.

Dorinda Outram says, "Enlightenment was a desire for human affairs to be guided by rationality rather than by faith, superstition, or revelation; a belief in the power of human reason to change society and liberate the individual from the restraints of custom or arbitrary authority; all backed up by a world view increasingly validated by science rather than religion or tradition."

This was the environment that spawned Freemasonry and from which Masonry took its values of an oral tradition, secrecy, direct interaction with Deity, a culture of trust and respect and egalitarianism. The German historian Reinhart Koselleck claimed that, "On the Continent there were two social structures that left a decisive imprint on the Age of Enlightenment: the Republic of Letters and the Masonic lodges.

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Spinoza

It's difficult to say if 16th and 17th century philosophers spawned the Enlightenment or if the Enlightenment generated many great philosophers. Either way, the Enlightenment and the philosophers who lived and wrote in it dramatically changed the world. Two eminent philosophers deserve the attention of Freemasons; Rene Descartes and Benedictus Spinoza. Both used Euclidian based proofs to demonstrate their concepts. Just as Euclid started from several self-evident axioms and definitions to create propositions that led to geometric proofs, Descartes and Spinoza used the exact same method to demonstrate and justify their concepts of God, spirituality, being and thinking.

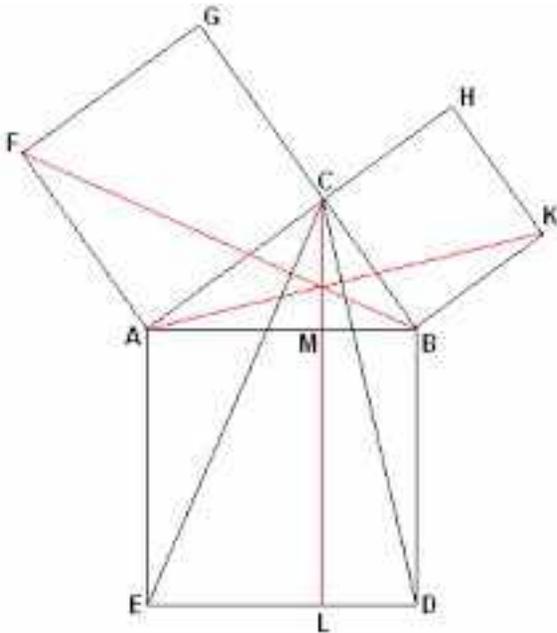
Descartes preceded Spinoza and it is reasonable to believe influenced him though Spinoza disagreed with Descartes on several important concepts of God's nature and the interaction of the human mind and body. Spinoza's Jewish family fled Portugal to avoid the Inquisition and settled in Holland, the most intellectually tolerant of all European countries. Spinoza's early writings got him excommunicated by the Jewish community. He was reduced to wandering about as an itinerant lens grinder. While doing so he worked on his opus, *Ethica Ordine Geometric Demonstrata* or "Ethics, Demonstrated in Geometrical Order" which was published after his death and is now known as just "Ethics."

Ethics is ingenious not only by what it says but how it says it. Spinoza mimics Euclid in his systematic proof that God is the universe, the single substance in which all natural phenomena exists. Such a concept of God could be universally accepted in all religions. He is clear that we can know God without intercession of the church and that a spark of the divine is within us to be discovered. These notions were horrifying to Jewish, Protestant and Catholic theologians because such a God would not be an anthropomorphic father figure known only through priests or rabbis. Every person could find God in nature because God is nature. He uses the word "nature" in a broader and deeper sense than we use it today.

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The problem above is the 47th Problem of Euclid. It is an invention by an ancient Greek geometer, Pythagoras, who worked for many years to devise a method of finding the length of the hypotenuse of a right angle triangle. Pythagoras is credited with having first proved the rule successfully applied to the problem.



Be reminded that Freemasonry is based on a belief in a Supreme Being and is built on the foundation of Geometry. Masons use symbols as pointers and reminders in our lifelong journey. We are taught that Geometry is the first and noblest of sciences and is the basis upon which the superstructure of Freemasonry is erected.

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So, Spinoza and Euclid, though certainly not contemporaries, used the same exact method of arriving at their conclusion. Euclid rose on the shoulders of Pythagoras and Spinoza rose on the shoulders of Descartes, but both proved the theories of their mentor.

Ethics is not an easy read. A student would have to slog through over 250 lemmas, propositions and corollaries but the result is astounding, a definitive proof that God exists and is the universe. Because God exists and is the universe the ethical laws of God are fixed and unyielding throughout the cosmos.

Why should Masons care?

Be reminded that Freemasonry is based on a belief in a Supreme Being and is built on the foundation of Geometry. Masons use symbols as pointers and reminders in our lifelong journey. We are taught that Geometry is the first and noblest of sciences and is the basis upon which the superstructure of Freemasonry is erected. In a careful reading of the Fellowcraft "Geometry Lecture" will yield many of the important points proven in Spinoza's *Ethics*. Albert Pike said "...hence it follows, that the human mind is a part of the infinite intellect of God..." In fact, Pike mentions Spinoza several times in his writings.

I was flummoxed by all this Masonic talk about Geometry, Pythagoras, and the 47th Problem (Proposition) of Euclid until I stumbled over a short 2006 paper by Bro. Jeff Peace in a blog called The Burning Taper. While Bro. Jeff merely speculated on the connection between the 47th Proposition of Euclid, Spinoza and Freemasonry it was enough to get my attention and cause me to follow his lead. The connection between the 47th Proposition and Spinoza is also mentioned in a paper by Theron Dunn on beaconofmasoniclight.blogspot.com.

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The Lesson

Perhaps the notion that Geometry and the 47th Problem of Euclid, as the foundation of Masonry, is a pointer to something else because that "something else" was heresy during the Enlightenment. Perhaps, just perhaps, early Masons read, understood and agreed with Spinoza's concept of God and our relation to him. Perhaps, just perhaps, the 47th Problem of Euclid is pointing to a specific Proposition in Spinoza's *Ethics* that describes an important, or maybe the most important, concept of Freemasonry.

I submit to you Benedictus Spinoza's 47th Proposition:

Prop. XLVII "The human mind has an adequate knowledge of the eternal and infinite essence of God"

I propose that the 47th Proposition of Euclid as used in Freemasonry points to the 47th Proposition of Spinoza which, in turn describes the root of our journey in Masonry; to discover within ourselves the eternal and infinite essence of God.

WB Brian C Thomas
 Myrtle Lodge #108 – WA
 Seattle Valley, Scottish Rite, 33°
 SRICF VIII°



THE ELEMENTS
 OF GEOMETRIE
 of the most aunci-
 ent Philosopher
 EVCLIDE

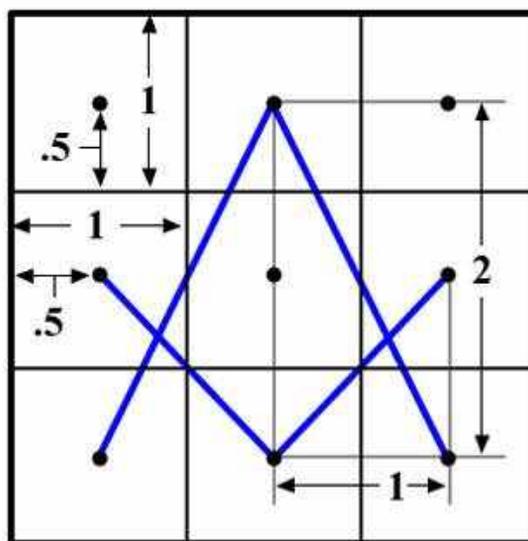


Figure 3- The line drawing of the Square and Compasses further labeled to show typical physical dimensions of both components of the symbol. Note that as described in the text, each cell in the matrix has a dimension of unity and all end points of line segments are placed in the exact center of each cell.

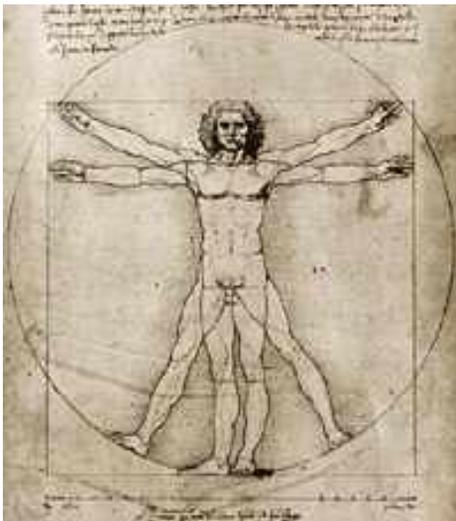
The 47th Problem of Euclid

A Symbol of Geometry; of exact science. Passed over with but a few words of ritual, it is Masonically most interesting.

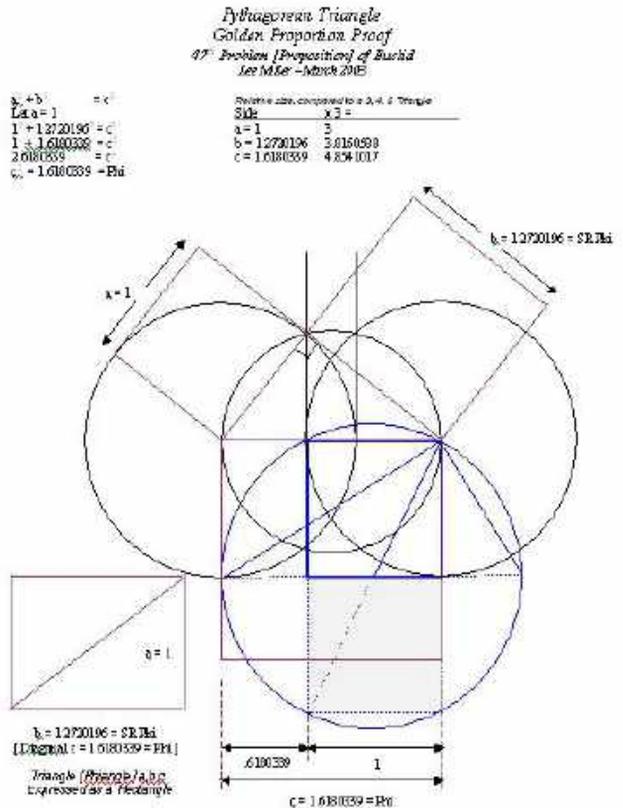
It appears on the frontispiece of Anderson's Constitutions, published in 1723; Street states it is the earliest example of a printed symbol of Freemasonry.

It was apparently known to ancient mathematicians long before Pythagoras (Masonically credited as its discoverer) or Euclid, who made the properties of a right angled triangle his forty-seventh problem. It is the root of all mathematics used to determine an unknown from two knowns.

In 2003, R.'W.'. Lee Miller, a noted author and freemason, created a proof the the 47th Problem incorporating the concept of the Divine Proportion, or "Golden Section".



In the famous diagram above, drawn by Leonardo DaVinci, the human form is broken into several different examples of the Divine Proportion, and also fits perfectly within a square and circle. (Interestingly enough, this diagram was used on the original Voyager I spacecraft to exemplify human form and proportion.



As you can see in the diagram above, the bottom square is bisected by the line at the hypotenuse- creating an exact golden section. This section is "1.618" on one length, and "1" on the other. The neat thing about this is that the 1:1.618 ratio is known as universally pleasing, a harmonious proportion, golden or Divine in nature. In fact, it appears in nature regularly, showing up in the webbed structure of leaves, heights of tree structures, lengths and facial proportions in animal forms, sea shells (The Nautilus), classical art composition (Rembrandt, Titian and other old masters), musical scale structure and notation, and even the architecture of the Pyramids. The Divine Proportion also shows a perceived harmony of our own human anatomy:



LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES BEYOND STEILACOOM LODGE

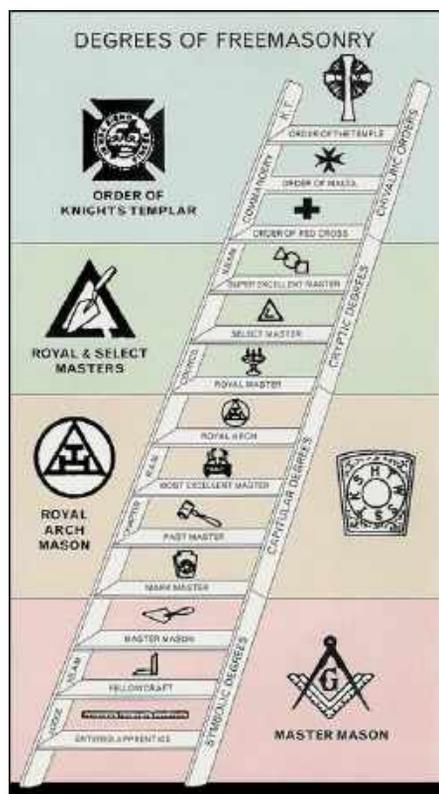


This is the first part of a multi-series of reports over the course of 2022 on Masonic educational experiences and opportunities available to Master Masons beyond what we have here at Steilacoom Lodge.

The York Rite

In Part 1, we'll look at the York Rite. The York Rite, also known as the American Rite, has several chapters that meet here at Steilacoom. It's sometimes known as the American Rite, since it's not generally practiced outside of the U.S.

It is a series of degrees as follows (Lodge Numbers added):



Royal Arch Masons – Tacoma #4

- Mark Masters
- Past Masters
- Most Excellent Masters
- Royal Arch

Council of Cryptic Masons – Tacoma Council #1

- Royal Master
- Select Master
- Super Excellent Master

Knights Templar – Ivanhoe Commandery #4 KT

- The Illustrious Order of the Red Cross
- The Passing Order of St. Paul (or the Mediterranean Pass)
- The Order of the Knights of Malta (or simply Order of Malta)
- The Order of the Temple

Each of these levels are overseen by its own organization. The York Rite specifically is a collection of separate Masonic Bodies and associated Degrees that would otherwise operate independently.

The York Rite is one of the appendant bodies of Freemasonry that a Master Mason may join to further his knowledge of Masonry. Each of the degrees builds on the knowledge of previous degrees. For example, the Mark Master degree builds on what we learn in Lodge as Master Masons.



Progressive Education Coming here in 2022

It is a progressive process that will be introduced this year at a York Rite Festival to be held here at Steilacoom Lodge. During the festival, candidates from across the state will come here to watch, learn and participate in the basics and then go back to their respective organizations to practice what they will learn here. It is an intense program and candidates will be supported by members in their local chapters to further their education in the ways of the Rite. Master Masons here at Steilacoom can obtain petitions from **James Nero, Michael Smitson, Alan Spreen** or **Ken Woo** to participate in the 2022 Festival. (Specific date is still pending as of this writing)

Royal Arch Masonry

York Rite Masonry, which takes its name from the old English city of York, dates back 1744 in the U.K., has been described as the oldest and purest of the Rites.

Like other forms of Masonry, the York Rite is not a religion. Nevertheless, it does develop Biblical themes in addition to themes based on the Medieval Crusades.



Triple Tau is originally the coming together of a T and a H, forming , meaning Templum. Hierosolyma, or the Temple of Jerusalem. Christians interpreted the symbol as "Holiness. supporting Trinity". Royal Arch records dating from 1767 show this symbol.

The symbolism of the Royal Arch picks up where the Symbolic (Steilacoom) Lodge leaves off. The symbolism of the Blue Lodge degrees emphasizes the building of King Solomon's temple. Royal Arch Masonry continues in this vein by emphasizing symbols and allegories of the Second Temple, the Ark of the Covenant, further symbolism of Solomon's temple completed, and the Lost Word (also called the Master's Word) — which is given to the Royal Arch Mason.

Within York Rite Masonry, the Royal Arch Degree is described as the Master Mason's Degree completed. This is due to the fact that up until 1767, the Master Mason Degree of the Blue Lodge contained the secrets of the Royal Arch. Nowadays, these same secrets form a part of the teachings of the Royal Arch.

In England, the Royal Arch Mason degree is automatically included in the Master Mason's Degree.

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SYMBOLS OF THE YORK RITE

*The Masonic Keystone, which is the Masonic mark of an Ancient Grand Master.
HTWSSTKS stands for "Hiram The Widow's Son
Sent To King Solomon."*



Mark Master

Ancient Cryptic Masonry centers on the story of the preservation, loss, and recovery of the Word. The Word represents man's search for life's purpose and the nature of God. Symbolic Freemasonry, as in the Lodge, teaches of the loss of the Word and hope for its recovery. The broken triangle symbolizes the imperfection, loss and unhappy dissolution caused by the untimely death of one of the Illustrious three.



Cryptic Masonry

*A cross and crown laid upon a cross pattée inscribed with "In Hoc Signo
Vinces" resting upon downward pointing
swords in saltire is often used to represent
the Knights Templar. (The various symbols
used allude to the orders of the body,
though the cross and crown is often used
alone as well.)*



Knights Templar



In 1813, the Mother Grand Lodge of England stated in no uncertain terms: “Ancient Craft Masonry consists of three degrees and no more, namely, those of the Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason including the Holy Royal Arch.” It is a natural progression of the Freemasonry’s primary theme.

No other degree has been officially recognized by the Mother Grand Lodge — this landmark remains to this day.

No additional Rites and Degrees can be bestowed upon a Master Mason until he has received the Royal Arch Degree.

This is perfectly logical, because a man is not a Master Mason until he receives the Master’s Word. This is something a Mason can only receive in the Royal Arch.

The Council Degrees (Cryptic Masons)

Within Capitular Masonry are contained the essentials of symbolism, allegory, and philosophy that a Master Mason requires in order to understand those teachings which have only been partially given to him in the Blue Lodge.

In architectural symbolism, the capstone is the crowning stone of an entire structure or wall. It is for this reason that Royal Arch Masonry is called “the Capstone of Ancient Craft Masonry” or the Capitular Rite.

After the degrees of Royal Arch Masonry, the second set of degrees within York Rite Masonry encompasses the degrees of the Council of Royal and Select Masters. These degrees expound upon the Royal Arch degree and, to a lesser extent, the Master Mason degree.

They are often said to be among Masonry’s most beautiful and impressive ceremonies, complete one’s education in Ancient Craft Masonry.

The degrees of the Council comprise what is called Cryptic Masonry or the Cryptic Rite because a crypt or underground room figures prominently in the degrees. The symbolic foundation of these rites is the subterranean Vault constructed by King Solomon as a stockpile for certain secret knowledge which was guarded by a select priesthood.

Knights Templar

The completion of the York Rite Bodies is the Commandery of Knights Templar—the degrees of which comprise what is known as Chivalric Masonry because they are based upon the Chivalric Orders of knighthood that fought to protect Christian pilgrims in the Holy Land during the Middle Ages.

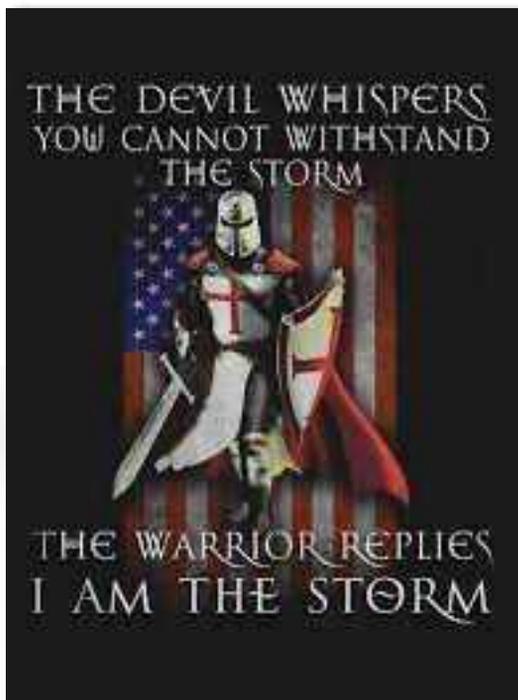
Unlike other Masonic bodies which only require a belief in a Supreme Being regardless of religion, membership in Knights Templar is open only to Royal Arch Masons who promise to defend the Christian faith.

