



GRAY LODGE 329

NEWSLETTER



What's going on at your Lodge?

February 2008

Improvements to the Newsletter...

Starting next month, we will be asking the Wardens and Deacons to contribute to the newsletter so we can share news and events that happening within their areas of responsibility. This is intended to better inform the brethren and make everyone a part of lodge events. Send your comments or suggestions to: master@gray329.org

Please stay up to date on all Gray Lodge news by subscribing to our e-mail list...send an e-mail to: gray329-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Useful Links:

- [Gray Lodge](#)
- [HMLMF](#)
- [Grand Lodge of TX](#)

February Stated Meeting: 2/6/08 @ 7.00pm

This month is the official reception of our District Deputy Grand Master, RW D Wayne Huddleston. This is even more special for us, as Wayne is a Past Master of Gray Lodge! That's two years in a row a PM of Gray has held this auspicious position There are also rumors that some lodges may be coming to try and take the Travelling Gavel, so it promises to be a great night with a high attendance!

Brethren, we will be getting graded on our reception of the DDGM, opening, closing and lodge "decorum" Please come and support your lodge as we aspire to achieve the best score in the district!



March

We will be having an open program, so please make plans to attend with your friends and family. The open program will start at 7pm with the business portion coming afterward.

Graded Degree

Brethren, we are planning to have a Graded Degree in the near future. It will be a Master Mason's degree. This will be a significant and high profile occasion for the Lodge. Please contact the Junior Deacon, Bro Roberto Sanchez (rmsh13@yahoo.com), if you wish to participate.

Degrees

We have several new candidates and therefore a lot of degree work coming up. If you would like to participate, please contact our Junior Deacon (rmsh13@yahoo.com) and he will let you know what the degree schedule is. If you need to brush up on your floor work, contact the JW, Bro Darrin Pitts (dpitts36@yahoo.com) and he will inform you of our rehearsals and degree team instruction.

Line Officers 2007

WM: Lex Leckie
SW: Greg Weisinger
JW: Darrin Pitts
SEC: Michael Moore
TR: Doug Hissong
SD: David Cousins
JD: Roberto Sanchez
MA: Randon Reaves
MC: Paul Anderson
SS: Butch Boggess
JS:
CH: Craig Johnston
TI: David Woodard

FROM THE EAST

Brethren,

As this Masonic year progresses, you, the members of Gray Lodge, can be proud of the way your line officers and active members are continuing to set higher standards. Our degree work is improving with broader participation, our candidates are of a high standard, and there is tangible evidence that we are helping the Library achieve its goals with the building. Added to that the warm and sincere fellowship that continues to bring new members as well as convince existing members to come back and attend lodge, is one of the most pleasing aspects of being your Worshipful Master this year. On your behalf we will be continuing this momentum to help raise Gray Lodge to the highest standards in Masonry. ***This year we are trying to fulfill the criteria for the "Vanguard Award". Please consult with myself or Bro Roberto Sanchez if you wish to try and help us win this prestigious title!***

See you in Lodge!

Fraternally, Lex Leckie, WM Gray Lodge #329.

Masonic Trivia

The oldest known Masonic writing, the Regius Manuscript or "Poem of Moral Duties," was discovered to be a Masonic document by a non-Mason, J. O. Halliwell, in 1839. It was written about 1390 and was given the name "Regius" because it was found in the Royal Library of England. It is now a part of the British Museum. Some common Masonic Ritual terms in use today are found in it such as "So Mote It Be."

In China, about 300 B.C., Mencius wrote "A master Mason, in teaching his apprentices, makes use of the compasses and the square. Ye who are engaged in the pursuit of Wisdom, must also make use of the compasses and the square." Additionally, in a book called Great Learning, 500 B.C., we find that "A man should abstain from doing unto others what he would not they should do unto him; and this is called the principle of acting on the square."

In 1920, Gate City Lodge #522 in Kansas City MO met every day of the week except Sunday to confer a record 1,107 degrees, averaging 21 degrees a week.

Music written by Brother John Stafford Smith (1750-1836) of Inverness Lodge #4 in London was, at one time, used by an Irish Masonic Orphans'

Home as their song. Later it became a popular drinking song for many years known as To Anacreon in Heaven. Then, some years later, the music was adopted by Francis Scott Key to which he wrote the words to our National Anthem, The Star Spangled Banner.

In 1860 in Limerick, Ireland, there was found in a small chapel a stone dated 1517 with the following inscription:
"I will serve to live with love & care
Upon the level, by the square."

The Commissioner of Patents In 1872 ruled that the Masonic Square and Compasses emblem could not be used in any trademark or trade name for commercial purposes.

In Christchurch New Zealand, there are two natural eroded stone pillars standing at the entrance to Tumbledown Bay. Looking from the land, the one on the left is named Boaz and the other on the right is named Jachin. Leads one to believe that the founders were indeed members of The Craft.

