

GRAY 329 A.F.&A.M.



April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2006

Brethren,

The ceremony to lay a cornerstone of a building is an ancient tradition popular in the United States since the colonial days. Modern masons, whose origins are the medieval stone-masons, continue this tradition to this day.

The cornerstone of the Houston Masonic Library and Museum and home of Gray 329 Lodge will be laid and inspected by officers of The Grand Lodge of Texas on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2006, at 3 p.m. in West Houston. Your family and the public are invited.

The cornerstone event will take place near the pillars of the nearly completed 10,000 square foot building located at 2370 Barker Oaks Dr., Houston, Texas 77077. The Library and Lodge is one block northwest of the corner of Westheimer and Highway 6.

The cornerstone ceremony itself is brief and usually takes about 30 minutes. The Grand Master will make a few remarks, and then the stone is symbolically "tested" using the ancient tools of stonemasons - the plumb, the level, and the square.

Besides being a once in a lifetime event, however the true reason you should attend is because this cornerstone ceremony is a symbol, a concrete allegory or perhaps, an allegory *in* concrete. The cornerstone's origin in freemasonry is as a foundation, a reminder of the need of sacrifice; the sacrifice of time, of effort, of thought which all good men in general and all good Masons in particular must make if they are to be an unselfish part of their communities.

Part of the cornerstone ceremony has traditionally been the deposit of daily items of that particular date and time. For this "deposit", Gray Lodge is completing a time capsule that will be sealed in one year. Please bring some metallic or non-corrosive item to lodge for the time capsule. Ideally it would be inscribed with your name for recognition one hundred or more years from now. You might as well go ahead and mark your calendars now for Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, **2007** to attend time-capsule burial.

If you cannot make the cornerstone ceremony, make plans to attend the dedication of the Gray 329 Lodge room on Saturday, on April 29<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. A formal dedication ceremony of the dining area and lighting of the gas stove by the Steward's Most Delicious Perfected Order of the Knife and Fork, will follow at 3:30 p.m.

For those of you that are keeping track, on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2006, it will have been only 136 years, 1 month, 13 days. (49,717 days) ago, on May 11th, 1870, that 22 master masons petitioned the Grand Lodge of Texas for their charter. They were probably hustling because only just a few days before, the cornerstone for Gray Lodge's first

cornerstone was laid (May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1870). I am sure they were worried getting their charter because back then Fedex took two weeks.

Please mark to following important dates:

The First stated meeting of Gray Lodge in its new lodge room is Wednesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2006.

Election of Gray 329 officers for 2006-2007 is Wednesday June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

Installation of Gray Lodge officers is Saturday, June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

Do not forget that that an immutable consequence that lodges are run by those that show up. The ritual is useless without the men who exercise in it. If I have no other opportunity to say so, let me remind you of that one time you stood in the Northeast corner and understood that it is, in the end, that the working tools of a lodge are really in fact only found in its men.

Gray Lodge is not a place, it is its men and there is always unique piece of work for you to do. Now that we have built this stupendously modest edifice, it is humbling to realize that is must now be filled with the work that there is work to do.

I would hope that you will realize that in your life this cornerstone ceremony is a calling from refreshment to task. It will do you no good to stand at the brink of your grave and wonder if you gave enough.

Mt Brethren, I am coming to the end of my tenure as your Worshipful Master. I leave optimistic that our cornerstone ceremony is not only a symbol of an achievement, but is the very foundation of progress and new accomplishments for Gray Lodge.

Myself, the working members and the officers of your lodge, the library and the Grand Lodge's officers are looking forward to meeting you soon at one of these upcoming events.

I respectfully remind you of the grateful obligation and hopeful consequences of your presence.

Fraternally,

Randall Slinkard, WM