Despite the name, the Masonic Knights Templar is not considered to be any kind of lineal descendant from those historical orders of knighthood.

The Knights Templar contains three degrees called Orders which elucidate a Christian interpretation of Freemasonry:

- The Illustrious Order of the Red Cross illustrates the preparations for building a second Temple.
- The Order of the Knights of Malta (or simply Order of Malta) explains the history of the Knights of Malta, relates the story of Paul’s arrival on the island of Malta. It is a Christian Order that seeks to perpetuate ideals of love and mercy.
- The Order of the Temple. The Order of Malta and the Order of the Temple have a Christian orientation and their teachings are based upon the crusades of the original Knights Templar.

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The Knights Templar is based upon the practice of the Christian virtues, moral values, and spiritual lessons. Members are urged to live their lives as Christian Knights.

The York Rite is historically the oldest and purest of the appendant Rites.

York Rite Freemasonry will help complement your Masonic knowledge and the teachings that are mentioned as landmarks of the Master Mason.



The Orders of Commandery

<p>Order of the Red Cross</p> <p>Red Cross Masonry has long been seen as a prerequisite for the chivalric degrees, and is found in both the York & Scottish Rites with its full form within Knight Masonry. In Commandery we refer to it as the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross, and through it we follow Zerubbabel on his journey to rebuild the temple, and communicate the important lesson of truth.</p>	<p>Order of Malta</p> <p>Finding its roots in the ritual of the ancient Knights Hospitaller, one of few chivalric orders that still exist in modern times, the Order of Malta with the Degree of Knight of St. Paul or Mediterranean Pass found within it introduces us to the history of this order and we learn why modern Knights Templar still venerate it today.</p>	<p>Order of the Temple</p> <p>Within this body we find the pinnacle of Christian knighthood, and are challenged to embody and promote Christian virtues. Through it we are sent on a personal journey that brings us face to face with the martyrdom of Jesus Christ and our own mortality. Through this we learn that though our days are few the grave has been overcome, and our redeemer lives.</p>
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Much to my regret, I am unable to make the Wednesday Masonic discussion groups that occur at the Grand Lodge Library space in University Place. I'd love to go and would love to share my passion for the exoteric and esoteric work surrounding Freemasonry, but my vocational cable tow prevents it.

The discussion group recently entertained a paper regarding the link between the Sumerian civilization (via the Epic of Gilgamesh) to Freemasonry. The Epic of Gilgamesh is one of the earliest pieces of literature known to exist, dating from the Ur III period (2100 BC to 1850 BC). The Epic consists of 11 tablets that chronicle the exploits of the mighty king Gilgamesh of the city-state of Uruk. The story has intrigue, adventure, lust, revenge, sorrow, a quest for redemption, and even advice for how one should live one's life.

Gilgamesh was said to have been an amazing king. The first of the 11 tablets describe him as:

"Supreme over other kings, lordly in appearance, he is the hero, born of Uruk, the goring wild bull. He walks out in front, the leader, and walks at the rear, trusted by his companions. Mighty net, protector of his people, raging flood-wave who destroys even walls of stone!"

He was also oppressive to his people, and may have been a womanizer as the following lines relate:

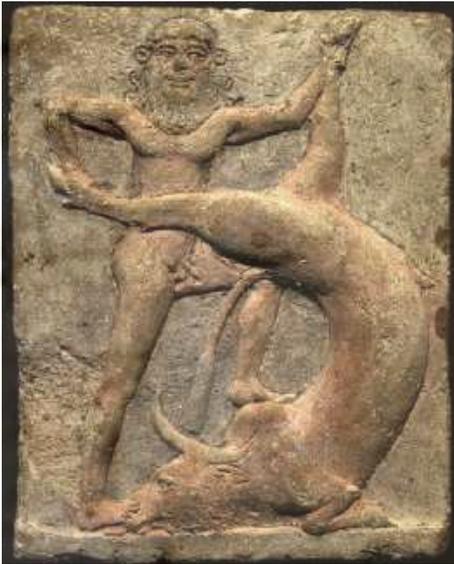
*Gilgamesh does not leave a girl to her mother(?)
The daughter of the warrior, the bride of the young man,
the gods kept hearing their complaints, so
the gods of the heavens implored the Lord of Uruk [Anu]*

-continues



The Epic of Gilgamesh stands out as one of the earliest-known pieces of writings in human history. It is an epic poem which narrates the story of the life of a man named Gilgamesh. Gilgamesh was the King of Uruk, a majestic Sumerian city that is located in present-day Iraq. This historic piece of poetic literature actually predates Homer's earliest writings by 1,500 years. For this reason, many historians have put it as the oldest remaining remnant of an epic in the history of Western literature. Starting off by introducing the powerful character of Gilgamesh, the epic takes the lead characters on an adventure where they learn about life, death, and friendship.





“Forget death and seek life!” With these encouraging words, Gilgamesh, the star of the eponymous 4000-year-old epic poem, coins the world’s first heroic catchphrase.

At the same time, the young king encapsulates the considerations of mortality and humanity that lie at the heart of the world’s most ancient epic.

To neutralize this mighty but ferocious hero, the gods created a counterpart – a wild man named Enkidu who had a heart as courageous and ‘stormy’ as was the King of Uruk’s. Gilgamesh sent a woman to seduce Enkidu and bring him into the city. Eventually, they have a contest of strength, and Gilgamesh and Enkidu end up as best friends.

Together they go to the sacred cedar grove where the gods were said to dwell, and defeat the guardian of that sacred forest, the terrible Humbaba. As they return to Uruk, the goddess Ishtar (goddess of love and war) asks Gilgamesh to marry her. Gilgamesh, remembering how Ishtar treated her last boyfriend, Tammuz (who was carried off to the underworld for having not mourned for Ishtar), refuses.

Spurned, Ishtar goes to her father, Anu (god of the sky), and requests that the Bull of Heaven be set loose upon Uruk to wreak havoc in revenge for her being spurned. She is so infuriated, that she threatens to break down the gateway of the underworld and let the dead out to destroy the living (likely the first known literary threat of a zombie apocalypse!). Anu relents and the Bull of Heaven is set free.

Enkidu and Gilgamesh engage in combat with the bull, with Enkidu grabbing the tail, and Gilgamesh stabbing it between its front shoulders with its sword. They make an offering to one of the gods, Sannasium, but throw a hindquarter of the bull at Ishtar, and further mock her. The gods eventually decide that one of the friends must perish, and Enkidu takes sick and dies.

Bereft by the loss of his best friend, Gilgamesh lavishes honors on the body of his friend, refusing to let him go until after a week, a maggot falls out of Enkidu’s nose. Gilgamesh reflects on his own mortality and sets out on a quest to find the secret to everlasting life by the aid of his own ancestor, Utanapishtim.

-continues



Tablet 9

Over his friend, Enkidu, Gilgamesh cried bitterly, roaming the wilderness. "I am going to die! --am I not like Enkidu?! Deep sadness penetrates my core, I fear death, and now roam the wilderness-- I will set out to the region of Utanapishtim, son of Ubartutu, and will go with utmost dispatch!

During his journey, he meets an innkeeper, Siduri, who helps him find the boatman that will take him to the far away place where Utanapishtim resides. Before departing, she gives him some solid advice –

Gilgamesh, whither are you wandering? Life, which you look for, you will never find. For when the gods created man, they let death be his share, and life withheld in their own hands. Gilgamesh, fill your belly, day and night make merry, let days be full of joy, dance and make music day and night. And wear fresh clothes, and wash your head and bathe. Look at the child that is holding your hand, and let your wife delight in your embrace. These things alone are the concern of men."

Tablet 11 finally finds Gilgamesh at the faraway place where Utanapishtim dwells, and Gilgamesh asks him about his background. He reveals that he dwelt in Shupparak but that the god Ea told him to tear down his house and build a boat, giving him the dimensions of a vast square boat – 10 times 12 cubits in height, width, and length with six decks and seven levels, into which he loaded his possessions and family.

A flood came, and he and his wife floated about during the six days and seven nights of the storm.

The boat grounded itself on a mountain, and he set free a dove, a swallow, and a raven. When the raven did not return, he set loose the animals and sacrificed a sheep.

The gods, summoned by the sweet smell of the sacrifice, arrive on the scene. The chief deity, Enlil, who had set the flood saw that two people had survived, he was initially angry. Upon reflection (and admonition from the other gods about the totality of the destruction brought about by the flood) relented and made Utanapishtim and his wife immortal.

While Gilgamesh cannot have the same immortality that Utanapishtim has achieved, he is told about a plant resembling a box thorn that grows in the primordial deep (the Apsu) that could grant him youth. Gilgamesh obtains the herb, but on the way back to Uruk, he takes a bath at a cool spring and a serpent, attracted by the smell of the herb, slithers up and steals it, leaving its discarded skin behind as a sign of its own regeneration. Gilgamesh's dreams of physical immortality are dashed.

He returns, wiser, to his kingdom and shows the boatman who had accompanied him, the glories of Uruk.

So how does this all relate to the Craft? The parallels to the figure and flood story of Utanapishtim are unmistakable with what we're familiar with from the flood story found in the Book of Genesis.

We must remember that Abram came from Ur, and that the influence of the Mesopotamian mythology likely colored and helped formulate the cultural identity of those who had come from that region. We know that the figure of Noah was, as is well documented in the Allied Masonic Degrees, deeply ingrained in Masonry's pre-Hiramic formation in the early 18th century. The traces of Noah still show themselves in a number of symbols in the blue lodge, such as in the Anchor and the Ark.

If we squint hard enough, we can see the line of descent between traditions that have merged over time, but we should always keep a clear perspective on what the evidence truly shows. If we are diligent and follow the rabbit down the rabbit holes, we may gain the additional lenses of human experience through which we can consider interpretations of our Masonic philosophy.

-continues



Maybe Siduri had it right in her advice to Gilgamesh –

Gilgamesh, fill your belly, day and night make merry, let days be full of joy, dance and make music day and night. And wear fresh clothes and wash your head and bathe. Look at the child that is holding your hand and let your wife delight in your embrace.

These things alone are the concern of men.

That my Brethren, is ancient wisdom.

Happy New Year to you all.



The poem is in two parts. The first part tells the story of a wild man, Enkidu, who the gods have created to stop Gilgamesh from oppressing the people of Uruk. He is presented with a prostitute, who civilizes him, and he goes to Uruk where he challenges the king to a test of strength. He is defeated by Gilgamesh but the two nevertheless become friends. They go on a mission together to slay the Guardian, Humbaba the Terrible, where they cut down a sacred Cedar that he is guarding. After that, they kill the Bull of Heaven. Those actions anger the gods and they sentence Enkidu to death.



Le Cabinet de Réflexion et ses symboles

To Await a Time with Patience: Explaining the Chamber of Reflection

The Chamber of Reflection is a small, darkened room adjoining the Lodge room. It is a somber place of meditation and reflection for candidates for initiation (typically the First Degree) into Freemasonry and is sometimes used in higher degrees.

The Chamber of Reflection is a small, darkened room adjoining the Lodge room. It is a somber place of meditation and reflection for candidates for initiation (typically the First Degree) into Freemasonry and is sometimes used in higher degrees.

Before the ceremony of initiation, the candidate is placed for a time in the Chamber of Reflection, to meditate and consider how Freemasonry is about to change his life. He is given a series of questions to answer. Typically, he is asked his duties to God, his fellow men, and himself. In some lodges he is also asked to make a will. At the end of this time, he is led to the Temple for initiation. These questions typically are sealed into separate envelopes to be opened later by the initiate to determine a candidate's self-growth in our fraternity.

It is not just for the external preparation of the candidate, to put on the required garments, but for the internal mental preparation of the candidate.

A Journey of Self-Reflection

The candidate is encouraged to contemplate what his motives are for joining a Lodge. The Chamber of Reflection is exactly what it implies, a quiet room where the candidate is to meditate before his initiation.

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Isolation in this cavern-like room is where a symbolic metamorphosis is experienced, the neophyte emerges from this chamber symbolically transformed into a new person. It serves to separate the candidate of all earthly things, his family, his job, the superfluities of daily life, and makes him consider the notions of his own mortality. The Chamber of Reflection is intended to be the candidate's very first experience in Masonry.

However, it is important to note that the Chamber of Reflection is a preparation tool, and not part of the degree itself.

The Chamber is also an important symbol. It represents a womblike state, where the aspirant is to participate in his rebirth as an initiate, to indicate when the candidate emerges from the chamber, in the same manner as being born a new person. Thus, the chamber indicates at the same time, a beginning, and an end. The end of the candidate's life as a profane, and the beginning of a new life as an initiate in search of more light.

Before ever knocking at the door of the Craft, the initiate was confronted with the gravity of his choice to join, so that any doubts he might have entertained could be acted upon. In this way he might be spared a commitment he has not truly resolved to make, and the Lodge spared a man who would not endure even the test of confronting himself, much less having the resolve to better that which he had confronted.

He is put in darkness and isolation because both things together decrease the perception of time and make a relatively short period of time seem much longer. Thus, when the initiate arrives at the door of a Lodge, he has, to mind, long been in darkness.

This is the beginning of the journey for each candidate as they embark into the mystical and dramatic realm of Freemasonry. It is at this point the candidate stands at the threshold of initiation where he may turn back. Yet, if he chooses to proceed his life will be forever transformed. If the candidate fails to progress through the work of the remaining degrees, by their experiences in the outer chamber will force them to reflect upon their reason for wishing to become a Mason, and as such, for all their actions in life.

The Chamber is not widely used in our Blue Lodges but has played an important role in the history of our craft for centuries. Its origins can be traced to Freemasonry practiced in France as early as 1750. The Chamber is today, more common in Europe, Mexico, Central and South America, Middle East, and Africa and in some York Rite ceremonies, most notably with The Order of the Temple.

Variations on the Theme

In some jurisdictions, the initiate is presented with Articles I and II of the Constitution of the respective Jurisdiction.

The candidate must then sign and declare to affirm solidarity and act accordingly to the principles of Freemasonry.

In some of the lodges around the world, where the chamber of reflection is used, it is customary to invite the initiate back into the chamber of reflection on his fifth-year anniversary of his initiation.

The Chamber is not unique to Freemasonry

The ancient Egyptian, Persian and Greek Sages adopted the custom of surrounding their teachings with enigmas that could only be contemplated in silence, and which expressed invariable and uniform principles that formed a perfect and harmonious ensemble that, at the same time, defined a ceremony of religious and secret nature needed for the initiation and training of all Priests and Priestesses who desired to unravel these enigmas.

These enigmas comprise all that relates to the developing possibilities of the human state that culminate with that which has been called "Restoration of Primeval State", and these are nothing more than a preparation for The Great Mysteries which appertain to the realization of the super-human states and conduct the Initiate toward states of spiritual order until reaching the Supreme Identity. Thus, the new adept is brought closer to the hidden truths of the divine.



Freemasonry is a continuation of this most ancient of human traditions for it shares with its remote ancestors the same great thought that unites all mystery traditions: a knowledge of our origins and a vision of our destiny. Freemasonry contains within itself the record of the great cycles of human history, from the rise and fall of empire and civilization to the individual births, lives and deaths that make up the human experience. It has accumulated under its lofty banner the mystic teachings of all ages, no longer scattered to the winds of time.



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Freemasonry represents the modern incarnation of the Ancient Mystery Tradition. This tradition, these great Mysteries, are not fantasies of fiction, they are the heritage of all human beings. The mysteries are the gateway to human evolution and the pathway to the future. Universal Co-Masonry recognizes that these mysteries cannot only be preserved and remembered, they must be practiced and continued so that the flames that they ignite in the minds of humanity must never be extinguished.

Dan Brown's "The Lost Symbol"

Current interest in the Chamber has grown from writer Dan Brown's "The Lost Symbol" TV series. The opening scene shows a skull atop a rickety wooden desk positioned against the rear wall of the chamber.

Two human leg bones sit beside the skull, along with a collection of other items that were meticulously arranged on the desk in shrine like fashion – an antique hourglass, a crystal flask, a candle, two saucers of pale powder, and a sheet of paper.

Propped against the wall beside the desk stood the fearsome shape of a long scythe, its curved blade as familiar as that of the grim reaper. "This room is Masonic?" the character Inoue Sato demanded, turning from the skull, and staring at Harvard Symbologist Robert Langdon in the darkness. Langdon nodded calmly, "it's called a Chamber of Reflection. These rooms are designed as cold, austere places in which a Mason can reflect on his own mortality. By meditating on the inevitability of death, a Mason gains valuable perspective on the fleeting nature of life."

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Chamber Elements

Although the impact of the chamber's furniture must be personal, the symbolism relates to hermetic and alchemical correspondences. The Hermetic nature of its symbolism indicates the direct or indirect influence of the Rosicrucian's. Rosicrucian degrees appeared in some French rites during the second half of the eighteenth century. There is no specific list of contents, but it may contain either literally or in representation, such objects or images as a skull, a burning candle and bell, a mirror, an hourglass, bread and water, Sulphur, salt, and a cockerel (symbolizing mercury), a lantern or candle, or the acronym "V.I.T.R.I.O.L."

According to Albert Pike, the Chamber of Reflection "should be one story below the lodge room: and if possible, underground, with no window. The floor must, in any case, be of earth. On the walls should be brief sentences of morality, and maxims of austere philosophy, written as if with charcoal." The room should be completely dark, and the walls painted black or made to look like the interior of a cave. In the center of the room is placed a small wooden table, accompanied by a stool or uncomfortable wooden chair for the candidate to sit on.

The Skull

Together with the crossbones, sickle and the hourglass, the skull naturally refers to mortality and is linked to the alchemical references also present in the Chamber. The alchemists aimed at transmuting base metals into silver and gold through the process of putrefaction. So must the profane transmute his nature, through a symbolical burial in the chamber, into a new transformed man in the form of an initiate. In alchemy this is called the great work. Indeed, man's refinement, transmutation, and transformation from a brute base metal into gold requires great work! The skull in alchemy, named *caput mortuum*, is the epitome of decline and decay. The crossbones are usually tibias, the weight-bearing bones of the lower legs.

The most misunderstood emblem is the skull. For centuries many non-masons and some persons within the Fraternity believed the skull to be an immoral and malicious symbol. It represented a malevolent and evil nature, such as poison or danger.

But in the Chamber of Reflection, as in the rest of Masonry, that is not the case. The skull has appeared for centuries in various Masonic degrees, tracing boards, and aprons, such as the nineteenth century Knight Templar apron.

The skull, together with the crossbones, is a symbol of mortality, and is used to elaborate on the other symbols present in the chamber. Its purpose is to serve as a reminder of the Latin phrase *memento mori*, "remember, you will die." It serves as a reminder that our earthly life is not eternal, and your time spent on this earth is limited and should be spent to improve society, yourself, and your spiritual service.

Burning Candle and Bell

The burning candle and bell lack some of the esoteric significance attached to the other emblems but are also important.

The bell is rarely used since it takes up space on the small table used in the chamber of reflection.

Its sole purpose is to inform the Master of Ceremonies, or the Mason in charge of the candidate while he is in the chamber, that the candidate is ready for the degree. Most common the candidate knocking three times on the door, has replaced the bell at the completion of his mental preparation. The single burning candle primarily serves to provide the candidate with suitable lighting so he may perform the assigned task, whether it be writing his philosophical last will and testament, required questions or thoughts, all depending on the Masonic jurisdiction, or practiced Masonic rite. Several Lodges in Washington state use electric candles to prevent accidents and to follow local fire codes.

