



GRAY LODGE 329

NEWSLETTER



What's going on at your Lodge?

April 2008

From the East

Apologies to all for the late sending out of this month's newsletter...work and other activities at the Lodge have made the last month rather hectic! In the last week alone we have put on an EA degree, catered to 200 plus teachers for Public Schools Week, presented a 65-year Masonic Service Award and been involved in the annual Houston Masonic Library and Museum Foundation dinner and auction fundraiser. These are exciting times and of great benefit to the Lodge...but we're not finished yet! The 3rd Annual Brisket Sale is this weekend...if you would like to buy some they are \$35 each...please order and bring your checks to the Stated Meeting. Briskets can be collected Saturday. Contact me for more details.

Sincerely and fraternally, Lex Leckie WM.

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@yahooogroups.com

Useful Links:

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

April Stated Meeting: 4/2/08 @ 7.00pm

There will be an open portion to this month's stated meeting...we are giving two well-deserved Scholarships out to local students. Please come out and join us in investing in our community's future! There will also be an enlightening lecture on the checkered pavement by our own Bro Secretary. Bring along friends and family for dinner at 6pm with the open portion to follow at 7pm. Business meeting will be conducted after this on the EA degree.

Symbolism (Part 1)

The symbols used in 18th-century Masonic tracing boards are references to the vast body of literature and philosophy which documents Renaissance thought. Masonic Tracing Boards are training devices. In the earliest days of speculative Masonry, the Master would sketch designs on the floor of the Lodge using chalk. Then he would talk about the drawing during the meeting. During the course of the 18th century, the drawings were transferred to "Tracing Boards" which are pictures, one per Degree, that encapsulate the symbols of each of the Degrees. The Boards to which we will refer are English. Speculative Masonry started in the 1600s, and its symbols are references to that vast body of literature and philosophy which documents Renaissance thought. In the Renaissance, the dominant metaphysic was Judeo-Christian monotheism with an admixture of Classical thinking. Renaissance philosophers incorporated many Greek (particularly neo-Platonic) and Jewish mystical ideas into their orthodox Christianity. Some of these influences came from the Hermetica which had, itself, been a substantial influence in the formation of early Christian doctrines. Others came from Kabbalah, the mystical tradition of Judaism. This fusion of classical and Jewish philosophy is called the "Hermetic/Kabbalistic Tradition"; and after it had been interpreted in the context of orthodox Christian doctrine, it became the basis of Renaissance thinking. Speculative Masonry dates from the end of the Renaissance (the mid-17th century), and it is no surprise that Masonic symbolism reflects this tradition. The First degree tracing board, which looks at first glance like a collection of heterogeneous objects, is, I think, a representation of the entire Universe. It is also a picture of a human being standing in a landscape. Neither of these images is immediately obvious, but I think the ideas will become clear. The central idea of Renaissance thought was the unity of the Universe and the consequent omnipresence of the Deity. This idea is represented by the "Ornaments of the Lodge." The fact that Masonry has gathered these three objects into a single group suggests that we consider them together. The Ornaments of the Lodge are the Blazing Star or Glory, the Checkered Pavement, and the Indented, Tessellated Border; all refer to the Deity. The Blazing Star or Glory is found in the Heavens at the center of the picture. It is a straightforward heraldic representation of the Deity. Look at the Great Seal of the United States on a dollar bill, and you will see the Deity represented

