

ANCIENT LANDMARK LODGE NO. 5

Ancient Free and Accepted Masons



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LOOK TO THE EAST

The Rigors and Rewards of the East

This past month was for me my first real reminder of the rigors and rewards of being Worshipful Master of a vibrant, active, large lodge of brothers. Before I go any further, we hosted several events and I want to take the time to thank those involved, especially WBs Tim and Drew, my Senior Warden and Junior Wardens Terry and Johnnie, Jeff Ansel, and all the others brothers and wives (including my own) that gave lectures, came to the Dinner, or made the social night so much more special. February truly was a month I will not forget. Thank You!

Alright, so lessons for the month.

First, once you are installed as Worshipful Master, you are NOT immediately endowed with the combined wisdom of the ages – even if everyone else thinks you are. As each week goes by, I get calls, emails, texts, or face to face requests – all asking after one thing or another. I honestly attempt to help every person who connects with me, but often I find myself scratching my head and having to state those humbling words, “I don’t know.” Luckily I am not a lodge of one, and I have had the benefit of a wide variety of sources to help answer those questions, requests, and conflicts. It’s a valuable lesson for each of us to learn to be more self-sufficient and come with suggestions along with problems.

Second, you must delegate to survive, and with that comes respect and trust. I spent months ahead of my installation planning this year, working on the budget, and attempting to get ahead of the curve. But I have quickly learned that the only way I will make it through this year is through the help of my brothers. This means letting go of some of the control you feel emboldened or required to wield. The lodge is resting on your shoulders, you are the public face of our institution. When things go well, the lodge as a whole is praised, when things go poorly – all eyes are on you. We had three events in February providing inspiration for this: the Rusty Mason night, the Sweethearts Dinner, and the Brother’s and Other’s social night. Each was a success, in their own ways.

I met brothers at the Rusty Mason evening that I had never met before – including Past Masters of our lodge. I had a wonderful time with my wife at the Sweethearts Dinner, and Terry and I enjoyed running the social night and seeing wives and significant others share in the lodge. In each instance I had varying levels of control over the event, and in each instance I was not let down. Anxiety can be a terrible, crippling, feeling. It’s gratifying to know that when the chips are down, I can rely on my brothers. As we move forward with other events in the lodge – including the Canadian Visitation, I know we collectively will do the best we can.

Finally, the Worshipful Master is in charge – this means being fair, listening, but making decisions and sticking to them. Several times this past month I just listened. People want to be heard, to say their piece, and then open things to discussion. Discussion in lodge can be contentious as long as it is civil, follows protocols and process, and gives everyone their fair opportunity to be heard. Yes we will not always agree – our degree obligations specifically speak to this. However, we can all be heard and at the end of the night as we go back to our various places of abode, we know that we are still a sacred band of friends and brothers. Other times this past month, I had to make difficult decisions. This is part of the mantle that I wear, one I have freely took upon myself. I appreciate the council that has been given me when I reached out for it and the respect given when I do make those choices.

Yes the East is filled with Rigor and Reward, just as is life – and I would not trade it for anything. Thank you for putting your faith and trust in me for this year.

Jeremy Nienow
Worshipful Master

NEXT STATED MEETING

March 12th

6:00PM - Dinner
7:00PM - Meeting



FROM THE WEST

Info for the Ladies

As I now find a chunk of time to sit down and write my newsletter article, I have just returned from this year's Sweethearts Dinner. I would be remiss if I didn't use this medium to once again thank Worshipful Brother Drew Bjorklund, Brother Jeff Ansel, and their lovely wives, Claire and Betty, for the time and effort they put forth to ensure we had gifts and a properly decorated space. Although she rarely does more than glance at these newsletters to ask if they are ready to be recycled, I would also like to thank my wife, Maria. While I was with the kids, she ensured she was ready for the evening a few hours early so she could assist in setting up and could man the reception table. As I sat with my bride welcoming guests, she recounted a conversation she had while setting up. She was asked what she thought of the possibility of me becoming Master if tradition prevails. Her answer was what I have come to expect, direct and without pretense. She said she is supportive but not looking forward to it. Smart lady, my wife. She went on to explain that she knows Masonry makes me happy but still doesn't "get" what it is all about.

I admit I have done a horrible job of presenting our fraternity to her. For many years, I didn't know what I was able to tell her. I knew that everything could be found on the internet, but wasn't quite sure what I had promised not to personally disclose. By the time I figured it out, she had stopped asking.

To help our new Brethren with ladies or those who have a new lady, I will share some information that is free to share with anyone.

Where did Masonry originate?

While we don't have accurate historical records of when the groups of operative masons (stone masons and the like) began or even when they started accepting speculative masons into their ranks. However, we do have the date of 1717 as the year the Grand Lodge was founded in London with a joint meeting of four existing lodges. Around this period is also when if find the first written accounts of lodges being attended in America.

What is its purpose?

We have all heard the purpose is to make good men better. While true, it is also vague enough to convince your spouse you are purposefully being obtuse. My personal explanation of our purpose is: to strengthen a man's character by extolling the virtues of charity, in a broad sense and personal; duty to one's family and community; and giving men the opportunity to meet others who value these ideals.



Are Freemasons a secret society?

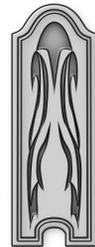
No, neither our membership nor where we meet is secret. We are a fraternity with a few secrets. The only things that are secret are our methods of recognition, some signs, details of the degrees, balloting, and things said to you in confidence from Brother.

What is the G, square, and compass all about?