Mirror

The mirror is essential to the Chamber of Reflection because the purpose of this portion of the initiation process is to allow the candidate to reflect. He is also to reflect on his own mortality, the reasons he has chosen to join the Craft, and to contemplate his own understanding of himself.

According to the lecture in the Third Degree, we are taught that Hiram Abiff repaired to the Holy of Holies to reflect upon the work he had accomplished, to meditate and pray.

It is in the Chamber of Reflection where the candidate gets a chance to practice the teachings of the Craft as they are intended and emulate our ancient patron.

Another example of reflection and looking within oneself is portrayed in the Rectified Scottish Rite.

When the candidate is brought to light in the first degree, and the hoodwink is removed, the first thing he sees are the brethren looking back at him.

It is at this point the Worshipful Master informs him that "It is not always before oneself, that one finds his enemies. That which is to be feared the most is many times behind himself. Turn around!" It is at this time that the candidate is once again presented with the mirror and sees his own reflection.

It is a lesson by which the candidate is taught that the enemy is usually within oneself.

Therefore, each member of the Craft should know and scrutinize himself to break off the rough and superfluous parts of his life to live the life of a true follower of the Craft. Thus, the Chamber of Reflection allows the candidate the chance to truly analyze and examine himself and the symbols in the room around him.



Alchemical Elements

Three of the alchemical elements used in the great work are Sulphur, salt and mercury, all of which are present in the Chamber of Reflection. Sulphur is symbolical of the spirit, being a masculine principle, referring to enthusiasm and corresponding to the virtue of Faith. Salt is a symbol for wisdom, being considered neutral, as far as gender is concerned, referring to pondering (something the candidate does in the Chamber of Reflection) and corresponding to the virtue of Charity. Mercury appears as the rooster drawn on the wall of the Chamber of Reflection. The rooster is connected to the deity Hermes, that is, Mercury. It is a feminine principle, referring to vigilance and it also corresponds to faith. As the rooster sings at dawn announcing the light of day, so it announces to our future initiate, the Light he may receive.

The Hourglass

This object is a reminder of mortality. It also recalls that time runs fast, just as the sand runs through the hourglass. It also conveys the meaning that we should make good use of the time given us. Moreover, our candidate is reminded that therefore, he should write his answers and philosophical testament within the allotted time.

Bread and Water

The chunk of bread and the pitch of water are symbols of simplicity, pointing to the future initiate how he should conduct his life.

Bread is made of wheat, an element connected to the goddesses Isis and Demeter. Isis is the Egyptian mother goddess and the goddess of the dead, again, two of the aspects of the Chamber of Reflection.

Furthermore, according to the ancient description of an initiation into the Mysteries of Isis by Apuleius, the candidate was placed in a secluded cell and subsequently participated in a ceremony in which he had to overcome trials. Demeter was celebrated at the great festival at the Temple of Eleusis, which became known as the Eleusinian mysteries.



The bread and water represent the elements necessary to life, but even though food and the material body are indispensable, they remind the candidate that the physical aspect should not be the main objective in one's existence.

Moreover, these elements remind us of the biblical narrative regarding the prophet Elijah, who is also connected with these elements and a cave (see I Kings 17: 8-11). He established a school of prophets in a cavern on a mountain. Furthermore, Elijah after eating bread and water, climbed the mount of God, in the same way that our future initiate nourished by these symbols can withstand the trials ahead and climb his own mountain. Elijah, once on the mount, also heard God as the still small voice, just as our candidate should follow his inner voice throughout his life, as we can read in Kings 19: 5-13.

VITRIOL (UM)

Vitriol is a sulphonic acid, or a sulphate used in the alchemical operations of yore. This word is the origin of the adjective vitriolic, meaning caustic or hostile, referring to speech or criticism. However, in the esoteric sense, it is an acronym for the Latin phrase: *Visita interioraterrae, rectificandoque, invenies occultum lapidem*, which means: "visit the interior of the earth, and rectifying it, you will find the hidden stone." Sometimes this acronym appears with the addition of U.M. at the end, which means, *veram medicinam*, the true medicine. If one takes this advice metaphorically, the meaning conveyed is that one must search within oneself, as the truth is hidden there, and this truth is the real solution to our problems. Again, a very appropriate acronym to be placed on the wall before the future initiate, while he must write his philosophical testament.

Various Sayings

Besides the profusion of symbols in the Chamber of Reflection, as a candidate removes the hoodwink, he will read various sentences on the wall. Most often he will read the following sayings:

- If you think we will find out your defects, you will feel uncomfortable among us.
- If curiosity spurred you towards us, go away.
- If you are capable of deception, tremble, you will be found out.
- If you take notice of human differences, leave, we do not know them here.
- If your soul is fearful, do not proceed!
- If you persevere, you will be purified, you will overcome darkness, you will be enlightened.
- Think of God, with humility.
- If you want to live well, think of death.
- Serve your country with devotion.
- Remember the great citizens who were Freemasons.
- Know thyself.
- If your heart is well intentioned, go on and you will have our support.

The Journey of a Thousand Miles

Herein a candidate's journey into the chamber of reflection on the day of his initiation into this tradition.

First the candidate, dressed in suitable lodge attire (dark suit and tie) is brought to the lodge building by his sponsor. He must not meet any of the other Mason except the ones necessary.

The Secretary and the Master of Ceremonies, (an officer who in some jurisdictions would be equivalent to the First Expert,) both dressed without any Masonic insignia, meet the candidate.

The Secretary collects the necessary fees and returns to the lodge room.

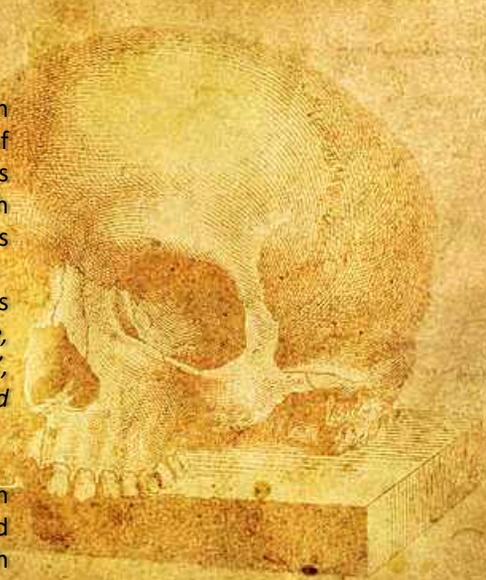


V. I. T. R. I. O. L.

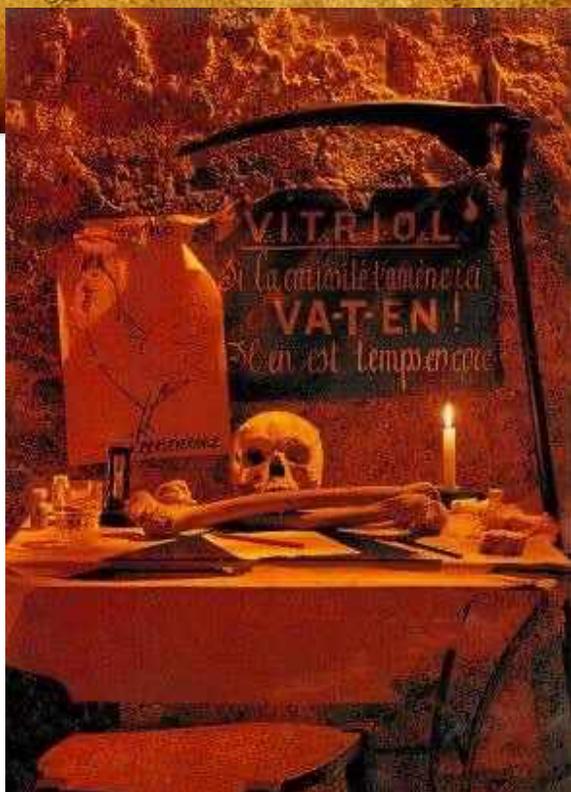
V.I.T.R.I.O.L
(Masonic/Alchemical Motto)

In Freemasonry, the motto is a common component of the symbolic "Chamber of Reflection," where a Mason contemplates and reflects on the nature of death. In both Freemasonry and Alchemy, the motto refers to a process of internal, spiritual purification. "V.I.T.R.I.O.L." or vitriol (sulphury acid) is interpreted as "visita interiora terrae, rectificandoque, invenies occultum lapidem", or "visit the interior of the earth, and purifying it, you will find the hidden stone."

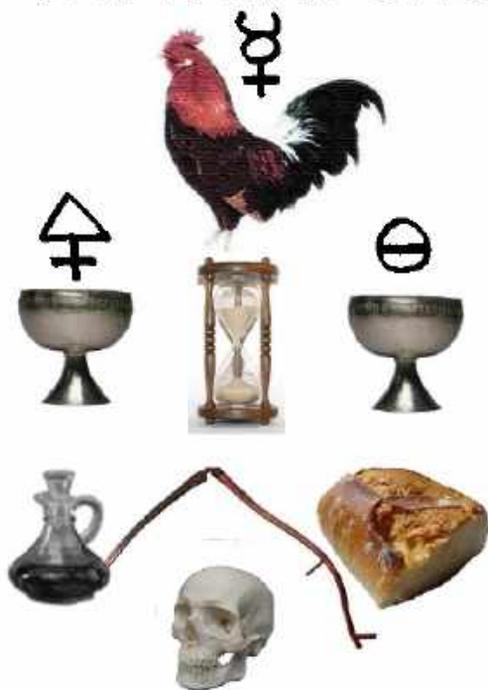
This is another way of saying "look within yourself for the truth." The motto originated in *L'Azoth des Philosophes* by the 15th Century alchemist Basilus Valentinus.



Visit the Interior of the Earth, Through Rectification, You Shall Find The Hidden Stone



V. I. T. R. I. O. L.



The Master of Ceremonies stays with the candidate, while the sponsor also goes into the lodge room. The Master of Ceremonies then blindfolds the candidate and introduces him into the chamber of reflection.

He presents the candidate with a piece of paper with questions that the candidate must answer.

The Master of Ceremonies indicates to the candidate that he must write on the paper his moral and philosophical testament.

He then instructs the candidate that when he has finished this task, he should ring the bell, or give three knocks to acknowledge that he is ready to proceed with the rest of the initiation. He is also told that, once the door is closed, he should remove the hoodwink. At that time, the candidate sees the chamber and the objects described earlier.

This is the beginning of the journey for each candidate as they embark into the mystical and dramatic realm of Freemasonry. It is at this point the candidate stands at the threshold of initiation where he may turn back. Yet, if he chooses to proceed his life will be forever transformed. If the candidate fails to progress through the work of the remaining degrees, by their experiences in the outer chamber will force them to reflect upon their reason for wishing to become a Mason, and as such, for all their actions in life.

The beginning of the candidate's Masonic Journey

The symbols, elements, and lessons within the Chamber of Reflection are provided for the specific purpose of allowing the candidate to meditate, reflect and contemplate. None of the emblems should ever be used to frighten, haze, tease, or humiliate the candidate in any way. The purpose of the Chamber of Reflection and its symbolic elements are meant to illustrate to the initiate that the ceremony of initiation is not to be taken lightly.





HISTORY OF THE CHAMBER OF REFLECTION

The idea of the chamber of reflection, as part of Masonic practice, spread to Germany, Belgium, Holland, and other European countries. Between 1787 and 1801, Friedrich Ludwig Schroeder worked on a revision of the German ritual based on Jachin and Boaz entitled Schroedersches *Lehrlingritual*. It was accepted and worked in several German lodges, although other versions of the ritual continued to be practiced.

In the early 1800's, the chamber of reflection was being used and practiced in several craft lodges in the United States. By 1814, the chamber of reflection had made its way into the rituals of the Grand Encampment of New York, and by 1816, to General Grand Encampment at its formation. The chamber of reflection was a well understood and a well-practiced Masonic custom in the United States at this epoch of its history. Some Freemasons even had small chambers of reflections in their homes, while others would make it a habit to revisit the one they used during their initiation into the Craft. All of this began to change by 1826, the year that America's most notorious incident involving the Freemasons took place — the Morgan Affair.

Captain William Morgan, a disgruntled Mason, announced plans to publish the rituals of Freemasonry. Although several other ritual exposures had been published in the United States during the previous century, Masons were outraged that their secrets would be divulged to the community.



On 11 September 1826, William Morgan was arrested and jailed for an outstanding debt. The next day four Masons paid the debt, bailed Morgan out of jail and escorted him to a waiting carriage. He was driven away and was never seen again. This event fueled outrage among anti-Masons in the United States and gave birth to the Anti-Masonic political movement.

Because of the Anti-Masonic movement, Freemasonry was forced to adapt and change. The laws of several grand jurisdictions were changed, and the custom of having to be invited or “tapped” to join Masonry were forever changed. Several hundred lodges in the United States closed its doors.

New York went from 480 lodges in 1826 to 75 in 1835; Massachusetts dropped from 180 Lodges to 56, and the Grand Lodge of Vermont completely went out of existence. Masonry experienced a transformation of a very exclusive and esoteric fraternity, to that of an open revolving door and transparent fraternity. The more esoteric traditions retreated from the craft lodge into the higher invitational bodies, while the rites and traditions of the craft lodge rituals were diluted or completely abandoned, like that of the chamber of reflection.

According to Masonic researchers and authors S. Brent Morris and Arturo de Hoyos in their book *Committed to the Flames*, in 1826, after the Morgan Affair, Robert Benjamin Folger filled a book with the enciphered craft rituals of a secret Masonic Rite. These rituals were that of the Rectified Scottish Rite, also known as the Knights Beneficent of the Holy City or CBCS. This order was well known throughout Europe but completely unknown in the United States at the time. The chamber of reflection resurrected itself in the United States in rituals such as the Rectified Scottish Rite, but never really returned into mainstream craft lodges until the end of the twentieth century.

Over the past several years, there have been several articles written about the chamber of reflection with no real research behind them. There are several lodges using chambers of reflection with the goal of scaring the candidate or doing it because it is a “cool thing to do.” If a lodge’s members do not know what V::I::T::R::I::O::L:: means or represents, and they do not know how to explain it to the new initiate, then that lodge should not be using a chamber of reflection



This important preparatory tool shouldn't be used because it is cool.

Rather, it should be used because it helps the candidate prepare himself mentally for the degree, it is an old tradition of the Craft, and it is the correct thing to do.





The symbol of the Skull and Crossbones, often called the Memento Mori, is a grim reminder of our own mortality. The Latin phrase “Memento Mori” is generally interpreted as “Remember that you must die” and is often associated with other fatalistic expressions such as Hora Fugit (The Hour Flees) or Tempus Fugit (Time Flies). The first Masonic adoption of the Memento Mori appears to have its roots in the York Rite Chivalric Orders, especially the Order of Malta and the Order of the Temple. The establishment of these Orders coincides well with the periods in which the Memento Mori was reaching its zenith as an expression of Christian belief concerning death and dying.

Images of Mortality

An important part of our ancient craft

MW Cameron Bailey

Images of mortality have always been an important part of Freemasonry. More subdued in American style Craft Masonry, and partly taken in by our Scottish and York Rites, but nevertheless these symbols and themes remain a part of our Blue Lodges.

This is because they are important symbols that serve to teach vitally important lessons. They remind us of how fleeting time truly is, that our own passing from this world is nigh, that what we do while we are on this earth is important and should make a positive impact on the lives around us.

In other places, other styles of Freemasonry are practiced. Styles of Craft Masonry in which these images of mortality play a much more prominent role.

Likewise, some of our Lodges and our Masons recognize the importance of these images and have sought to slowly reclaim for them prominence within our Lodges. Perhaps the most visible manifestation of these efforts is the construction and use of Chambers of Reflection within some Masonic Temples. In the Jurisdiction of Washington anyway, this is becoming more common with each passing year.

This is vitally important to the future of our Craft because today's younger Masons have made it quite clear that they expect to receive esoteric Masonic education within their Lodge. These symbols, along with all other Masonic symbolism play a vital role in that education, for at its core Freemasonic knowledge is communicated through symbol and allegory.

Yet sometimes there is pushback against these images of mortality.

A lady's organization that utilizes our Temple for their own meetings might run across these images and misunderstand both them and their purpose. Masons who have not done the work required to learn about Freemasonry may do likewise. Complaints couched as concerns might be made.

Quite likely it was just this kind of thing that pushed images of mortality into a more subdued existence in our Craft Lodges long ago. This is probably the reason they retained their original prominence largely only in the Rites.

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Images of Mortality – continued from previous page

But giving in to complaints or concerns about the symbols, images, and lessons of Freemasonry, voiced by those who do not understand Freemasonry, and indeed are in most cases not even Freemasons is a profound error.

Freemasonry is the most noble, most sacred, organized body of men to have ever existed on the face of this earth.

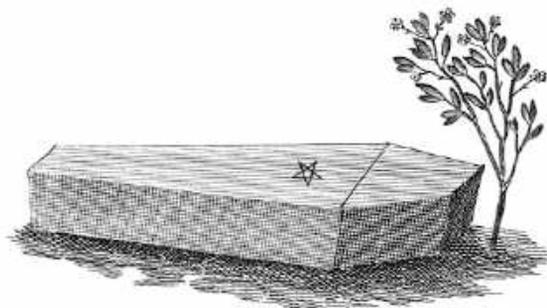
Freemasonry has vastly improved our world, and improved the lives of countless millions over the course of centuries.

“Attracted only by favorable report, teeming thousands, ignorant of its internal workings, continually seek admission ‘unsolicited by friends and unbiased by mercenary motives.’ Mighty Legions march forward under its banners, succoring the widow, the orphan and the destitute, practicing charity, loyal to country and worshiping God.”¹

Freemasonry need not apologize for anything.



MW Cameron Bailey is the current Grandmaster of the Grand Lodge of the State of Washington F&AM



The coffin is an obvious image to identify with the emblems of mortality. But its depiction is open to much interpretation. Almost uniformly shown with a sprig of acacia, the coffin will also be marked with either a pentagram or a five-pointed star. Rarely is it seen with a cross. Whether the variations are the results of esoteric interpretation, or the limitations of the engraver's art is an unanswered question.



The skull & crossbones is a rough symbol. It stops you in your doings and makes you see it. It dares you to understand it. It does what it is meant to do: it reminds you of your own mortality. The skull and crossbones symbols appear usually at Masonic lodges in Chambers of Reflection.

Something to think about

Where Does Morality Come From?



I was recently part of a Masonic discussion group where the subject of morals sparked a lively debate. How and why did mankind develop a moral code? What enabled or required it?

The opinions ranged from natural selection, that we were born with a moral structure, to observations that we were taught by parents, clergy, and schoolteachers. That flies in the face that some in the animal kingdom also have a moral code. Primates such as chimpanzees have been observed behaving in ways that are decidedly right and wrong. Even that dog or cat you may have in your home seem to have moral behaviors.

The concept is controversial with different opinions from ethicists, scientists, philosophers, historians, psychologists and just about anybody.

What is Morality?

Morals are the prevailing standards of behavior that enable people to live cooperatively in groups. Moral refers to what societies sanction as right and acceptable.

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Most people tend to act morally and follow societal guidelines. Morality often requires that people sacrifice their own short-term interests for the benefit of society. People or entities that are indifferent to right and wrong are considered amoral, while those who do evil acts are considered immoral.

The conversation sidetracked into current societal behaviors that can be best described by Charles Dickens' "best of times and worst of times." Dickens was never a Freemason, but he had plenty of connections and family members who were. The discussion talked about advances in technology, our ability to live much longer than previous generations are some of the bounties of modern life. The bad appears to overpower the good; increases in violent crime, gun deaths, a divided society, the discrimination of different cultures, people of faith and the loss of confidence against modern leaders.