In the Wisconsin Masonic Journal we find it stated that John Wesley, the Founder of Methodism was made a Mason in Downpatrick Lodge #36, in Ireland, on October 30, 1738. However, according to Brother Alphonse Cerza writing for the Masonic Service Association, a thorough investigation of this statement was made by Brother W. J. Chetwode Crawley who says:

"Reviewing the circumstances of the supposed initiation of the Reverend John Wesley ... we are driven to the conclusion that the idea is altogether illusory, and based on a palpable confusion of identity."

Also, the Reverend Wesley's diaries prove that he was in England on the night another John Wesley was made a Mason in Downpatrick, Ireland.

Lux in Tenebris Lodge # 3856 in London is for blind Masons. The Latin words mean "Light in Darkness."

By Ancient custom, the King was always covered while his subjects were never covered in his presence. The American custom of the Master of the Lodge wearing a hat as a symbol of his authority is apparently a result of that ancient custom.

Ahiman Rezon, written by Laurence Dermott in 1764, was the Book of Constitutions for the Antients Grand Lodge, a ritual that is still in wide usage.

The title was derived from three Hebrew words, "ahim", "manah", and "raizon". But, what does the term mean?

At different times it has been interpreted as: A Help to a Brother; Faithful Brother Secretary; Will of Selected Brethren; Law of Prepared Brethren; Secrets of a Prepared Brother; Royal Builder; and The Thoughts or Opinions of a True and Faithful Brother. No one knows for sure what meaning Brother Dermott gave to the term.

In all my research on Brother Washington, I can find only two references to his having or wearing a sash.

One is the blue sash he wore in the painting by Charles Willson Peale (1741 - 1827) .

The other is the bloodstained sash given him in 1755 by the dying and defeated British general Edward Braddock at the Battle of Monongahela, where Washington became a war hero at age 23. Brother Washington kept Braddock's sash and pistol and carried them throughout the remainder of the war of Independence.

In a letter written in 1932 by Mrs. Ellis Lovell Crosby, a great-great-niece of President Washington to Brother S. J. Pridgen of Atlanta, GA, she states:

"I am sending a piece of fringe from Washington's sash. I sold the sash to Pierpont Morgan for \$3,500.00. He gave it to Mount Vernon and it now hangs in the hallway of the mansion. I only took a little from the sash so as to keep it..."

She presented the small piece of the sash to Georgia Lodge #96, F&AM of Atlanta which they proudly displayed among their archives. I do not know whether the fringe came from the sash worn in the painting or the one given Brother Washington by General Braddock, but my guess would be the latter.

If anyone can enlighten me on this matter, please do so.

Much of this data was gleaned from "Georgia Lodge Tidings", Vol. 10, July 2, 1932.

"The Character of a Freemason"
From the Farmer's Almanac, 1823
Andover, Massachusetts

The real Freemason is distinguished from the rest of Mankind by the uniform unrestrained rectitude of his conduct. Other men are honest in fear of punishment which the law might inflict; they are religious in expectation of being rewarded, or in dread of the devil, in the next world. A Freemason would be just if there were no laws, human or divine except those written in his heart by the finger of his Creator. In every climate, under every system of religion, he is the same. He kneels before the Universal Throne of God in gratitude for the blessings he has received and humble solicitation for his future protection. He venerates the good men of all religions. He disturbs not the religion of others. He restrains his passions, because they cannot be indulged without injuring his neighbor or himself. He gives no offense, because he does not choose to be offended. He contracts no debts which he is certain he cannot discharge, because he is honest upon principle."

Thanks to "THE TRESTLE BOARD" Cochran Masonic Lodge #217 F&AM Cochran, Georgia, USA

When Brothers Richard E. Byrd and Bernt Balchen first flew over the North and South Poles, they dropped a Masonic flag on each Pole. Then, in the 1933-35 expedition, Brother Balchen tossed his Shrine Fez on the North Pole.

The town of Keystone, near Mount Rushmore in South Dakota, was named by a gold prospector in 1877 for his York Rite Chapter watch charm.

"'3 TIMES 3' - In ancient times the Entered Apprentice Degree was alone prevalent amongst the generality of our Lodges; for no Brothers could be passed and raised except in the Grand Lodge, and few availed themselves of the privilege. Hence they had only one sign, one token, and one word, and these three constituted the honors. But the members of the Grand Lodge had three signs, three tokens, and three words, and therefore, three times three were appropriately termed the Grand Honors."

from the September 1974 Bulletin of the Masonic Relief Association
of the U.S. and Canada

A Brother was initiated on August 23, 1879 by Lodge #239 in a balloon flying over Paris .

Well known actor Jack Carson was the first of five candidates to receive the Entered Apprentice degree at Cecile Daylight Lodge #305 in Independence, MO in 1936. He was taught the proficiency while the other four candidates were being initiated. By his request, he then returned his Entered Apprentice proficiency that same evening, even examining himself. He gave a perfect proficiency!

