

October, 2009

Gray 329 Brethren,

First, on behalf of my father, myself and my entire family, I would like to say thank you for all the kind words, cards, flowers and the fraternal love we felt at the recent passing of my beloved mother. I would be remiss if I didn't thank my officers for stepping up during the hardest thing I've ever gone through.

I owe the ladies of Eastern Star especially a big thoughtful thank you for the reception here at the Lodge and Library after the funeral. The kindness and support dad and I got here at our beloved lodge is a true testimony of Freemasonry at work.

The September time-capsule event at the downtown Houston Masonic Temple Lodge was a huge success thanks to the hard work of Senior Deacon Randon Reaves and all his committee help. Gray 329 Lodge and the Freemason fraternity were well represented and we received substantial media coverage from the Chronicle and local TV news stations of the event.

On Tuesday October 20th, Gray Lodge 329 will be the opening a representation of Grand Lodge for a cornerstone laying ceremony for the new downtown Houston Tellepsen YMCA. The Tellepsen family donated over \$20 million to build the new YMCA and donated it to the City of Houston. For information on the cornerstone ceremony please contact Randon Reaves @ 713-410-6010 or randon@randon.com.

The library will also be having its annual Auction and Gala for the Tellepsen family on Thursday November 12th, at the Houston Club. Please contact Paul Anderson or Randon Reaves for information. Gray Lodge does have special ticket prices for members available.

This month Gray 329 held its annual A.S. Richardson Lecture at Stated Meeting on October 7th. We had the privilege of having Illustrious Pete Norman, Chairman, Valley of Houston for the Scottish Rite (along with many other titles) in a noted and well-know Masonic historical scholar. This was a fascinating and entertaining lecture on the recent history of Italian Freemasonry.

Thank you all again for your support and prayers at the passing of my mother.

Gray 329 is busy this month and there is always plenty of work to be done and there is certainly always something you can do, please contact me directly or some by Lodge on Thursday evenings with any questions, advice or suggestions.

Fraternally,
Darrin Pitts
Worshipful Master

The Cornerstone Ceremony

A Masonic cornerstone ritual is probably the only Masonic ritual, other than a Masonic funeral, that the public (known Masonically as "profanes") will ever see conducted. When the brethren are sharply dressed, and well-rehearsed, it is spectacular event to behold. The cornerstone ceremony is the symbolic laying of the cornerstone, that which supports (again, symbolically) the entire structure of the building being built. When the cornerstone is discussed, by extension, it refers to the entire building project, and that, in turn refers not only to the actual physical actions to erect the building, but also to the mental, spiritual, even metaphysical energies that have come together to cause the creation of the structure. The Grand Lodge officers conducting the ceremony, symbolically square, level, and plumb the cornerstone, assuring that it is set correctly, that "the Craftsmen have done their duty."

After the Grand Lodge officers have squared, leveled and plumbed the cornerstone, the Grand Master "finishes the work" by proclaiming the foundation stone "well formed, true and trusty."

The Grand Master then "blesses," for lack of a better word, the cornerstone (again, which by extension, represents the entire project) by pouring corn (which means grain, and doesn't necessarily have to be maize), wine and oil.

The Corn of Nourishment symbolizes health and heartiness of the workers.

The Wine of Refreshment symbolizes plenty.

The Oil of Joy symbolizes peace and joy.

There is no "magical" effect; the Grand Master has no power to bestow these benefits. He is, quite simply, asking that these benefits and blessings be bestowed upon the project and the people by the GAOTU, the Great Architect of the Universe, God.