While some moral principles seem to transcend time and culture, such as fairness, morality is not fixed. Morality describes the values of a specific group at a specific point in time. Historically, morality has been closely connected to religious traditions, but today its significance is equally important to the secular world. For example, businesses and government agencies have codes of ethics that employees are expected to follow. As Masons, we definitely have rules for proper behavior and conduct.

Some philosophers make a distinction between morals and ethics. But many people use the terms "morals" and "ethics" interchangeably when talking about personal beliefs, actions, or principles. For example, it's common to say, "My morals prevent me from cheating." It's also common to use ethics in this sentence instead.

So, morals are the principles that guide individual conduct within society. And, while morals may change over time, they remain the standards of behavior that we use to judge right and wrong.

Where does morality come from?

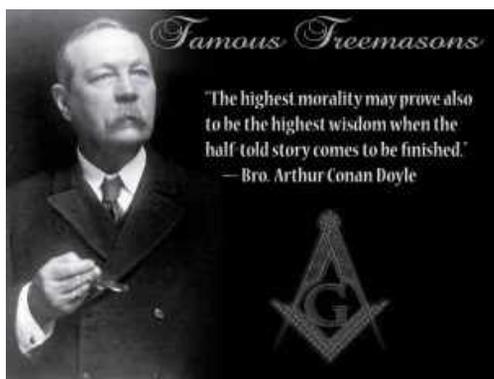
In the popular imagination, there is still quite a widespread assumption that religion is the source of morality. This is typically based on a belief that religion transmits the moral edicts of a divine creator of the universe.

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“Morals are the principles that guide individual conduct within society. And, while morals may change over time, they remain the standards of behavior that we use to judge right and wrong.”





ETHICS

VERSUS

MORALS

WHICH APPROACH WORKS BEST?

 Morals are the principles underlying the ideal behavior of each individual.	 Ethics are the principles underlying the best behavior of members of a culture.
Morals are subjective and personal.	Ethics are subjective and communal.
Morals are usually based on a philosophy or religious belief.	Ethics are decided upon by a society after debate and trial.
Morals transcend cultural norms, but may conflict with them.	Ethics are based on cultural norms, but may conflict with an individual's morals.

Despite the fully natural origins of morality having been very well established by scholars and widely accepted in the academic world, many people are surprisingly uninformed about this subject and are at a loss to even begin to explain the origins of morality in non-supernatural terms.

Understanding the origins of morality, like all behavioral traits, requires an evolutionary perspective, considering both biological and cultural evolution.

The individual characteristics include instinctual and emotional traits such as empathy and guilt, as well as higher cognitive capacities such as the ability to inhibit impulses and the capacity to reason. The group dynamics revolve around cooperation and competition, and the ways in which societal and cultural norms and rules evolve. All these individual and group factors are, of course, intertwined.

Instinctual and emotional traits include:

- Empathy
- Guilt and conscience
- Shame (and concern for reputation)
- Disgust
- Outrage and inequity aversion

All these emotions and their behavioral correlates can be demonstrated in simpler form in other animals, particularly in other primates.

There is a large body of research demonstrating and delineating the complex moral instincts of young children, including babies far too young for these to have been socialized into them.

Babies exhibit empathy, fairness, justice, and the ability to judge "goodness" and "badness" of human behavior.

Some of these emotions, such as disgust and outrage, can fuel either compassion or cruelty. Even empathy has the potential to fuel aggression, as when someone's empathic identification with an in-group victim leads them to exact revenge on a perceived out-group perpetrator.

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Charles Darwin theorized that moral character goes back to the beginnings of the human. Race, when we as hunter-gatherers were forced to band together for survival. This required cooperation, trust, and a moral code so that fairness and civility within the group is codified for the well-being of the whole.

Morality is more widespread than we realize

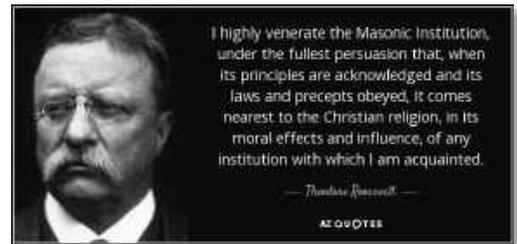
Morality is meant to promote cooperation. People everywhere face a similar set of social problems and use a similar set of moral rules to solve them. Everyone everywhere shares a common moral code. All agree that cooperating, promoting the common good, is the right thing to do."

There was an Oxford Research report that studied ethnographic accounts of ethics from 60 societies, across over 600 sources. The universal rules of morality are:

- Help your family
- Help your group
- Return favors
- Be brave
- Defer to superiors
- Divide resources fairly
- Respect others' property

A Peculiar System of Morality

The Masonic system of education teaches morality to its members in an unusual way, in our rituals, and during degree work. This is defined in masonic ritual as a "peculiar system of morality" which has existed for several hundred years, remains, and continues to be the central feature of Freemasonry today. The old Chinese adage states: "... a journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step" and so be it for our masonic study of morality. Morality is etymologically derived from the Latin word "moralitas" which means manner, character, or proper behavior.



ETHICS VS MORALS	
<p>In most cases, when any one of us does something, we try to act according to what society believes is right. More often, we listen closely to what our own beliefs about right or wrong are telling us, even if they're different from society's views. These two have to do with ethics and morals.</p>	
<p>MEANING</p> <p>ETHICS refers to the rules that a social system provides us with.</p>	<p>MEANING</p> <p>MORALS are our own principles.</p>

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W



RIGHT



Freemasonry is intended to be moral, and to both teach and as far as it is able, enforce morality amongst ourselves.

As a fraternity, we have a set of basic principles that they all live by. Masonic lodge members promise never to bring anything offensive or defensive into the lodge with them — both weapons and words. The object of the lodge is to create a place where those divisions are left outside, so Masons can engage in activities that unite them instead of separating them:

- **A moral code:** Freemasons believe in honor and that a man has a responsibility to behave honorably in everything he does. Freemasonry teaches its members the principles of personal decency and personal responsibility. It hopes to inspire them to have charity and good will toward all mankind, and to translate principles and convictions into action.
- **Charity:** Freemasonry is devoted to the promotion of the welfare and happiness of all mankind. Freemasonry teaches its members that unselfishness is a duty and that it's not only more blessed to give than to receive, but also more rewarding.
- **Education:** Freemasonry teaches a system of morality and brotherhood by the use of symbols and dramatic presentations. It encourages its members to expand their knowledge of the world around them.
- **Religious, not a religion:** Freemasons believe in the brotherhood of man, under the fatherhood of God. Freemasonry isn't a religion, but it is religious because it requires its members to have faith in a Supreme Being, according to the individual Mason's belief. It's not a sectarian organization and does not promote one religion over another. Masonic ceremonies describe a moral code, using basic principles that are common to all religions.

- **Social responsibility:** Freemasonry stands for the reverence of God and the proper place of individual faith in society; for truth and justice; for fraternity and philanthropy; and for orderly civil, religious, and intellectual liberty. It charges each of its members to be true and loyal to the government of the country to which he owes allegiance and to be obedient to the law of any state in which he may reside.
- **Nonpolitical, nonsectarian:** One of the first rules of Freemasonry forbids the discussion in Masonic meetings of religious matters and politics — topics likely to cause personal arguments. It's also against the fundamental principles of Freemasonry for Masonic organizations to take political action or attempt to influence elections or legislation.
- **Equality among members:** Freemasonry regards no man for his worldly wealth, social status, or outward appearance. Kings, princes, sultans, and potentates have been Masons. So have paperboys, garbage men, factory workers, and fast-food fry cooks.

The morality of Freemasonry requires Masons to deal justly with others, not to defraud, cheat or wrong them of their just dues and rights. A Mason is therefore particularly bound never to act against the dictates of his conscience.

The teaching of morals by allegory is a time-honored technique still relevant, though members new to the Craft may not be familiar with it.

Allegory is a story that can be read on two levels, firstly as a surface narrative and secondly at a deeper level which is moralistic.

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It is the embodiment of a train of thought in a visible form by means of images and thus involves a transfer of meaning with several correspondences with the real world. For example, the whole of the third degree is allegorical for behind the story of the central character lies the foundation of the philosophy of Freemasonry.

Ethics and Morality

The systematic study of morality is a branch of philosophy called Ethics which is derived from the Greek word "ethos" meaning character.

Ethics is the systematic study of the nature of value concepts - good and bad, right, and wrong, and of the general principles thereof. In fact, ethics has several branches and facets of study perhaps of direct relevance to freemasons in their quest of understanding morality so germane to our system.

Applied ethics addresses questions as to how a moral outcome can be achieved in a specific situation, while normative ethics addresses how moral values should be determined. Descriptive ethics describes the morals and thus morality to which people hold to, while the fundamental nature of ethics or morality is addressed in metaethics.

The crucial point to be reckoned is that morality is antecedent to ethics. It denotes the concrete activities of which ethics is the science.

Rational men are entitled to an opinion on morality, which may be proclaimed, or locked up in the safe and sacred repository of the heart, but what is important is that morality should suffuse every thought, word, and deed, more so for Freemasons because it is our creed.

Having core beliefs, based on fundamentally sound assumptions, that engender human advancement is part of what I would call "morality."

Acting in harmony with basic moral principles without fear or favor and over time makes one to live respected and die regretted.

To me, to maintain a moral stance in the face of corrupting and compromising influences is a high benchmark. Accepting others in their sincere beliefs, and ability to change when change is indicated, through rational thinking and attaining knowledge is consistent with morality.

Non-violence and a love for peace and harmony, unity and brotherhood, honesty and truth are certainly moral.

To forgive and forget is also a great gift of morality. After all a heartfelt request to The Supreme Architect for salvation makes everything better and new. The Biblical story of Mary Magdalene's pardon by Jesus Christ is a shining example of the morality of forgiveness.

The greatest insight that today's Masons ought to have the sense to discriminate between right and wrong, and to distinguish between the ideal and the practical; to act on that, what his conscience tells him is the best choice, and restoring *Ordo ab Chao* - order out of the mental and moral chaos amidst the crushing pressures and stresses of daily modern life. Such is the nature of the human concept of morality. Do right if you can, if questionable do not do so.

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Pike on Morality

The revered masonic scholar, Albert Pike wrote in his classic tome *Morals & Dogma*:

“Masonry is not made for cold souls and narrow minds, that do not comprehend its lofty mission and sublime apostolate. To comfort misfortune, to popularize knowledge, to teach whatever is true and pure in religion and philosophy, to accustom men to respect order and the proprieties of life, to point out the way to genuine happiness, to prepare for that fortunate period, when all the factions of the Human Family, united by the bonds of Toleration and Fraternity, shall be but one household—these are labors that may well excite zeal and even enthusiasm.

“Masonry is the universal morality, which is suitable to the inhabitants of every clime, to the man of every creed. It has taught no doctrines, except those truths that tend directly to the well-being of man.

“Masonry is engaged in her crusade, against ignorance, intolerance, fanaticism, superstition, uncharitableness, and error.”

So, Mote It Be

The discussion lasted well into the night. And just as the overall issue of the origins of morality and ethics is still debated far and wide, it was a good discussion to understand our responsibilities as a fraternity in passing knowledge and questions about our *“peculiar system of morality”* onto the next generation of brothers.



MASONIC LANDMARKS

The term "landmarks" can be misinterpreted to the uninitiated and confusing for the novitiate as well as the long-time brother. In our world, landmarks mean more than monuments or buildings.

The "Ancient Landmarks" and "Landmarks of Masonry" are terms which appear throughout the literature of Masonry and are the source of deep study by many in our fraternity.

On the subject of "landmarks," as about history and symbolism, there is a great diversity of opinion, both by Grand Lodges and by individuals, and the need of a comparison of ideas which are held by those who have made the subject a study was the cause which prompted us to compile this article.

"What is a landmark?" is a debatable question. It has been answered in part by definitions; it has also been answered by enumerating certain laws or customs which are considered landmarks by the authors of the compilations; it has also been considered a proper subject for legislation by some Grand Lodges and they have enacted laws as to what are to be considered landmarks in their jurisdiction.

What is a Masonic landmark?

Masonic landmarks are a set of principles that many claim to be ancient and unchangeable precepts of Masonry. Issues of the "regularity" of a Masonic Lodge or Grand Lodge are judged in the context of the landmarks. Because each Grand Lodge is self-governing, with no single body exercising authority over the whole of Masonry, the interpretations of these principles can and do vary, leading to controversies of recognition. Different Masonic jurisdictions have different landmarks.

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Mackey's 25 Landmarks

The first major attempt to define the landmarks of Freemasonry was in 1858, when Albert Mackey defined 25 landmarks in total:

1. The fraternal modes of recognition
2. The division of Masonry into 3 symbolic degrees
3. The symbolic legend of Hiram Abiff
4. The government of the fraternity by a Grand Master
5. The prerogative of the Grand Master to preside over every assembly of the craft
6. The prerogative of the Grand Master to issue dispensations for conferring degrees at irregular times
7. The prerogative of the Grand Master to issue dispensations for opening and holding Lodges otherwise not established
8. The prerogative of the Grand Master to make Masons at Sight.
9. The necessity for Masons to congregate in Lodges
10. The government of Lodges to be by a Master and two Wardens
11. The necessity that every Lodge when congregated be duly tiled.
12. The right of every Mason to be represented in all general meetings of the Craft
13. The right of every Mason to appeal from his Lodge's decisions to the Grand Lodge
14. The right of every Mason to sit in every regular Lodge

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Mackey's 25 Landmarks – *continued*

15. That no unknown visitor be allowed to sit in Lodge without being examined and found to be a Freemason

16. That no Lodge can interfere in the business of another Lodge

17. That every Freemason be amenable to the laws and regulations of the Jurisdiction in which he resides

18. That candidates for Freemasonry be required to meet certain qualifications; namely: being of mature age, not a cripple, and freeborn.

19. That a belief in the existence of God be a requirement for membership

20. That belief in a resurrection to a future life be a requirement for membership

21. That a "Book of the Law" shall constitute an indispensable part of the furniture of every Lodge

22. The equality of Masons

23. The secrecy of the Institution

25. The foundation of a speculative science upon an operative art, and the symbolic use and explanation of the terms of that art for purposes of moral teaching

25. That none of these landmarks can be changed.

Here are some examples:

"Of the nature of the Landmarks of Masonry, there has been some diversity of opinion among writers; but perhaps the safest method is to restrict them to those ancient, and therefore universal, customs of the Order, which gradually grew into operation as rules of action. or if at once enacted by any competent authority, were enacted at a period so remote, that no account of their origin is to be found in the records of history." (Albert G. Mackey, *Mas. Jur.* page 15.)

"The very definition of Landmarks shows that an enumeration of them is scarcely possible. All we can know is that it is a law or a custom that has existed from time immemorial. If any universal usage exists and has existed so long that its origin is unknown, it is a Landmark." (Josiah Drummond, *Maine Masonic Textbook.*)

"With respect to the Landmarks of Masonry, some restrict them to the O.B., signs, tokens and words. Others include the ceremony of initiation, passing and raising; and the form, dimensions and supports; the ground, situation and covering; the ornaments, furniture and jewels of a Lodge, or their characteristic symbols. Some think that the order has no landmarks beyond its peculiar secrets. (Geo. Oliver, *Dict. Symb. Mas.*)

"We assume those principles of action to be Landmarks which have existed from time immemorial, whether in the written or unwritten law; which are identified with the form and essence of the society; which, the great majority agree, cannot be changed, and which every Mason is bound to maintain intact, under the most solemn and inviolable sanctions." (Simons, *Prin. of Mas. Juris.*)

"Those fixed tenets by which the limits of Freemasonry may be known and preserved." (*Dictionary of Freemasonry, Morris.*)

"The Landmarks of Masonry are those ancient principles and practices which mark out and distinguish Freemasonry as such, and they are the source of Masonic Jurisprudence." (Lockwood's *Mas. Law and Practice, Page 14.*)

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"My idea of an Ancient Landmark is a rule or usage of the Premier Grand Lodge which can not be abrogated, without cutting off the offending Body from the Universal Craft." (W. J. Hughan.)

"A belief in God, our Father; in the immortality of the soul; in the brotherhood of man; and in the necessary practice of all the moral and social virtue, were the essentials, our duty to God, our country, our neighbor and ourselves, was everywhere and universally inculcated. These we take to be the Landmarks of the Order." (John Q. A. Fellows, Proc. G. L. of La., 1889.)

"A 'Landmark' that cannot be established by the writings of the fathers, or other recognized authorities, to have been the rule or belief among Freemasons in 1723 and before, or that is not now generally accepted as such, can hardly be held as Landmark. (H. B. Grant, Const. G. L. of Ky., 1910.)

"A Landmark, to be a Landmark, must command the universal respect and observance of all Masons." (T. S. Parvin, Iowa Proc. 1889, Page 106, cor. report.)

"The fundamental principles of the Ancient Operative Masonry were few and simple, and they were not called landmarks. Each lodge was independent of every other, and there was no superior authority over all. Each was composed of Apprentices and Fellowcrafts. Each had its Master and Wardens, and these were elected by vote of all the members. The ancient charges show by what principles the relations of those of the fellowship to each other were regulated; and these may not improperly be said to have been the 'landmarks' of the Craft." (Albert Pike, Iowa Proc. 1888, Page 156, cor. report.)

"The Old Landmarks were, in fact, the secrets which existed amongst the Operative Masons in the days when they alone supplied the membership of the Craft." (W. B. Hextall, Ars. Q. C. XXV, Page 91.)

"The Ancient Landmarks of Freemasonry, like all other landmarks material or symbolical, can only preserve their stability, when they reach down to sure foundations. When the philosophic student unearths the underlying rock on which our Ancient Landmarks rest, he finds our sure foundations in the triple dogma Georgia-- of the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man, and the Life to come. All laws, customs and methods that obtain amongst us and do not ultimately find footholds on this basis, are thereby earmarked as conventions and conveniences, no way partaking of the nature of Ancient Landmarks." (Chetwode Crawley, Ars. Q. C. XXIII.)

The Masonic Congress at Chicago in 1893 defined the landmarks this way:

"The Ancient Landmarks are those fundamental principles which characterize Masonry as defined by the Charges of a Freemason, and without which the institution cannot be identified as Masonry, combined with the essentials of the unwritten language by which brethren distinguished each other as Masons."

Origins

According to Percy Jantz, the Masonic term *landmark* has biblical origins. He cites the Book of Proverbs 22:28: "Remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set", referring to stone pillars set to mark boundaries of land. He further quotes a Jewish law: "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbors' landmark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance" to emphasize how these Landmarks designate inheritance.

Albert Mackey Expands on the above historical significance of landmarks: "The *universal language* and the *universal laws* of masonry are landmarks, but not so are the local ceremonies, laws, and usages, which vary in different countries. To attempt to alter or remove these sacred landmarks...is one of the most heinous offences that a Mason can commit.

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Mark Tabbert believes that the actual rules and regulations laid down in the early masonic landmarks derive from the charges of medieval stonemasons.

After the organization of the Premier Grand Lodge in 1717, the "Charges of a Freemason" were extracted from the old manuscript copies and a set of thirty-nine "General Regulations" were adopted, the last of which reads in part as follows: "Every Annual Grand Lodge has an inherent power and authority to make new Regulations, or to alter these, for the real benefit of this ancient Fraternity: Provided, always, that the old Land-Marks be carefully preserved." This is the earliest mention of landmarks in connection with Freemasonry.

Neither at that time nor at any subsequent period can we find any enumeration of landmarks by the Grand Lodge of England, "Ancient," "Modern" or United.