Brother and General Thomas H. Benton, Grand Master in Iowa, 1860-1862, posted federal troops around Brother Albert Pike's Masonic Library at Little Rock, Arkansas to protect its valuable contents when that city was invaded during the Civil War.

"No man ever took the oaths and subscribed to the obligations with greater watchfulness and care than I exercised in receiving the various rites of Masonry, and I say with due deliberation and without fear of breaking the faith. I have never encountered a lesson, never witnessed an example,

never heard an obligation uttered which could not be openly proclaimed to the world." The words of a Mason who was also a President of the United States, Warren G. Harding.

The earliest known appearance of the letter "G" inside the interlaced square and compasses is on a photo of an etching in "Freemasonry A Journey Through Ritual and Symbol" by Kirk MacNulty. The date shown on the etching is "5776" which we Masons know to be 1776 in standard dating form.

Another very early appearance is on a cast bronze plate made by Paul Revere in 1796. By the year 1800 the combined symbol had appeared in England on embroidered aprons and upon a "Master's Tracing Board. In the language of some countries, the letter "G" does not stand for either "God" or "Geometry" so it is not a part of their basic symbol of Freemasonry.

Of the early American Astronauts, John Glenn, L. Gordon Cooper, Virgil I. (Gus) Grissom, Edwin E. Aldrin, Jr., Thomas P. Stafford, and Donn F. Eisele were members of our "GentleCraft."

The Baltimore Convention in 1840 moved all Lodge business from the first to the third degree. Most all Lodge business elsewhere throughout the world is conducted in the first degree.

The Holy Book must be opened upon the altar before a Masonic Lodge may be opened. Freemasonry is not concerned with doctrine or dogma or sect or denomination, but only with "that natural religion in which all men agree." Therefore, the Holy Book is called the V.S.L. or Volume of Sacred Law or the Book of the Law. If the members of a Lodge are Christian, Moslem, Jewish or Buddhist, the V.S.L. of their particular belief is opened upon their altar. The V.S.L. is, therefore, a symbol of the revealed will and teachings of the Great Architect of the Universe - a name under which any Freemason can worship that Deity in Whom he puts his faith and trust.

The examination of a candidate for proficiency in the previous degree was first introduced in 1850 in Louisiana.

While stationed in Louisiana during WW I, preparing to go overseas, Major General James H. Doolittle, under special dispensation issued by the Grand Lodges of both California and Louisiana, was elected to membership in Hollenbeck Lodge #319 of California and initiated, passed, and raised in one meeting in Lake Charles Lodge #16 of Louisiana. A recent storm had wrecked the Lake Charles Masonic Temple and the degrees were conferred in the local Elks Temple, loaned for the purpose.

In 1892 the world's tallest building was the Masonic Temple at Randolph and State Streets in Chicago.

According to Solomon's Lodge No. 1, F. & A. M. in Savannah, Georgia, founded February 21, 1734 by the English Statesman, philanthropist and Freemason Br. James Edward Oglethorpe, it is the oldest Continuously Operating English Constituted Lodge of Freemasons in the Western Hemisphere. Solomon's Lodge has in its possession a 1733 John Baskett Bible which was actually signed and given to the Lodge, during its earliest days, by Oglethorpe the founder of the Colony of Georgia."

Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi, creator of the Statue of Liberty, first tried to plant his luminous lady not in New York harbour, but at the homely entrance to the Suez Canal. In her original form, she was to be an Egyptian peasant swathed in robes, and titled "Egypt Bringing Light to Asia."

The Rite of Perfection that had flourished in France in the first half of the 18th century had been sanctioned by the Grand Lodge of France in Bordeaux, the oldest provincial Masonic center in France.

Stephen (Etienne) Morin, a traveling wine merchant, received his Masonic degrees in Loge La Francaise, Bordeaux. Several years later he became Master of a new lodge, Loge Parfaite Harmonie, which was concentrating on "higher" degrees. At the time, France was a hotbed for additional, or "higher," Masonic degrees.

Morin sailed to the West Indies with authority to spread the Rite of Perfection in the Western Hemisphere and to "create Deputy Inspectors in all places where the sublime degrees are not established." It was in Jamaica that he met Henry Andrew Francken, who was deputized by Morin and given authorization to take the Rite to the American colonies.

Francken's Masonic background is unknown. He may have received the degrees in Holland, although some historians believe he was initiated in the West Indies between 1762-67.

Both Morin and Francken played important roles in establishing the "higher" degrees in the Western Hemisphere and laying the foundation for today's Scottish Rite.

The Republic of Texas had four Presidents: David G. Burnett, 1836; Sam Houston, 1836-1838; Mirabeau B. Lamar, 1838-1841; Sam Houston, 1841-1844; Anson Jones, 1844-1846. All were Freemasons.

For all of the above, thanks to Ray Dotson

Copyright © Gray Lodge 2007 - 2370 Barker Oaks, Houston, TX 77077 - (281) 556-8700

If you wish to contribute to this newsletter, please contact master@gray329.org