From the Deacons Office

Brethren, We have had a very busy year thus far...we are 80% of the way through the 2007 - 2008 Masonic year and we have conferred over 25 degrees. Our candidate board in the Deacons office is completely filled with the candidates' names, and they are coming along very well in their esoteric work. As always our school of instruction is being held every Thursday starting at 6 p.m. So if you are interested in teaching a candidate, would like to brush up on your esoteric work, or even considering obtaining a certificate come by your lodge on Thursday evenings. This year we are planning in participating in a graded degree, so if you would like to be part of the degree team please contact me. We are raising the bar at Gray Lodge, We were once known as the "Grand Lodge of Hillcroft" and we are on our way to regaining that kind of reputation. Your officers as well as committee members have been working diligently so we can become a Vanguard Lodge once more. We are really close to qualifying for the award for the award this year; if you are interested in volunteering and supporting our efforts, please contact me. We have also instituted and revived some new traditions, such as the symbolic "North East Corner", and the A. S. Richardson Lecture. This past October we had Cliff Cameron, the Grand Historian of the Grand Council, kick off our A.S. Richardson Lecture series. Next October, we will be honored of having one of the foremost renowned American Masonic scholars, Rex R. Hutchens. For those of you who are Scottish Rite Masons that name should be really familiar, he wrote "A Bridge to Light" the book they give you once you are coroneted a Scottish Rite Mason. Roberto M. Sanchez, Junior Deacon (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

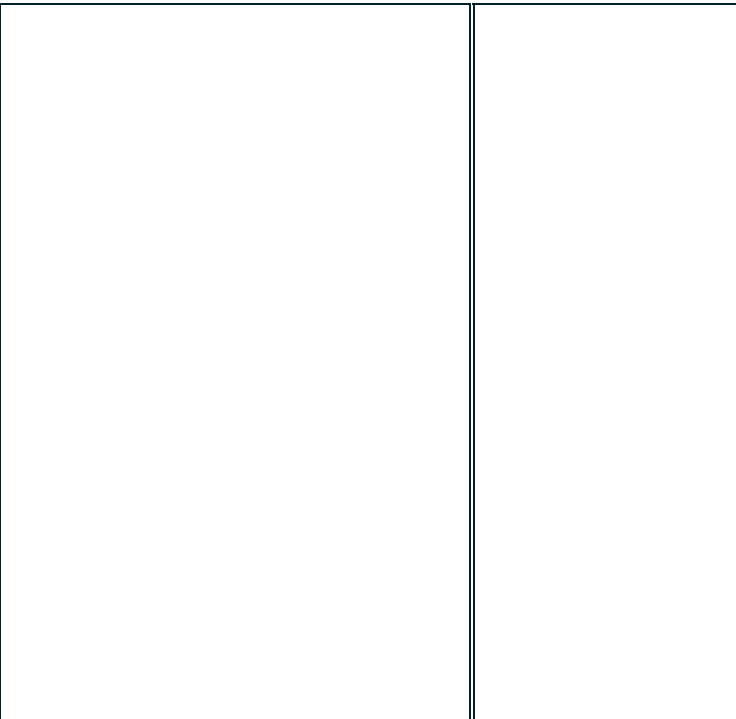
WM: Lex Leckie
 SW: Greg Weisinger
 JW: Darrin Pitts
 SEC: Michael Moore
 TR: Doug Hissong
 SD: David Cousins
 JD: Roberto Sanchez
 MA: Randon Reaves
 MC: Paul Anderson
 SS: Butch Boggess
 JS:
 CH: Craig Johnston
 TI: David Woodard

there in the same manner. The Checkered Pavement represents the Deity as perceived in ordinary life. The light and dark squares represent paired opposites, a mixture of mercy and justice, reward and punishment, passion and analysis, vengeance and loving kindness. They also represent the human experience of life, light and dark, good and evil, ease and difficulty. But that is only how it is perceived. The squares are not the symbol; the Pavement is the symbol. The light and dark squares fit together with exact nicety to form the Pavement, a single thing, a unity. The whole is surrounded by the Tessellated Border which binds it into a single symbol. The Border binds not simply the squares, but the entire picture, into a unity. The idea of duality occurs throughout the Board: from the black and white squares at the bottom to the Sun and Moon at the top.



May

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.



Recommended Reading: *Freemasonry Today* (<http://www.freemasonrytoday.com/>)

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