In 1844, George Oliver wrote that some jurisdictions restrict the definition of a Masonic landmark to be only the "signs, tokens and words" while others include the ceremonies of initiation, passing, and raising of a candidate. Some also include the ornaments, furniture, and jewels of a Lodge, or their characteristic symbols.

In 1863, Oliver published the [Freemason's Treasury](#) in which he listed 40 landmarks. Mackey expanded on both of these lists and remarked that the safest method of defining the landmarks is "those ancient, and therefore universal, customs of the order, which either gradually grew into operation as rules of action, or, if at once enacted by any competent authority, were enacted at a period so remote, that no account of their origin is to be found in the records of history."

Pound's Seven Landmarks

In 1911, understanding Mackey's 25 points to be a summary of Masonic "common law", the legal scholar [Roscoe Pound](#) (1870-1964) distinguished seven of them as landmarks:

1. Belief in a Supreme Being
2. Belief in immortality
3. That a "book of sacred law" is an indispensable part of the "furniture" (or furnishings) of the Lodge
4. The legend of the Third Degree
5. Secrecy (not specifying as to what)
6. Symbolism of operative masonry
7. That a Mason must be a man, freeborn, and of lawful age

In the last century, several American Grand Lodges attempted to enumerate the landmarks, ranging from West Virginia and New Jersey to Nevada and Kentucky.

In the 1950s the Commission on Information for Recognition of the Conference of Grand Masters of Masons in North America upheld three "ancient landmarks"

- Monotheism — An unalterable and continuing belief in God.
- The [Volume of The Sacred Law](#) — an essential part of the furniture of the Lodge.
- Prohibition of the discussion of Religion and Politics (within the lodge).

No Landmarks in Our Jurisdiction?

The Grand Lodge of Washington F&AM notes the following:

Washington Constitution of 1913, Sec. 13, says: "The action of Freemasons in the Grand Lodge and in their Lodges, and in their individual capacity is regulated and controlled 1. By Ancient Landmarks, and other unwritten laws of Masonry. 2. By Written- Constitutions, and general or special legislation. 3. By Usages, Customs and judicial action."

"Sec. 14 Landmarks. - The Ancient Landmarks include those principles of Masonic government and polity which should never be altered or disturbed."

No landmarks are enumerated.

The Significance of Masonic Landmarks

These are the moral lessons and fraternal obligations taught in our ritual and which must ultimately reside in our hearts. Generically, landmarks should guide our thoughts, words, and actions, and define for us what it means to be a Freemason and how to act like a Master Mason.

The first great duty, not only of every lodge, but of every Mason, is to see that the landmarks of the Order shall never be impaired.

-Albert Mackey

We start with the view that morality must be grounded in a belief in a Supreme Being, that there must be something to which we answer that is greater not only than ourselves, but greater than our Fraternity as well.

Critical to our brotherhood are the obligations we take on with respect to each other – from keeping a confidence and providing advice and guidance, to more tangible and material support.

These obligations also extend to the wives and widows, children and orphans of our brethren.

We are religious and patriotic, but our Lodges are non-sectarian and non-political.

There is more. We seek to be virtuous and honorable people. We believe that every human being has a claim upon our good offices, and we see it as our duty to assist in making the world a better, more loving, and more compassionate place. So, we search for truth, we support justice, we show toleration, and we act charitably.

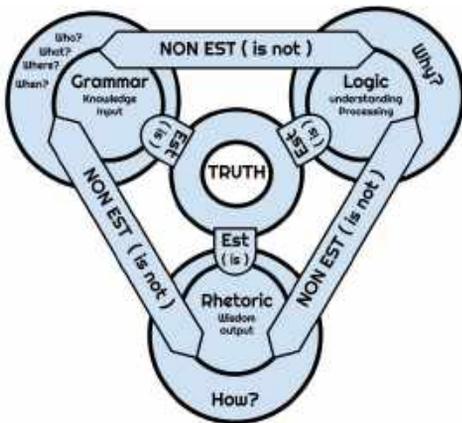
These are a few of our personal Landmarks, some of the things that distinguish us from other social clubs or societies, and what makes our Fraternity so special and makes Freemasonry a force for good in the world.



Stuff we should know as Masons



Trivium & Quadrivium



A large part of the Classical model is its method or the manner of teaching the content. The classical model employed in Masonry recognizes that the ancient TRIVIUM aligns one's natural cognitive development and learning inclinations.

The Liberal Arts have been, from antiquity, the foundation upon which knowledge of our natural exists.

Plato and Pythagoras were first in codifying their importance; the flowering of our western understanding of the liberal arts took place in medieval education systems, where they were categorized into the Trivium and the Quadrivium.

Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric are the Trivium, and Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, and Astronomy are the Quadrivium.

The Trivium

The Trivium combines the use of the senses with knowledge to lay the foundation for further study.

The Quadrivium

The Quadrivium is the higher-level education for the philosopher and employed the use of the Trivium to be able to compose higher ideas and thereby, expand the knowledge of the human condition.

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The Masonic Connection

Freemasons the world over have expounded on the Seven Liberal Arts ad infinitum.

Plato's [Dialogues](#) explain the curriculum serious students. The study of the Liberal Arts is more of a study of knowledge than it is of any specific actual data and information.

As we may have learned by now, knowledge without application is dead and useless.

Knowledge in the pursuit of higher ideals. Remember, one of the goals of Freemasonry is to better the human condition while standing up in defiance of falsehood, ignorance, and hatred.

The Cornerstone of the Liberal Arts

The [Trivium](#) is the foundation stone of the Seven Liberal Arts and really provides us the method and ability to communicate. It is composed of Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric.

Grammar: Knowledge and Learning of Language

Logic: Reasoning, Questioning, and Thinking with Language

Rhetoric: Directing, moving, and Persuading using Language

The study of Grammar is also the study of history, geography, reading, and writing.

It is basic, absolutely, but more encompassing than simply learning one's ABCs and how to put pen on paper and write.

Logic is about how we learn – we use our senses to experience, put our minds to thought, question, and experiment.

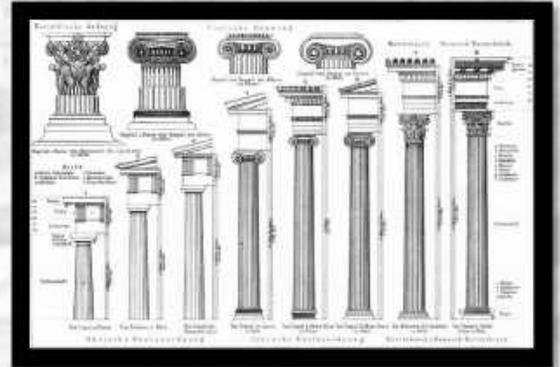
We learn to ask the correct questions to achieve the answers we seek.

They are not provided to us – we must seek them out and test for ourselves.

Finally, rhetoric is the ability to take what we have learned with grammar and dialectic and put them firmly into the hands of an audience we are attempting to persuade.

Rhetoric uses emotional discourse, thoughtfully created, and properly applied, to communicate new ideas.

-continues



The liberal arts were based upon the Hellenistic education called enkyklios paideia, taught by fifth century BCE Sophists to the upper classes, and promoted by Roman luminaries like Cicero. The Classical Roman architect Marcus Vitruvius Pollio (80 BCE – 15 CE), who was raised in the early liberal arts tradition, admonished the architect that expertise arose from both practice and reasoning. In his Ten Books on Architecture Vitruvius wrote that due to the broad range of skills required to build excellent architectural structures, architects must be educated from an early age.

TRIVIUM

1	Input (Grammar, Knowledge)	Gathering data from an eclectic array of sources <i>without</i> pre-judging it	Answers <i>Who?, What?, When?, & Where?</i> (raw data)
2	Processing (Logic, Understanding)	Comprised of 3 basic sub-steps: Filtration, Correlation, & Analysis (Quadrivium largely utilized here)	Enables us to learn <i>Why?</i> (What is the reason, meaning, or purpose?)
3	Output (Rhetoric, Wisdom)	Speech and action based upon the knowledge that one has gathered and understands	This is <i>How</i> Knowledge and Understanding are propagated so that real and positive change can be created

Practicality to Masonry

The true goal of Freemasonry is to provide a framework of how to be in the world, to make that world better for those that follow us but more importantly, for our own betterment.

We cannot communicate lofty ideals via ritual alone – we need to be able to express what we have learned to a wider audience, to bring new thoughts to a wider world.

Once the Trivium is learned we start with the Quadrivium. The Quadrivium is the four subjects, or arts of arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy because these four things make up the world in which we live.

Foundation to Higher Learning

The quadrivium is considered the foundation for the study of philosophy and theology.

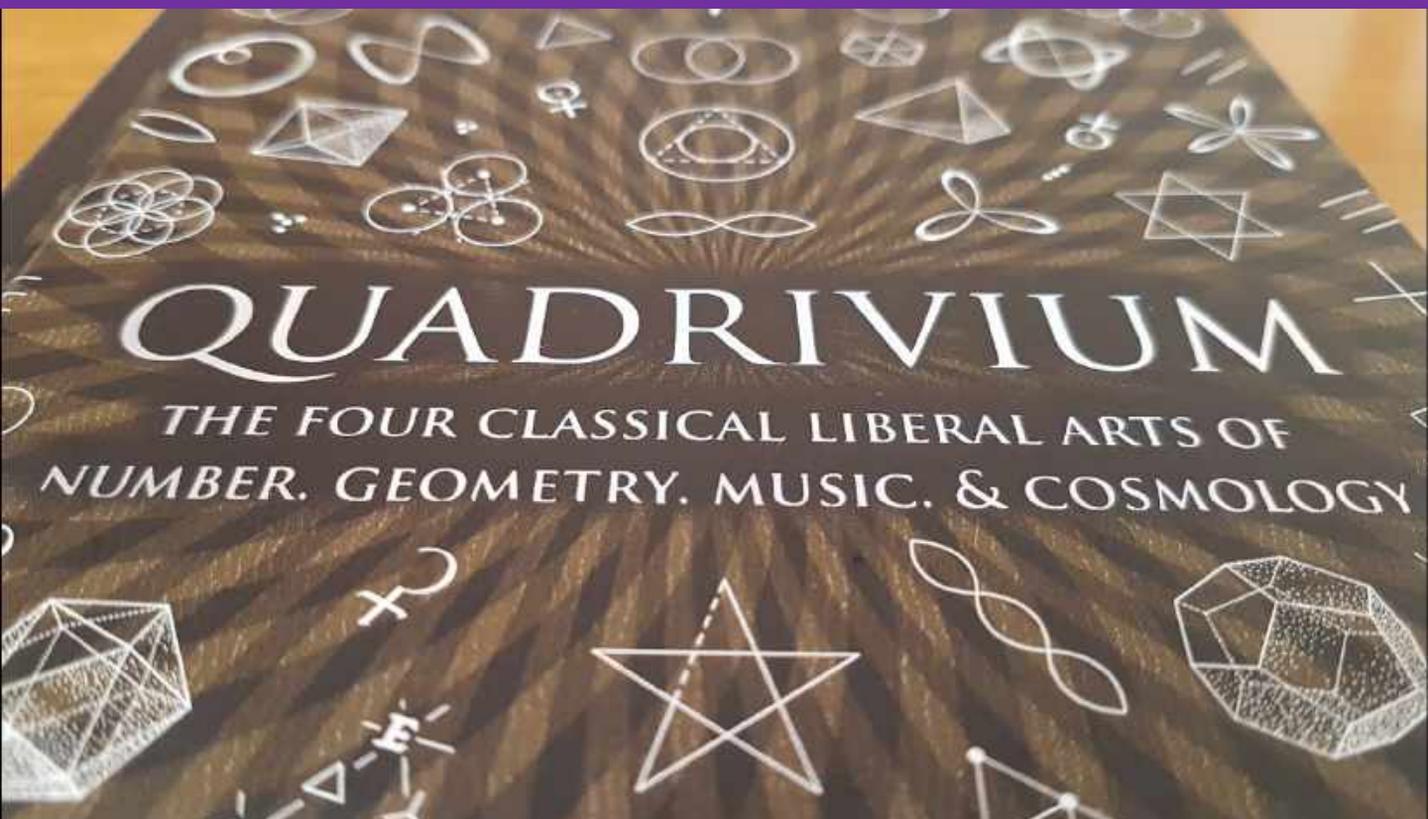
The quadrivium was the upper division of the medieval education in the liberal arts, which comprised arithmetic (number in the abstract), geometry (number in space), music (number in time), and astronomy (number in space and time).

These four studies compose the secondary part of the curriculum outlined by Plato in [The Republic](#) and are described in the seventh book of that work (in the order Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy, Music).

The quadrivium is implicit in early writings of [Pythagoras](#) and in the [De nuptis of Martianus Capella](#), although the term “quadrivium was not used until [Boethius](#) early in the sixth century.

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As [Proclus](#) wrote:

“The Pythagoreans considered all mathematical science to be divided into four parts: one half they marked off as concerned with quantity, the other half with magnitude; and each of these they posited as twofold. A quantity can be considered in regard to its character by itself or in its relation to another quantity, magnitudes as either stationary or in motion. Arithmetic, then, studies quantities as such, music the relations between quantities, geometry magnitude at rest, spherics [astronomy] magnitude inherently moving.”

The Masonic Connection

The earliest evidence linking Masonry to the Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences is the [Regius Poem](#), written around 1390.

The early Lodges of the 18th century were brought about in a time of great change in the world. The Enlightenment was just getting into full swing, and everything was changing: religion, education, science, and politics.

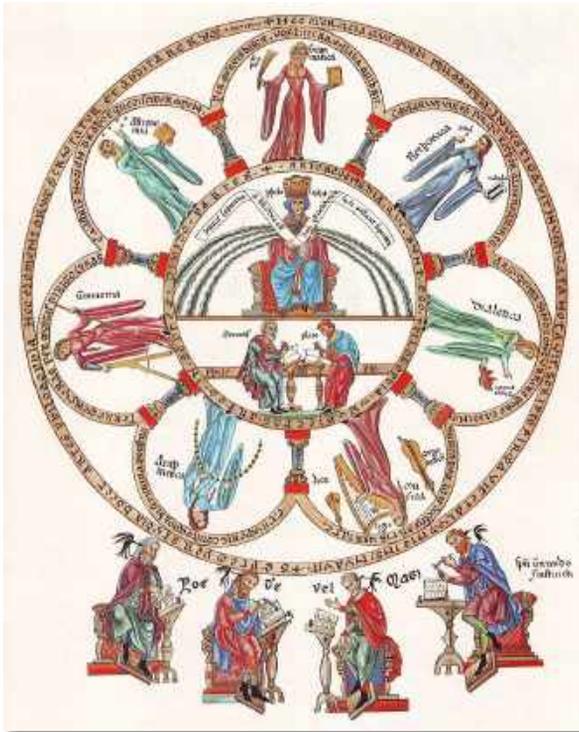
Not everyone was thrilled with all these changes, especially those formerly in control of all aspects of the common man’s life.



The Seven Liberal Arts were first introduced to us in the ritual of the Fellow Craft Degree

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The question that every Mason should ask himself could be: what can I use today, in the 21st century out of these “ancient” disciplines; whether is there anything for us, speculative Masons, to be learned and applied in our everyday life and actions?

So where else could these things be discussed safely if not in a Lodge? Many of the concepts of Masonry, while considered part of our culture today, were quite radical in their time. The simplest example being the acceptance of people of a wide range of faiths. That kind of thinking would have got you killed in earlier times and in fact did account for a great many deaths.

In looking at the ritual and lectures one can see the Enlightenment ideas over and over. The various philosophic paths are represented as well. So it is very likely that Masonic Lodges were in fact places of great learning and discussion about topics of great importance to all men in an atmosphere of safety and cooperation.

People everywhere are realizing this practice of getting people together to obtain critical thinking skills and the art of holding discussions have been missing in our society for some time.

One contribution to the community is to get people thinking and sharing views on important questions. Not just surface discussion but deep thinking, challenging your beliefs, really digging down, enabling you to figure out why you believe what you believe.

Our ritual and lectures repeatedly teach us skills for better learning and improving oneself.

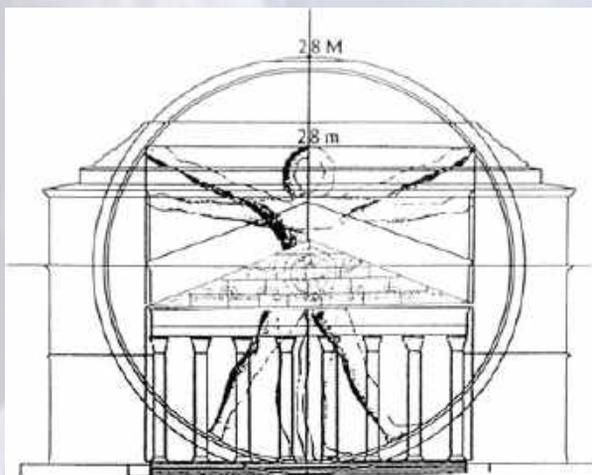
Practicing the liberal arts involves uncovering the beginning principles of each art, which span out into lines of reasoning, and then connecting them. For instance, in logic, you start with looking at the terms, categorizing them, then working them into propositions and figuring out how they relate to each other and form syllogisms and so on.

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Balancing the relationship between the humanities and sciences provides trenchant insight into the practicality of what we learned when we first encountered the idea of the trivium and quadrivium in the Fellow Craft degree.

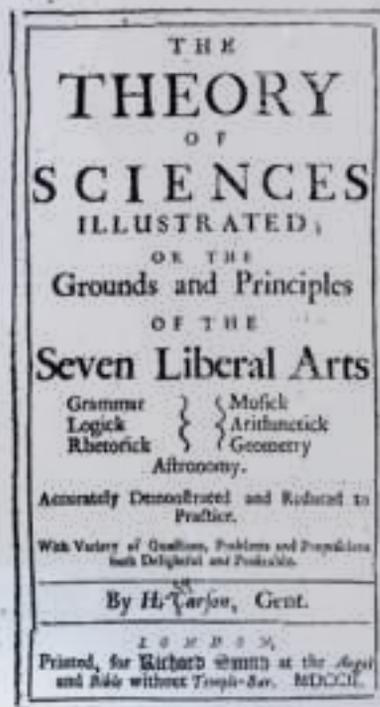
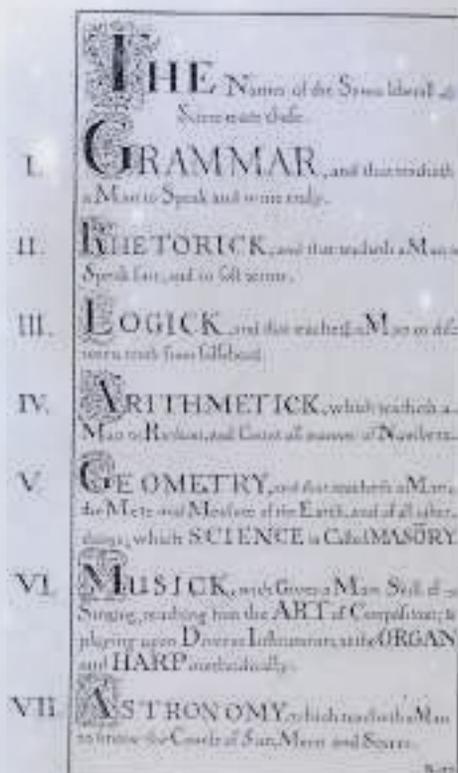
Plato saw the difference between the lower utility of using geometry to construct a temple and a higher utility of forming the soul. These arts each contribute to the formation and ordering of the soul, and that is the amazing capacity of what we can do as Masons.



From ancient times there are references to its symbolic function of the Pantheon complex. According to Dio Cassius, it resembles the heavens, but cosmological interpretations do not take into consideration the real metrical dimensions of the whole complex nor the relation between its numbers, shapes, forms and proportions.

Some scholars take the neo-Pythagorean roots of the Pantheon seriously, interpreting the architecture as an integrated visualization of a mathematically-conceptualized theory of the cosmos, consisting of an amalgamation of cosmological, geodetical and anthropomorphical dimensions. To generate harmony, the laws of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and musical proportions are fused.

The Pantheon can be considered an architectural image of the Pythagorean cosmos, a "living organism" with a mathematically-proportioning "soul" and unchanging, "eternal" consonant-symphonic ratios. It "resembles the heavens", but is a resemblance based on mathematical knowledge, a summary of the ancient quadrivium.



Changing of the Guard

VWB James Nero

As we end out the year, I would like to thank Brother Ken Woo for running for and accepting the position of Treasurer while I run for and go through the chairs.

Our Lodge overall financially is healthy. I will note that in the budget that was passed out at the December Stated Meeting to be approved at the January Stated meeting, that there was a deficit of about \$16,000.

That shortfall would come out to about \$140 per member. We cover this with earnings from our investment account. As of December 31, 2021, our investment balance is sitting at about \$585,000. If you presume a conservative return of 5%, that would give us about \$29,000 next year, so overall we are still projecting a net gain for the ensuing year.

I would like to say that our Financial Advisor that the Lodge has been using for over a decade is retiring, and with the new treasurer, we will have a new financial advisor. We have always had a more conservative mix in our investments, and that our new treasurer and financial advisor will handle all of that.

I looked back and when I took back the Treasurer position in 2016, our account balance was at \$597,000. So, we have just a little less money six years later after having some pretty major draws. Could we have more? Probably, but we utilize our returns too much to have a super aggressive mix of stocks.

Our main draw over the years, aside from COVID building issues, has been our Temple Board improvements. Since I've been Treasurer, we have replaced the roof (twice), the HVAC ducts, all three HVAC pumps, the carpets, the kitchen stove, and countless other small projects. These are the major expenses which have pulled down our investments.

The Temple Board is looking at several projects to work on this year where we could improve our building.

Some are items I am sure we want to happen quickly and are security related, like our front door. Others are longer term, and more wants, like an improved, upgraded, and ADA compliant restrooms. If these come to the Lodge for a vote, I ask you consider them wisely. If you want a say in what is going on, Temple Board meetings are on the fourth Monday, and as a member of the Lodge, you are invited.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as Treasurer the past six years. I enjoyed the position very much. A special thank you to Right Worshipful Brother Don for making my job so easy.



2022 Will Be An Interesting Year Financially

Bro. Ken Woo

My thanks to the excellent job to **VWB James Nero** for his tenure as Lodge Treasurer. His will be large shoes to fill. **VWM James** will continue as Treasurer of the Temple Board. I have served as a Lodge Treasurer for six years at my previous Lodge and at each turn the Installing Master was **VWB Jeremy Yielding**. You would think **VWB Jeremy** would have learned by now that they kept re-electing me until I got it right. So that's how I wound up at Steilacoom.

Qualifications

I am not an accountant by training. I am an Economist, which should tell you one thing and that is if you placed all the economists in the world end-to-end, they'll never reach a conclusion. There's a reason why economics is called the "dismal science." If that is so, I clearly am a dismal scientist. If you think about it, it's a contradiction in terms. I also have an MBA degree, which is another reason for the term *caveat emptor*. Here's what I learned in business school:

- I will always ask **WM Lance Orloff** what his core competencies are.
- I decided to re-organize my family into a "team- based organization."
- I tell my kids dating is really test marketing.
- I can spell "paradigm."
- I actually know what a paradigm is.
- I believe you never have any problems in your life, just "issues" and "improvement opportunities." **Mr. Senior Warden**, I'm keeping an eye on you!
- I can calculate my own personal cost of capital.
- I refer to my previous life as "my sunk costs."
- I feel sorry for Dilbert's boss.
- None of my favorite publications have cartoons.
- I once told my wife we need to do some more market research before we produce another child.
- At my last family reunion, I wanted to have an emergency meeting about our brand equity.
- I use the term "value-added" without falling down laughing.



But seriously, I take this position with a degree of humility in that you have entrusted me with the assets of our Lodge. I can only hope I can live up to those expectations.

Lodge Financial Reports

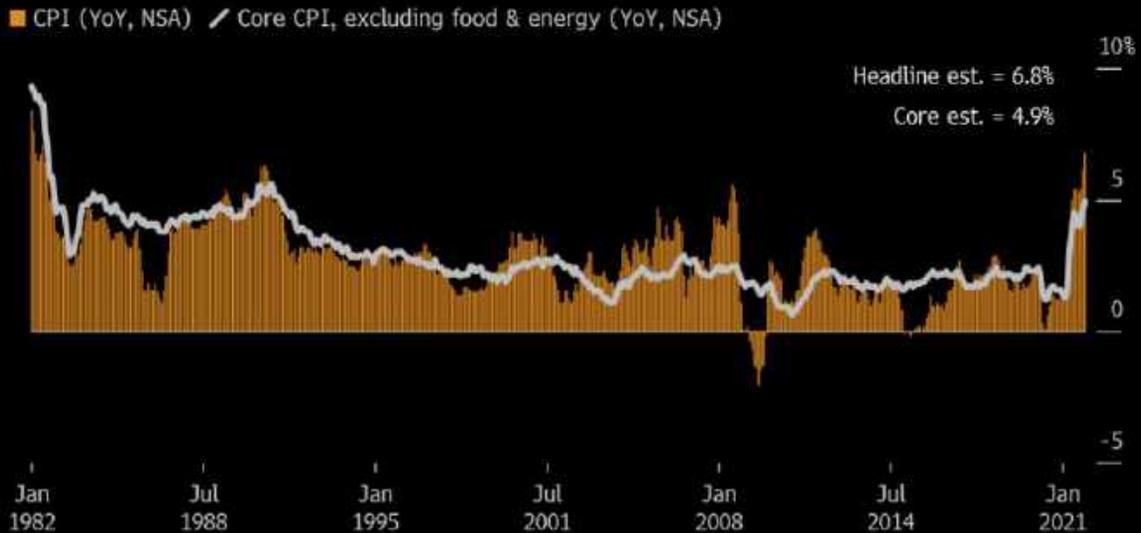
As a matter of process, I would like to improve on **VWB James'** work by having detailed financial reports attached to **RW Don Campbell** minutes each month and will answer any questions you might have outside of the stated meeting. I believe in brevity in stated meetings, no long-boring recitations of expenses and revenues. A budget is approved in advance and to report during Lodge of expenses and revenues is redundant and time-consuming. If there are variances, those will come before the officer's group to review and to report, if necessary, to the entire Lodge. I believe most of you are interested in two things: 1) Are we solvent? and 2) Am I giving you accurate and trustworthy information?

-continues



Price Pressures Accelerate

U.S. November headline inflation increased by the most since 1982 on annual basis



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bloomberg survey

Bloomberg

I believe we are in adequate financial shape after reviewing our financial data. I have addressed areas for improvement to the Worshipful Master. As for accuracy and trustworthiness, would you like your ring and wallet back now?

I also believe in no surprises. I don't like being surprised and I don't like surprising people.

The 2022 Budget

The 2022 Lodge budget of \$28,800.00 was presented at the December stated meeting. A vote of the membership is scheduled for the January stated meeting. The negative numbers are misleading as they are covered by investment and interest income. The increases were basically a function of zero revenue in the past year, inflation and a shortage of goods and services.

Specifically:

Food Prices. Food prices continue their steady climb, rising in November nearly as much as they did for all of 2019 before the pandemic wreaked havoc on supply chains and dramatically altered consumer demand. This will negatively impact food purchases for Lodge meals in CY 2022.

Consumer Prices. The consumer price index surged 6.8% in November compared to 12 months ago. It's the largest rise in close to 40 years. Core inflation, stripping out food and energy, increased 4.6%, the fastest gain since August 1991. Energy, shelter and vehicle costs led the gains, which more than wiped out the wage increases that workers received for the month.

Global Supply Chain Disruption The pandemic has disrupted nearly every aspect of the global supply chain — that's the usually invisible pathway of manufacturing, transportation and logistics that gets goods from where they are manufactured, mined or grown to where they are going. At the end of the chain is another company or a consumer who has paid for the finished product. Scarcity has caused the prices of many things to go higher. The New York Times has a good explanation [here](#).

Community Groups we support and serve: The inflationary environment and other issues outlined will most likely see an increased demand in services and contributions we provide to our youth groups, affiliated organizations and local non-profits. It's a vicious circle and there is no scientific way to predict an accurate short-term outcome.

The draft budget follows on the next page.



Steilacoom Lodge Proposed 2022 Budget

Steilacoom Lodge No. 2

						Through Nov	
		2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Budget
Revenues	Dues, per capita	3,920.00	10,123.00	4,438.00	7,509.00	3,476.90	3,500.00
	GL Life Membership Dividend	3,182.68	4,170.61	4,462.48	4,812.18	5,137.18	5,500.00
	GL Life Membership Pass Through	-	450.00	1,000.00	-	450.00	-
	Petitions	700.00	1,075.00	200.00	10.00	220.00	600.00
	Dinner Donations	1,557.24	1,195.00	922.54	445.00	444.00	1,200.00
	Table Lodge	-	1,000.00	890.00	-	-	1,000.00
	Other Donations	518.00	813.25	322.00	111.00	250.00	-
	Fundraising	1,851.50	230.00	96.00	198.00	707.00	-
		11,729.42	19,056.86	12,331.02	13,085.18	10,685.08	11,800.00
	Expenses	Rent	8,700.00	8,700.00	8,700.00	8,700.00	7,250.00
Grand Lodge Assessments		3,728.00	4,109.25	3,733.00	4,048.75	3,145.75	4,000.00
GL Life Membership Pass Through		-	450.00	1,000.00	-	450.00	-
Cemetery Maintenance		-	850.00	923.74	-	1,254.06	1,200.00
Dinner and Refreshments		2,651.45	2,193.52	1,902.36	569.82	1,342.30	2,800.00
Preparation Assistance		200.00	-	-	300.00	-	1,200.00
Warden's Conference		1,150.00	495.00	990.00	-	-	2,000.00
Supplies, Postage, Travel		2,763.26	4,036.14	2,337.52	1,846.66	2,905.41	3,000.00
Bikes for Books		344.21	342.16	537.29	-	159.03	500.00
Donations - Youth Group, Fraternal Assistance		225.00	1,885.30	618.11	1,115.00	410.40	1,000.00
Activities - Cemetery, Picnic, Guys Night, etc.		1,443.77	347.34	741.83	880.20	446.84	1,000.00
Outreach and Assistance		-	-	-	-	-	500.00
Table Lodge		-	1,010.00	670.39	-	-	1,000.00
Website/Zoom		300.00	92.98	-	-	571.26	600.00
Tri-Lodge and District Communications		-	-	-	-	-	100.00
Installation		477.50	487.62	350.00	-	250.00	600.00
Memberships		135.00	135.00	270.00	-	100.00	300.00
Bank Charges		15.00	-	60.00	-	10.00	-
Personal Property Taxes		32.27	31.51	28.12	35.23	34.03	100.00
	22,165.46	25,165.82	22,862.36	17,495.66	18,329.08	28,600.00	
	Profit (Loss)	(10,436.04)	(6,108.96)	(10,531.34)	(4,410.48)	(7,644.00)	(16,800.00)
Transfers	Interest Income	62.02	39.07	6.58	14.89	7.34	-
	Transfer from Investments	15,000.00	15,000.00	8,000.00	50,000.00	25,000.00	16,800.00
	Transfer to STMHA	(13,000.00)	(28,000.00)	-	(48,600.46)	(10,000.00)	-
	Change in Bank Account Balance	(8,374.02)	(19,069.89)	(2,524.76)	(2,996.05)	7,363.34	-





This year has been interesting as well as sometimes frustrating for the Lodge because of COVID-19 and the restrictions and changes it has caused.

We've had ZOOM meetings, hybrid ZOOM and in person, and for the last part of the year actual live meetings.

At the end of 2020 WB Bruce's year term was extended for 2021 since the Washington Masonic Code prevented us from having an election.

He and his officers worked diligently to keep the Lodge functioning as best they could.

There were Monday ZOOM meetings twice a month primarily for fellowship, and Thursday ZOOM meetings primarily for education. These meetings were attended by Brothers from around the country and the world. We have continued the Thursday meetings in person to practice ritual and also have some education.

Membership has remained relatively stable at about 141 members. Four Brothers have joined from other Lodges with two more affiliations pending.

We have had inquiries with up to 20 men who have an interest in Masonry. So far we have elected an outstanding young man who has taken his EA degree and is scheduled for his FC degree in January.

Since our bylaws changed several years ago dues have increased each year and will continue to do so. Dues are now 10 times the state minimum wage which is increasing each year. 2021 it was \$13.69 or \$136.90 for 2022. It will increase to \$14.33 or \$143.30. Since rereading the by-laws the amount is supposed to be rounded to the nearest dollar so it will be \$143.00.

Several members have decided to buy a life membership so they will no longer have to pay annual dues. The costs range from \$650 for those age 18-35 and reduce to \$400 for those 66 and over. Contact the Secretary if you are interested or have questions.

As I stated earlier we've stayed at 141 members even though there were 8 deaths reported. We will lose up to 7 more who have not paid their 2021 dues.

Installation of 2022 officers has been postponed until the 14 January stated meeting due to the severely inclement weather which continues the strange year we have experienced.

This installation is to be my 25th and last as Secretary whenever it may be. WB Bruce Everett is to be appointed/installed as Assistant Secretary with every intention of assuming the office of Secretary at the following year's installation.

I wish to thank everyone who has assisted to make this year and all the previous years an interesting and challenging part of my life.

RWB Donald J. Campbell



Funny Stuff



Seven Habits of Highly Mediocre Brethren

1. Ritual Karaoke during Treasurer's Report.
2. Substituting scenes from the musical "Grease" into the Fellowcraft degree.
3. Conversational Pig Latin during Zoom meetings.
4. Wears invisible sneakers.
5. During "announcements," specifies special pricing for the warranty on everyone's vehicle, including the donkey parked in front of the building.
6. Performing the Working Tools lecture becomes more tolerable when done in Cookie Monster's voice.
7. Tying all the white aprons together into one.



Steilacoom Lodge's 2022 Officers' Installation was rescheduled because of two feet of snow



More Funny Stuff

**HOW PM'S BE WATCHING
NEW WM'S RUNNING THE LODGE**



FREEMASON

[Facebook.com/FraternalTies](https://www.facebook.com/FraternalTies)



What my friends think I do



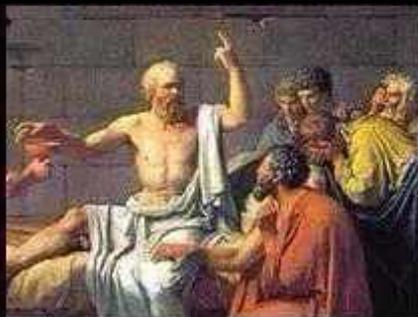
What my mom thinks I do



What society thinks I do



What conspiracy nuts think I do



What I think I do



What I really do



What the Geico Robot thinks of having our ritual published online.

Even More Funny Stuff

Dubious Predictions for the New Year

- Down or Gore-Tex jackets will protect you from climate change only in the winter
- Nanoparticles will make alcohol consumption faster and make you funnier
- Smart-Aleck cars will become the new rage
- Your genome will be sequenced before you are born
- COVID will be replaced by the heartbreak of psoriasis
- The Lodge will add smart carpets that will make getting to the East and West great entertainment
- Before each stated meeting, we will be forced to prove the Worshipful Master is not a robot.
- Whoever inserted a copy of Mad magazine in the Volume of Sacred Law, very funny. Not.
- Spinal cord implants will be the major social event of the year.
- Bringing the Lodge into the 21st century, the Tyler will now be armed with rubber bands
- One of us will celebrate our 150th birthday (Hint: It's not Keith Richards)
- The higher you go in Masonry, the more painful the fall. Think about it.
- You will kick a bad habit and acquire two new ones.
- You will not be able to find The Metaverse in dirty socks.
- Bitcoin can be used at Lodge game nights.
- Russia will invade Tukwila. And no one will care.
- For those of us of a certain age, the Lodge will be installing comfortable cushions on the sidelines. You know the type - the ones that make a funny noise when you sit.
- The Worshipful Master wants to turn RW Don Campbell's office into a skateboard park.

Watching TV Will Rot Your Brain

The Lost Symbol TV Series - Truth or Baloney?

In September, NBC's streaming service Peacock debuted a new television adaptation of Dan Brown's *The Lost Symbol*, based on the follow-up novel to the smash hit *The Da Vinci Code*. One of the most anticipated novels of all time, *The Lost Symbol* originally set several sales records when it was released in 2009—selling a million copies on its first day and staying on the *New York Times* bestseller list for 29 weeks.

The novel also touched off a sudden explosion of interest in Freemasonry, which provides a mysterious backdrop to the plot of the story. The term "Freemason" ended the year among the top 10 search words on Yahoo, and during a single six-week period, was the subject of 127 major-media stories, and sparked debate inside our fraternity over the dramatic liberties the film has taken with regard to Freemasonry.

Sorting Fact from Fiction

While *The Lost Symbol* casts Freemasonry in an overall positive light, the book does include a few inaccuracies—and not surprisingly, many hail back to popular Masonic myths. Brother Brent Morris, managing editor of the *Scottish Rite Journal*, was asked to dispel four Masonic myths perpetuated by Brown.

False: Masons drink wine from human skulls and do other evil things as part of their degree rituals.

The first scene in *The Lost Symbol* features a Masonic initiate drinking wine from a human skull in the Scottish Rite House of the Temple. Morris says this ritual description can be traced back to an 1887 book called "*Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated*" by Jonathan Blanchard, who believed that Masonry was evil and should be destroyed.

"He started a group called the National Christian Association dedicated to the destruction of fraternal organizations and secret societies, and he published all the rituals he could get a hold of," Morris says.

-continues



The series is a prequel to the Robert Langdon film series, and features Ashley Zukerman as fictional Harvard symbologist Robert Langdon. It also stars Eddie Izzard, Beau Knapp, Rick Gonzalez, Valorie Curry and Sumalee Montano in main roles.





He adds that many of the rituals that Blanchard exposed, including the drinking from a human skull, came from the Cerneau Scottish Rite, a rogue branch of Scottish Rite that was established by Frenchman Joseph Cerneau. Morris says the Cerneau Scottish Rite operated in direct competition with the Scottish Rite's Southern and Northern Masonic jurisdictions until about 1890, when it finally died out.

False: The 33rd degree is the pinnacle of Freemasonry.



The Lost Symbol makes a common mistake by confusing the degrees of Freemasonry and the Scottish Rite. For example, Brown portrays one of his central characters as a 33rd degree Mason, part of the "highest echelon of the world's oldest surviving brotherhood," where only an elite few members know the secrets of mankind.



The truth, of course, is that there's no Masonic degree of higher rank or importance than the third degree, that of the Master Mason. Contrary to The Lost Symbol, a Mason with the 33rd degree is not at the zenith of all Freemasonry but instead has gained an honorary title within the Scottish Rite, recognizing his significant contribution to society or Masonry in general.

Brown has fun with the origin of the 33rd degree, suggesting that the number was chosen because Jesus was 33 years old when he was crucified, God is mentioned 33 times in the book of Genesis, there are 33 vertebrae in the spine, and so on. True? Morris says the reason for the number 33 is a mystery.

False: There is a Masonic pyramid in Washington, D.C., that leads to "ancient mysteries" buried long ago.



Morris says that despite age-old beliefs to the contrary, the pyramid is not a fundamental part of Masonic symbolism, and there is no Masonic pyramid—be it a building, a map, or a handheld object—that leads to lost wisdom as described in The Lost Symbol.

-continues



“Part of this goes back to the long-held belief that the Great Seal of the United States secretly contains Masonic emblems and that the uncompleted pyramid with the all-seeing eye is a Masonic emblem,” Morris says.

He adds that the Great Seal myth is promoted not only by naive non-Masons, but also by mistaken Masons who think it’s a cool story. The truth, Morris explains, is that three committees designed the Great Seal, and the only Masonic committee member, Benjamin Franklin, contributed no Masonic emblems to the design process. Furthermore, both the uncompleted pyramid and the all-seeing eye were added by non-Masons.

As for the ancient mysteries, *The Lost Symbol* suggests that Masons are the last remaining of secret fraternities that were developed to protect this mystical wisdom, said to contain power for elevating man to the realm of the gods.

“The ancient mysteries generally refer to a series of religious practices in the Mediterranean Basin,” Morris says. “These were basically religious fraternities where you would go through an initiation process. At one time there was a theory that Freemasonry was a descendant of the ancient mysteries, because here you have a fraternity... and they’re teaching their members to know more about God and the world and themselves. But it turns out that while that’s a nice theory, there is no historical connection.”



False: To hide the ancient mysteries, early Freemasons used an encoded language called the “Masonic cipher” that was legible only to the worthy.

Morris says that by 1745, Freemasons had started using a cipher, which he describes as essentially a tic-tac-toe grid with the letters of old-world alphabets. But that cipher was used merely as a symbolic gesture, not as a secret language. Today, he adds, a Mason might be shown how to use the cipher as part of receiving, say, a Royal Arch degree. “It’s very much like giving you a key to the city,” Morris says. “The key to the city doesn’t really unlock anything. It’s a symbolic presentation.”

This article was excerpted from an article by Cason Lane in The California Freemason magazine. More Fact vs. Fiction on the television series “The Lost Symbol” is discussed by WM Maynard Ferguson by clicking [this link](#).



NEWS FROM GRAND LODGE

Are Our Lodges A Community Treasure?

MW Cameron Bailey



***Most Worshipful Cameron Bailey
Grandmaster***



*Centennial Lodge in Snohomish was
chartered in 1877*

I quite often hear the lament that our Lodges used to be filled with the leaders of our community, but now rarely are. Certainly, we see this with our Legislature. Today, to my knowledge, only one of Washington's Legislators is a member of the Grand Lodge of Washington. But if we look at overlapping membership in the early days of our State, we see that virtually all early Washington Legislators were Freemasons.

If we hope to see a return to that level of influence, if we want to see our elected officials within Masonry, if we want to see our bank presidents, our attorneys, our Chamber of Commerce directors, our doctors in our Fraternity, well then, we must make it possible for them to join.

This is an issue that every Lodge in our Grand Jurisdiction falls down on, so please don't think that I am picking on Centennial Lodge, but I'm going to use my own story in relation to Centennial Lodge to illustrate how we can make it so that these men that we want to attract to our Fraternity can actually be in a position to join us.

If I can delve into local history a bit, doing so will illustrate my argument:

- Centennial Lodge was Chartered in 1877.
- In 1889, the State of Washington was founded.
- In 1890, The City of Snohomish was incorporated.

My family, were sort of latecomers to Snohomish. Albert and Ellen Bailey beat the State and the City, by settling here in 1888. They started by farming 40 acres along the river.

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In 1918, their son, my Great Grandfather Earle took over that little farm, and began expanding it. Expansion that continued throughout his lifetime. Today, generations later, we are still farming that land just south of the City, indeed most of my family still lives right there on our farm.

About the time Earle took over the farm, he joined Centennial Lodge, and he maintained his membership throughout his lifetime. Although Grand Lodge records show that he had some difficulty paying his dues on time during some of the years of the Great Depression. He died a 50 plus year member of Centennial Lodge.

Since those humble beginnings as newcomers in 1888, my family has been mightily involved with the Snohomish Community. Earle led an organization called The Seattle Milk Shippers, an organization that still exists today, in our time we know it as Darigold. My grandfather Cliff served as a Snohomish County

Commissioner, and after Snohomish County achieved Home Rule Status, a County Councilman. In fact, the Charter that established Home Rule for Snohomish County was largely written on my desk. He later went on to represent Snohomish in our State Senate. Beyond that, both my Grandfather, and my uncle served on the Snohomish School Board, and both led that Board as President.

As for me, well, I've served as a member of the Snohomish City Council, and was deeply honored to lead this City, for a time, as its Mayor.

Given this history, I think that there can be little doubt but that I am a Snohomish man, through and through. My family has been extremely active in this community for six generations now, and we aren't leaving anytime soon.

So, I'm a Snohomish guy, but when it came time to join a Lodge, I went up Highway 2. I joined Sultan-Monroe Lodge.

Why did I do that?

Why did the Mayor of this City go to Monroe and join a Lodge there?

The answer is simple really.

I'd figured out that in order to become a Freemason, one needed to ask a Freemason.

Well, the trouble with that was that was I didn't know any Freemasons in Snohomish.

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*A younger undated photo of our Grandmaster
MW Cameron Bailey*



*MW Cameron Bailey on a visit to Steilacoom
Lodge in 2021 on the annual opening of Grand
Mound Lodge*

I knew where the Lodge was of course, for I lived not far from it in one of our historic Snohomish homes, but I didn't know any Masons.

I did sort of know a Mason in Monroe, so he's the one I asked.

And that is how my home Lodge ended up being Sultan-Monroe Lodge.

It is a simple explanation really, but let's ponder it for a minute.

Should there be a community, anywhere in this State, in which the Mayor and other local elected officials haven't met the Worshipful Master of the Lodge?



Shouldn't the doctors, attorneys, business owners, and other professionals within our communities all have opportunity to meet the leaders of our Lodges?

If we hope to have these kinds of men in our Lodge, how can that be accomplished if they do not know who we are?

How can we say, 'To Be A Freemason, Ask A Freemason' and actually have that work, if we lock ourselves away, hide in our Lodges so that no one can find us to ask?

When I was Mayor of this City, we built a lot of stuff. As a result, my name is on a lot of little stones on public facilities in this community.

Most notably in my opinion, our beautiful new Library.

The thing is, none of those stones are Masonic Cornerstones. They all could have been. We in City government at that time would have been deeply honored to have the Freemasons lay cornerstones on our facilities

Alas though, we had no idea how to get in contact with the Freemasons. We knew about this building. It looked vacant 99% of the time, and to be honest about the only sign of life ever seen at it were the gem and rock shows that took place here. Again, I am not picking on Centennial Lodge. This is a failing in every Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction.

I am simply using Centennial Lodge to illustrate my point, because of my own personal history with Snohomish.

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Sultan-Monroe Masonic Lodge #160 is the result of the successful consolidation of two smaller lodges, Monroe #160 and Sultan #179. As a result of the consolidation, Sultan-Monroe becomes a Lodge of over 100 members with a strong financial structure. This will enable the Lodge to continue the fine Masonic work and traditions these two Lodges were noted for in the past. Monroe #160 was chartered in 1907 and Sultan in 1910.





Most Worshipful Cameron Bailey is a Past Master and honored member of Centralia Lodge #63 and is currently the Grandmaster of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Washington F&AM.

If we hope to attract the very best men in our community to our Lodge, then we must get to know those men, so that if and when they decide that they are ready to join our Ancient Craft they know who to ask about doing so.

We need to get our local elected officials into our Lodge for dinner, and ask them to explain their long term vision for our community.

We need to invite the Chamber of Commerce into our Lodge for dinner, asking them to talk about their current initiatives, and offering our help for the future.

We need to invite the President of our Local bank to dinner with our Lodge, and ask him to talk about the possibilities for economic development within our City.

We have hospital districts. Who better to invite to a Lodge dinner to talk about local health initiatives than our local hospital district Commissioner?

Let's get our Masonic Temples Open.
Let's start cooking or catering some fine meals.

And Let's invite the men who lead our Community in to talk with us as a Lodge.

Let's make those meals fun, and a quality experience for our guests.

If we do that, those men will know who to ask about Freemasonry when the time is right for them to become Freemasons.

If we don't do that, we will never actually succeed in attracting these men to our Fraternity, for no one wants to have to spend hours digging around the internet, just to try and figure out which one of his neighbors might be a Freemason.

We can do this. We can, with dedication and time, see a future like our past, when a non-Masonic male Legislator is a true oddity.

Let's do it together.



FROM OUR DISTRICT 15 DEPUTY

Greetings from our Grand Master, MW Cameron Bailey, and the Grand Lodge Team.

We are looking forward to the New Year of 2022. It looks to be a very busy one as we return to in-person meetings and to new leadership on our Lodges.

I would like to highlight two upcoming events of interest in 2022.

The District 15 Meeting with the Grand Master will be a virtual meeting held on Tuesday, January 18th at 7:00pm.

This is our chance to Honor the Grand Master, to highlight the activities of District 15, and to get the latest information on the activities of the Grand Lodge.

You will also hear from those brothers who have made themselves available for election as Junior Grand Warden at the 2022 Grand Lodge Session in June.

You can register for the meeting on Grandview Portal. This will send you the necessary links to be able to sign into the meeting.

I hope to see all of you at the meeting.

The Grand Lodge Leadership Retreat is scheduled for Wenatchee on March 18 – 20.

While the primary focus of the retreat is Wardens and Deacons of the Lodge, it is open to any Master Mason on a space available basis.

The committee has developed multiple classes on a wide range of subjects touching on all aspects of the Lodge experience.

Information is available at the Grand Lodge Web Site www.freemason-wa.org/leadership-retreat . Registration will open on January 1, 2022.



*Deputy to the
Grandmaster
VWM Mark Conlee*

I encourage all of you to get involved in the activities of Steilacoom Lodge.

There is a need for help in many areas, especially with contacting and meeting with those men who have expressed an interest in potentially joining Freemasonry.

The act of meeting with members who can explain their reasons for participating in Masonry is the best method we have to educate these men about the fraternity.

I wish all of you a Happy New Year and I look forward to meeting you at the Lodge meetings.

Mark Conlee

Deputy of the Grand Master in District 15



A Message from Washington Masonic Charities



Sickness & Distress – Masonic Outreach Services is Here to Assist

Do you know a Mason, Masonic widow, or member of our Masonic family who needs assistance because of age, illness, disability, or hardship? Maybe you could use a little help yourself? Masonic Outreach Services' professional case managers do home visits, assess needs, and find solutions that help our members and Masonic widows.

If you know someone who may benefit from our assistance, help connect them to us by calling **(844) 288-3531** or emailing: outreach@masonscare.org.





**SCAM
ALERT!**

There is a fake email circulating that says it is from Charles E. Wood, Grand Master asking for you to send gift cards. Please delete and do not respond. It is a scam!

Scammers Running Amok

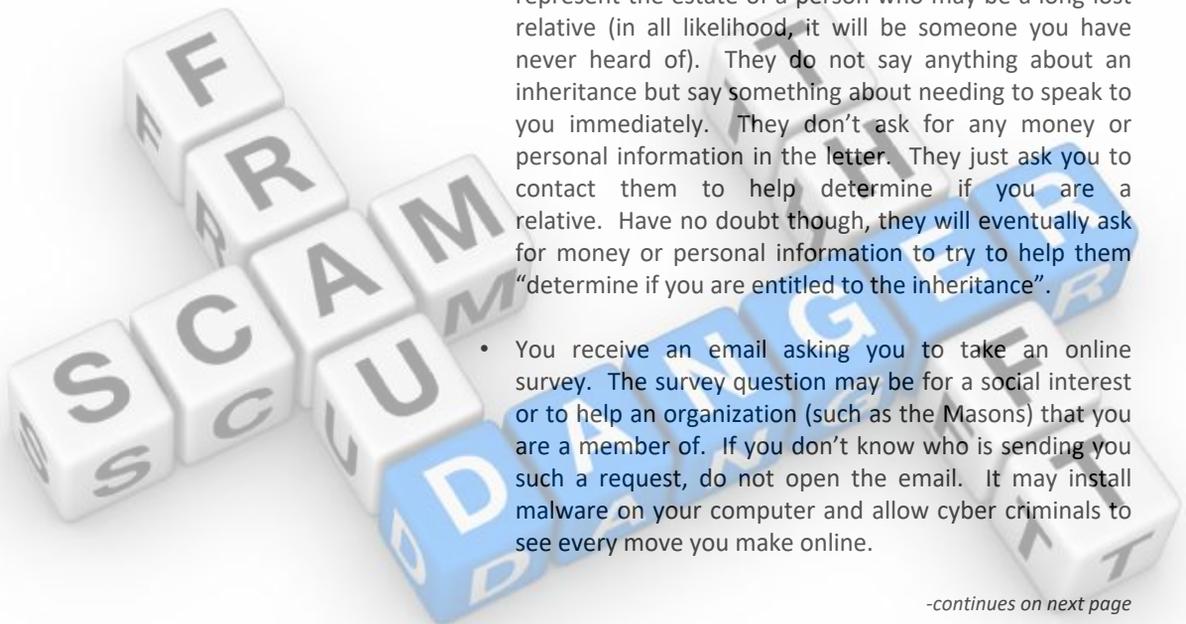
RW Clint Brown
Grand Secretary

We have seen an uptick at the Grand Lodge office in scam emails and people pretending to be the Grand Master asking for money. Scammers continue to do what they do because they are successful. However, if we are vigilant, there are ways to avoid becoming a victim.

Scammers are getting more sophisticated every day and they prey on people's generosity, trust or fear. Many scammers are not asking for money when they make initial contact. They may have your personal information and use real names that you can verify on the internet. For example, they may use the name of a law firm or business that you can easily find with an internet search. However, further investigation will show that the phone number or email address are different than the ones listed for that business. Here are a few scams that we have heard about.

- You receive an email from a law firm saying they represent the estate of a person who may be a long-lost relative (in all likelihood, it will be someone you have never heard of). They do not say anything about an inheritance but say something about needing to speak to you immediately. They don't ask for any money or personal information in the letter. They just ask you to contact them to help determine if you are a relative. Have no doubt though, they will eventually ask for money or personal information to try to help them "determine if you are entitled to the inheritance".
- You receive an email asking you to take an online survey. The survey question may be for a social interest or to help an organization (such as the Masons) that you are a member of. If you don't know who is sending you such a request, do not open the email. It may install malware on your computer and allow cyber criminals to see every move you make online.

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- You receive a telephone call from someone claiming to be raising money for or wanting to confirm personal information for a Masonic Lodge, a Shrine Temple or another similar organization. These are called Charity Scams. When in doubt, get their information and investigate their legitimacy.
- You receive an email or telephone call from a third party that something bad has happened to someone you know (the Grand Master is in a Honduran jail), and they need you to wire money to them immediately or better yet, they ask you to send gift cards. Again, a scammer looking for money.
- You receive a call from someone claiming to be with the IRS (or some other alphabet agency) and stating that you owe them money and must make a payment right away in order to avoid arrest.
- Don't believe everything you see. Spoofing is making an email or website appear to be associated with a well know organization (such as the Masons). If you receive an email or a link to a site but you are not familiar with the sender or they ask for personal information, do not click on it.
- If it seems too good to be true, it probably is. Trust the little voice inside your head. Scammers play on your sympathy, fear and trust.
- Be careful about information that you share either online or on social media platforms. I know people who have posted photos of there family while on vacation only to come home to find that their house has been robbed. Don't share personal information online.
- Update or change your passwords on a regular basis.

Here are some things to help you avoid being a victim:

- Scammers are notorious for bad grammar and spelling. This is also true with robo-call scams. I received a robo-call saying that the IRS would be "filling" a lawsuit.
- Scammers may pressure you to act immediately. If it is a phone call, they may tell you not to hang up and may threaten to arrest you, sue you or make some other threat to keep you from hanging up. This is an old ploy to try to prevent you from checking out their story and to get you to make a rash decision. Resist the pressure to act immediately.
- Beware of links within emails. If you see a suspicious link DO NOT click on it. You can rest your mouse (but don't click) on the link to see if the address matches the link that was typed in the message. If it does not match, it is a dangerous link.

It is important that you never give out personal or financial information to anyone you do not know. Grand Lodge or Washington Masonic Charities will never call you and ask for your Social Security number, bank account or credit card number. Also, take the time to call someone you trust or look up the information on the internet. The scammers do the same things over and over (with some variations) and someone has heard about the scam and will share that information with others.

If you have questions about an email or phone call that you receive, do not hesitate to contact my office to determine if it is legitimate. There are many people out there who are trying every way possible to take your money. Do not allow yourself to become a victim.



What Members Should Watch Out For



Be on the lookout for anything suspicious when receiving communications related to the following:



Tech support from an unknown source



Free cash offers



E-cards from an unknown person/email



Seasonal job offers from unknown persons/organizations



Free items or coupons from unknown persons/retailers



Checks or gift cards from an unknown person/source



Social media messages/offers from an unknown source



Emailed, mobile, social media, or web ads/deals that seem too good to be true (hint: they usually are!)

Masonry Dissected

By S. BRENT MORRIS, Ph.D., 33°, GRAND CROSS

One of the things that makes Masonic history so fascinating to me is how much we know and yet how little.

We know today there are three degrees in Craft Masonry: Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason. Those romantically inclined may think this situation dates from the time of King Solomon, but common sense should lead to the conclusion that this development is more recent.

A reasonable question to ask is, "How long have there been three degrees?"

Not that long, it turns out. There were only two degrees in 1717, when the first grand lodge was created in London. (That is also when grand masters and their powers were created, but that is another innovation on the body of Masonry for another time.)

There were still only two degrees in 1723 when James Anderson published *The Constitutions of the Freemasons* (a Fellow-Craft could be elected grand master then). Shortly after this publication, there were hints something else was going on, but no details.

Soon after 1723, more information started appearing. On October 12, 1725, a London music club for Freemasons, *Philomusicae et architecturae societas Apollini*, recorded in its minutes that the society "passed" two members as Master Masons.

The first recorded Master Mason Degree in a Masonic lodge was in Scotland's Lodge Dumbarton No. 18 on March 25, 1726, and yet there were no details of the ceremony. Something happened in these meetings that transformed a Fellow Craft into a Master Mason, but we do not know what it was.

MASONRY DISSECTED:

BEING

A Universal and Genuine DESCRIPTION

OF

All its BRANCHES from the Original to this Present Time.

As it is deliver'd in the

Constituted Regular Lodges

Both in CITY and COUNTRY,

According to the

Several Degrees of ADMISSION.

Giving an Impartial ACCOUNT of their Regular Proceeding in Initiating their New Members in the whole Three Degrees of MASONRY.

VIZ.

I. ENTER'D APPRENTICE, II. FELLOW CRAFT,
TICE, III. MASTER.

To which is added,

The Author's VINDICATION of himself.

By SAMUEL PRICHARD, late Member of a
CONSTITUTED LODGE.

LONDON:

Printed for J. WILKINSON, at the Three Flowers, Lane behind
the Chapter House near St. Paul's. 1718. (Price 6s)



*S. Brent Morris is a Master Mason, a 33° Scottish Rite Mason, and retired in 2021 as the editor of *The Scottish Rite Journal*, a publication of the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite Southern Jurisdiction.*

The Graham Manuscript of 1726 has a legend about the sons of Noah—Shem, Ham, and Japhet—raising the body of their father from the grave to find secrets on or about it. The Graham legend thus hints at coming ritual additions but does not give ceremonial details. On June 30, 1729, The Daily Post of London ran an advertisement addressed “to all Free and Accepted Masons, that have been made after the Antediluvian Manner.”

The ad refers to lecture to be given with “the whole History of the Widow’s Son killed by the Blow of a Beetle, afterwards found 3 Foot East, 3 Foot West, and 3 Foot perpendicular.”

This advertisement appears to be a jab at contemporary Masonry, but also appears to be another hint of things to come. It certainly is a foreshadowing of the Hiram Legend. Then on October 20, 1730, Samuel Prichard’s *Masonry Dissected* was published in London. Like Athena bursting fully armored from the forehead of Zeus, the Hiram Legend made its appearance.

Prichard’s small (approx. 7½" × 4½") 32-page pamphlet proved wildly popular.

It apparently sold out the first day it was available, as a second edition was offered the next day, and a third edition was advertised October 31.

It was reprinted in *Read’s Weekly Journal* or *British Gazetteer*, on October 24, 1730, presumably a pirated edition. Another pirated edition printed by Thomas Nichols of London also probably had made its appearance, as well as other pirated editions reprinted in the *Northampton Mercury* and in *The Original Mercury*, *York Journal*: or, *Weekly Courant*, all by November 2, 1730. London citizens surely were curious about the growing social movement of Freemasonry, as seen by several exposures of Masonic ritual and ceremonies published to that point up to this date.

However, the popularity of *Masonry Dissected* pointed to something else at work. It has been speculated that Masons themselves were the primary purchasers of the book, as they wanted to add this new degree to their repertoire, and the grand lodge offered no ritual guidance.

On the other hand, perhaps the Masons just wanted to learn more about this new and increasingly popular ceremony. An interesting point emerges on the topic of secrecy.

After arguing that his obligation of secrecy was invalid since the secrets had been published, Prichard explains for his initial audience why he is publishing his book: “I was induced to publish this mighty Secret for the public Good, at the Request of several Masons, and it will, I hope, give entire Satisfaction, and have its desired Effect in preventing so many credulous Persons being drawn into so pernicious a Society.”

For readers today, however, the chief point of interest is that our knowledge of the Hiram Legend and Third Degree ceremonies starts with *Masonry Dissected*.

It is possible to follow the expansion and presumed popularity of this new creation, but many questions remain.

Who was Samuel Prichard?

Where did the rituals of *Masonry Dissected* originate?

Were they created out of the whole cloth, or did they build on some earlier tradition?

Why was the Master Mason Degree adopted so rapidly but other later degrees were not?

Did influential members of the young grand lodge promote it, perhaps behind the scenes?

Was there any pushback against this new degree from traditionalist lodges?

These questions of the origins of Freemasonry and how it grew and evolved all come back to knowing more about a 32-page booklet published in 1730, *Masonry Dissected* by Samuel Prichard.



Just what we don't need; Another COVID variant



Scientists estimate that cases in the United States are doubling every two days. It is now the dominate virus in the U.S. accounting for more than 80% of hospitalizations.

The Omicron COVID-19 variant is surging in Western Washington with speed that has the potential to overload health care systems and disrupt workplaces, scientists and health officials said.

Outbreak Increased 25% Locally

Pierce County reported seven new COVID-19 deaths for the last two weeks in December 2021 amid increasing case and hospitalization rates. "Omicron is spreading quickly, and we expect these numbers to grow," the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department said in a statement. Due to a surge in testing, the county was unable to get complete case data from the state Department of Health. That agency reported 3,255 new cases statewide and a pandemic record high of 6,235 on Christmas Day.

What do we know about the new variant?

Health officials are anticipating another wave of coronavirus infections as the new, more contagious omicron variant spreads. Omicron has been detected in 16 counties in Washington, with the majority of cases in King and Pierce Counties.

Omicron is now the dominant strain of the virus in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

At the beginning of December, omicron accounted for .2% of sequenced COVID-19 cases. By December 18, that climbed to nearly 25%.

As of Dec. 20, more than 82% of Washington residents age 12 or older had received at least one COVID vaccine and nearly 76% had been fully vaccinated. In King County, 91% of people age 12 or older have had one shot and nearly 85% are fully vaccinated.

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Vaccine Availability

The state Department of Health [offers a statewide vaccine finder](#) on its website. You can also call the state COVID-19 hotline at 1-800-525-0127, then press #. Help in many different languages is available. Some pharmacies are also offering vaccines to people who just walk in and some bigger vaccine clinics welcome people to line up for a shot.

If you or a friend or family member can't easily commute to a vaccine site, you can [fill out this form on the state Department of Health site](#), and state officials say they will find someone who can come to your home to give you the vaccine.

Will we be headed back into another lockdown?

It's unknown at this time. International travel restrictions have already been implemented and a number of cities have instituted stricter measures about public gatherings. Local schools and universities are reconsidering re-opening in-class learning.

What should I do if I get a positive test?

The Associated Press [offers this explainer](#) to answer exactly that question. The basics: Isolate for 10 days, stay on top of your symptoms and get medical help if you have a weakened immune system, and make sure you tell the people you have been in contact with so they can get tested as well.

How do I get tested for COVID?

King County and the University of Washington [run a number of free public COVID testing sites](#). County health officials say lines have been longer lately, and they recommend making an appointment first.

[Search statewide for testing sites](#) at the Washington Department of Health site. The department said you can also call 2-1-1 to get information about testing sites.

Testing may also be available at your doctor's office, or you may be able to pick up a home testing kit at your local pharmacy, but in the days leading up to holiday travel, [those kits have been very hard to find](#).

Why is Omicron spreading so fast?

Scientists are trying to decode the dozens of mutations that omicron carries to figure out what else is going on. Researchers in Hong Kong recently reported hints that Omicron may multiply more quickly in the airway than delta did, although not as efficiently deep in the lungs.

What scientists can't measure is human behavior: Many places were relaxing restrictions, winter forced gatherings indoors and travel has jumped right as omicron began spreading.

Who's most at risk?

Based on the behavior of other variants, "if you're older, if you have underlying conditions, if you're obese, you're more likely to have severe disease. I don't think it's going to be any different" than other variants, said Dr. Carlos del Rio of Emory University.

But even if you don't get very sick, an Omicron infection could certainly ruin the holidays. Experts agree that in addition to getting vaccinated and boosted, it's wise to get back to the basics of protection: Wear masks indoors, avoid crowds and keep your distance.



KEY FACTS

Surprise!

DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU READ!

The federal No Surprises Act will

ban most surprise medical bills

beginning in January 2022.

SORT OF



READ THE FINE PRINT

This past year, I had cataract surgery done. With other underlying health issues, I was told by my eye doctor this was necessary for my health and well-being. I consulted several other health care professionals, and all agreed that it should be done. Being over 65 (like many of you brothers), the cost was covered by Medicare. Now, months later, I was generally happy with the outcome. No more eye-glasses, except to read. No more looking like a geek with optical glass that resembled the bottom of a Coca-Cola bottle.

Then reality hit.

I started getting additional bills from my doctor each month for the past seven months. I finally called the doctor's billing agency and asked if I was paying for this in perpetuity. The lady who answered the phone was firm and adamant. "Medicare only covers a portion of the cost. You need to pay the doctor's going market rate which was several hundred times what I was quoted." I was aghast. I insisted prior to the surgery that no additional "extras" were tacked on (e.g. RLK, Lasik and a whole bunch of other procedures offered up. I remember feeling like I was in a used car showroom when the medical assistant tried to upsell me on services).

AAF WHAT IS A SURPRISE MEDICAL BILL?



A SMB occurs when an insured patient receives either non-emergency or emergency care at an **in-network** facility



BUT

one or more of the providers who treat the patient **are not** in the patient's insurance network.

i A SMB can also occur when an insured patient receives emergency care at an **out-of-network** facility.

AmericanActionForum.org

But the doctor's bill was only the start of it. His office billed me for the surgery center where he did his deed. I started getting bills from people I never heard of. One was for a surgical nurse. Another was from the anesthesiologist (the gas-passer), another was for post-op care, and on and on. Before I knew it, a quoted \$350 procedure covered by insurance turned into a nearly \$10,000 hit on my limited retirement income, savings and investments.

-continues

Now that we are in 2022, this kind of nonsense is now illegal. Sort of.

Effective January 1, 2022, [federal law](#) bans many types of out-of-network medical bills and puts the onus on doctors and health insurance companies to resolve their payment disputes

In many scenarios, consumers should no longer face unexpected charges from doctors not in their insurance networks.

Patients still have to pay in-network copays, deductibles and other cost-sharing, which have been [rising](#). But any additional out-of-network bills are now prohibited for the [following services](#):

- [Emergency care](#) in a hospital ER, a freestanding ER or urgent care center.
- [Elective care](#) at an in-network hospital or surgery center, but where [doctors](#) — notably anesthesiologists, pathologists, radiologists and assistant surgeons — may be out-of-network. This is known as "[drive-by doctoring](#)."
- [Air ambulances](#).

Ground ambulances [aren't included](#) in this law. So [three out of four](#) insured people who take an ambulance ride are still at risk of facing surprise bills.*

- Instead of sending out bills, doctors and insurance companies have to resolve their differences. If the two sides can't agree on a payment rate within 30 days, either side can request [federal arbitration](#).
- The doctor and insurer then go to the arbiter with their best offer, and the arbiter picks one.

In writing about how this impacts our members, who average in age from 65+, I can't help but think that perhaps one benefit of being a Mason is to have some sort of supplemental health insurance coverage to pay for overages. Masons were taken care of years ago as we all got older in age. Whether the expense was too great or something the Grand Lodge decided it didn't want to mess with, is unknown to me. But perhaps may be worth exploring again.

The New York Times has a good article about this law. Just [click here](#) to read more.



Congress enacted new consumer protections against surprise medical bills to take effect in 2022:



- Health plans must cover surprise bills at in-network rates.
- Balance billing is prohibited.
- Out-of-network providers cannot send patients bills for excess charges.

Unexpected Medical Bills Top List Of Public's Worries

Percent who are **very or somewhat worried** about being able to afford each of the following for themselves and their family:



In an earlier time, Masons were taken care of at this facility in Puyallup, which is now the site of Good Samaritan Hospital. Recently, the Grand Lodge of Washington sold off the Masonic Retirement Home in Des Moines

*This happened to me when I had a hydration problem and passed out at home. 911 dispatched an Aid Car from Central Pierce Fire. That tax-payer supported program billed us an additional \$2,000 for a ride to the emergency room at Good Samaritan Hospital, a few miles from where we live.





Calendar of Events

Steilacoom Lodge

- January 13, 2022 Study Night.** 6:00 p.m.
- January 14, 2022 Stated Meeting.** 6:30 p.m. Dinner 7:30 pm -First Night – Installation of 2022 Officers
- January 24, 2022 Officer's Meeting**
- January 27, 2022 Study Night** 6:00 p.m.
- February 10, 2022 Study Night** 6:00 p.m.
- February 11, 2022. Stated Meeting** 6:30 p.m. Dinner 7:30 p.m. Meeting. Youth Night.
- February 24, 2022. Study Night** 6:00 p.m.
- February 28, 2022. Officers Meeting**
- March 10, 2022. Study Night** 6:00 p.m.
- March 18, 2022 Stated Meeting -** 6:30 p.m. Dinner. 7:30 p.m. – Meeting
- March 24, 2022. Study Night.** 6:00 p.m.
- March 28, 2022 – Officers Meeting**

Grand Lodge

- January 18, 2022 – District 15 Zoom Meeting.** 7:00 p.m. Please make reservations through Grandview
- February 15, 2022 - Seattle Scottish Rite** -Invitation to Presentation by Ill. Glen Cook. 6:30 p.m. [Click here for flyer.](#)
- March 18-20, 2022 Leadership Retreat** – Wenatchee Convention Center
- March 26, 2022 Frank S. Land #313 Crab Feed** – 5:00 p.m. to 10 p.m. Tickets are \$50.00 pp. Contact Steve Dinkins steve.dinkins@outlook.com, 425 652-5452
- June 9-12, 2022 - Annual Communication** – Wenatchee Convention Center





Steilacoom Lodge Scheduling Notes From Our Worshipful Master-Elect

Events to be scheduled in 2022

OUTSIDE EVENTS

Camping/Hiking It is intended that we will have several camping and/or hiking trips. At least one of these will be a car-camp style family oriented event at a group site. At least one of these will be a Neanderthal style where propriety will be left at home. At least one of these will be dedicated to a trail hike with elevation gain. And of course, guidance will be provided for those with little experience by those with a generation of such.

Game Nights For months without other such events, we will have a game/movie/whatever night as we have in the past. For these, the youth groups will be invited. We have a popcorn machine. We have a new pizza oven.

Date Nights For those who remember the Rhine House. I will schedule several such events. These to alternate with other outside events.



2022 LODGE VISITATIONS

January 21	Olympia #1
February 3	Washington #4
March 16	Mt. Moriah #11
April 19	Horace Tyler #290
May 19	Corinthian #38
June 14	Fairweather #82
July 16	Grand Mound Historical #3
August 10	Parkland-Lakewood #299
September 14	Phoenix #154
October 19	Trivium #22
November 16	Lincoln Park #80
December 13	Evergreen #68



Sickness and Distress



WB Joseph Allen was involved in a traffic accident during the winter storm following Christmas. WB Joseph is OK, a little shaken up and suffers from back pain and bruises. He was T-boned by an uninsured motorist.

**THE FACT THAT
THERE'S A HIGHWAY TO
HELL AND ONLY A
STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN
SAYS A LOT ABOUT
ANTICIPATED TRAFFIC
NUMBERS.**

We've heard from a number of Brothers who tried to navigate the local roads after the holiday blizzard. It was clear every nut job with a four-wheel drive vehicle was out trying to play whack-a-mole with us. Speaking for myself, "Ha! Ya missed me!" But seriously, this is the time of year where driving is hazardous no matter the weather. So please be careful and safe.



BIRTHDAYS

January		February		March	
Paul Lowe	1-Jan	Oliver Bond	1-Feb	William Tobin	1-Mar
John McCrossin	6-Jan	William Ehlers	2-Feb	Byron Cregeur	2-Mar
David Keltner	11-Jan	Edwin Brock	9-Feb	Al Luberts	4-Mar
Harold Ponther	17-Jan	Sean Davison	9-Feb	Harry Forslund	5-Mar
Thomas Dodsworth	28-Jan	Matt Deuser	9-Feb	Phillip Case	6-Mar
		Scott Dilley	11-Feb	Kenneth Daggert	9-Mar
		Gene Giegoldt	11-Feb	Jerold Dock	9-Mar
		Natural Allah	15-Feb	Nathaniel Chance	11-Mar
		Ken Gibson	15-Feb	Ken Woo	16-Mar
		Justin Rivera	17-Feb	Franklin Lee Fortuna	17-Mar
		William Shepard	17-Feb	David Baldwin	18-Mar
		David Melby	19-Feb	Bruce Everett	20-Mar
		Salih Shakir	22-Feb	Dennis Watson	22-Mar
		Tim Gunderson	23-Feb	Alan Sprren	27-Mar
		Joseph Allen	25-Feb	Sean Diaz	29-Mar
		Daryl Mcaughlin	27-Feb		



Kirkley

Anniversaries



January			February			March		
Robert Powell	23	1/9/99	Patrick Schrader	36	2/7/96	A. Roy Supplee	63	3/3/59
Sean Davison	3	1/11/19	David Melby	4	2/9/18	Harry Boyd	46	3/5/76
Lee Webb	30	1/14/92	Glenn Wallace	11	2/11/11	Scott Muetz	11	3/5/11
Raymond Johnson	29	1/14/93	Paul Leech	38	2/15/84	Don Campbell	40	3/12/82
Robert Patterson	59	1/14/63	Harry Horn	44	2/24/78	Wayne Dunbar	67	3/18/55
David Battell	42	1/18/80	Elwin Hulse	5	2/24/17	Weldon Heblich	61	3/20/61
John Bower	4	1/19/18	John Holmaas	58	2/27/64	Lance Orloff	6	3/25/16
Chris Hadley	4	1/19/18				Sean Diaz	16	3/27/06
Oliver Bond	50	1/24/72				Hans Amon	15	3/31/07
David Southwell	13	1/27/09				Jason Billings	4	3/31/18
Larry Overly	31	1/29/91				Edward Floyd	22	3/31/00



SIXTY-SIX YEARS AGO

SIXTY-SIX YEARS AGO

Here's an interesting question

The William O. Ware Lodge of Research in Kentucky poses this question. What is the relevance of a 66-Year-Old Letter in relationship to life today in 2022? Does it have meaning for us today or is it merely a curiosity? [Click this link](#) to read the 1957 letter from Grandmaster William O. Ware.



BACK IN 1957

AVERAGE COST A first class stamp \$0.04 A gallon of gas \$0.24 A loaf of bread \$0.19 A movie ticket \$0.50 A new house \$12,220.00	U.S. PRESIDENT <i>Dwight Eisenhower</i> 	 TECHNOLOGY Soviet Union inaugurates the "Space Age" by launching Sputnik I, the world's first artificial satellite. A month later Sputnik II carries a dog into orbit, making that dog the first living being to enter space.
AVERAGE WAGES PER YEAR \$4,550	IN THE NEWS... The year 1957 was the peak of the Baby Boomer years.	Ultrasonic scanning is pioneered in Scotland.
'50s SLANG Akele alibi - A child Get Bern! - Go away Unreal - Exceptional Go ape - Get excited Blah! - To agree Split - Leaving a Place	Martin Luther King Jr. heads a nationwide resistance to racial segregation and discrimination in the U.S.	IN THEATERS... The Bridge on the River Kwai Jailhouse Rock 12 Angry Men Old Yeller Penny Face
IN Style... WOMEN Fern fitting sleeve dresses Gordias • Petticoats Beehive • Short bangs Bouffants • Pileo cuts MEN Suits • Folders hat Wingtip shoes Cardigan sweaters Leather motorcycle jackets Sideburns • Pompadours Greased up hair • Duck tails	American Bandstand, an American music-performance and dance television program, makes its network debut on ABC.	ON Television... Gunsmoke Wagon Train Price Is Right American Bandstand Leave It to Beaver
	Elvis Presley purchases a mansion in Memphis, Tennessee and calls it Graceland.	
	Mickey Rourke hits career home run # 200.	
	The Cat in the Hat by Dr. Seuss is first published.	
	ON THE RADIO... All Shook Up - Elvis Presley Love Letters in the Sand - Pat Boone Little Darlin' - The Diamonds Young Love - Tab Hunter So Rare - Jimmy Darsay	



A Thought for the New Year



Choose Joy

Whatever is true, whatever is noble.

Whatever is right, whatever is pure.

Whatever is lovely. Whatever is admirable.

If anything is excellent or praiseworthy

Think about such things.

-Philippians 4:8



Brethren, you are now to quit this sacred retreat of friendship and virtue, to mix again with the world. Amidst its concerns and employment's, forget not the duties you have heard so frequently inculcated and forcibly recommended in this Lodge.

Be diligent, prudent, temperate, and discreet.

Remember that, at this Alter, you have promised to befriend and relieve every Brother who shall need your assistance. Remember also, that you have promised to remind him, in the most tender manner, of his failings, and aid his reformation; to vindicate his character when wrongfully traduced; and suggest in his behalf the most candid and favorable circumstances. Is he justly reprehended? Let the world observe how Masons love one another.

These generous principles are to extend further. Every human being has a claim upon your kind offices. Do good unto all. Recommend it more especially to the household of the faithful. Be diligent in the duties of your respective callings; by liberal benevolence and diffusive charity; by constancy and fidelity in your friendships, discover the beneficial and happy effects of this ancient and honorable institution. Let it not be supposed that you have labored in vain and spent your strength for naught; for your work is with the Lord and your recompense with your God.

Finally, Brethren, be ye all of one mind; live in peace and may the God of love and peace delight to dwell with and bless you !

SUBLIMIS

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