The square and compass are tools used by stone masons to prepare and qualify their raw materials. Freemasons use metaphorical versions of these (and other) tools to reinforce traits to build character. We "square" our actions to ensure we behave appropriately. G stands for Geometry, an area of study necessary for building structures, but can also be generalized to explain the world around us and encourage the pursuit of knowledge. It is also the initial of the name of Deity, recognizing that members may have other names but that we all answer to a higher power.

I hope this is a start to the information you will share with your lady to make her confident that Masonry is something she should be glad you have decided to join instead of something she just puts up with. As always, I encourage you to speak with your Brothers to solicit their input.

Sincerely,
Terry Mallberg
Senior Warden



FROM THE SOUTH

News from the South

To those brothers whom we haven't seen in a while that came out for our Rusty Mason night I want to say thank you so much. I hope we get to see you again this year and beyond. Also, thank you to WB Tim Godfrey for organizing the event. In my view it was a total success with full benches in the south.

Our Lodge received further esteem when we were presented with a beautiful trophy from Montgomery Lodge #258. It is composed of a white column (I think it is of the Tuscan order), and a plush monkey wearing a fez affixed on the top. What makes it even better is that the monkey sings "I like to move it move it" while he dances. It is our task to get rid of this thing within 3 months by travelling to another Lodge and presenting it to them. There is a Lodge in Brainerd that perhaps could use a laugh. Come see it before it's gone, forever.

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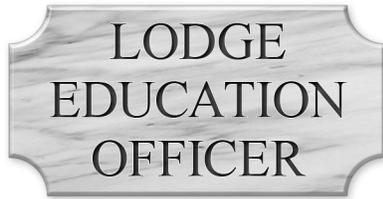
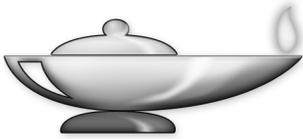


News from the South... cont. from page 2

Our March 5th stated meeting will feature a homecooked meal provided by our Chaplain Mike Doyle, who is an excellent cook. He always puts a lot of work into the meals he makes for us and it would be great for you to come out and enjoy one of them. You know, I've learned a lot of things since becoming a Mason but one of the most important lessons I've learned so far is that you should never forget about bringing dessert. There will be dessert.

Please mark your calendars for our Entered Apprentice Degree on March 26th and show our newly admitted Brothers your support.

Johnnie Timm
Junior Warden



Level Steps:

100 Meditations for Freemasons

The following excerpts are from Level Steps: 100 Meditations for Freemasons:

What Kind of Mason are You?

“What are you doing?” a man asked three laborers beside a building under construction.

The first man replied, ‘Stone cuttin’.’

The second smiled. ‘Puttin’ in time until a better job comes along.’

The third man waited a moment and then said simply, ‘I’m building a cathedral.’” -Anonymous

It is true that, with all the important things in life, we get out of them what we put in. Freemasonry is no exception. Our most mundane chores can be exalted to the level of Spirituality if we approach them in the right frame of mind. In the same way, our highest aspirations can be brought low if we bring a grudging spirit to the attaining of them. We must all become involved in drudgery to survive in this modern world of ours, but never forget that, with the right attitude, a well-ironed sock or shirt is as fulfilling an accomplishment as a difficult piece of ritual well delivered or a good deed unselfishly done.

Light Unto Others

“I would not give much for your Freemasonry unless it can be seen. Lamps do not talk but they shine...So let your actions shine out your Masonry. Let the main sermon of your life be illustrated by your conduct, and it shall not fail to be illustrious.” -Anonymous

We have a duty to our much maligned Brotherhood to be exemplary in our conduct, for we are the visible face of Freemasonry. Freemasonry will be judged by what we, as Freemasons, do. We should be mindful of this every day, every moment and so order our actions as to be a credit to the institution of which we claim to be so proud.

But that is not all. Like any system designed for the betterment of men, Freemasonry is useless unless it is lived. The precepts that it teaches have no meaning until they find expression in our daily actions. The true secret of Masonry is to be found here: in a life well lived, in a heart devoid of all malice and in a conscience clear in the knowledge that, “I have tried my best.”

Level Steps: 100 Meditations for Freemasons is available on Amazon in a Kindle edition currently for \$4.99. I have found it to be inspirational and help me to find the proper mind-set as I try to apply the “mysteries” of Freemasonry to my daily life.

Ronald R. Bradley
Lodge Education Officer



The Meaning of Brotherhood

As I sit here thinking about the upcoming Lodge newsletter I recall a man, Brother and dear friend who once sat beside me in Lodge. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce him to those of you who did not have the honor of knowing him. His name is Robert Merrill and he affiliated with our Lodge from New York where he was raised an Ancient York Rite Mason in St. John's Lodge #1. That's another story I will tell you some time. I met Brother Merrill shortly after being raised a Master Mason myself and we developed a strong friendship. As I moved through the line of officers in the Lodge he was always at my side offering his wisdom and good council. As I became Master of the Lodge he sat at my right as Chaplain.

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Meaning of Brotherhood... cont. from page 3

It was shortly after that Brother Merrill became ill and passed away. I had the honor and privilege of serving at his memorial service and this, in part, is what I said of my friend and dear companion...

“My Dear Friend and Brother,

You would tell us often that you had nothing to offer the Lodge, that your time had passed and you just enjoyed watching the younger Brothers do the work. Of this, I have no doubt but I believe you did more for this Lodge than you could ever know.

You would take the opposite side in a discussion even though you didn't believe that viewpoint just to challenge us to open our minds and see all the possibilities.

We learned from your actions, not your words that we can endure much longer that we think.

You taught us that the people we care most about in life are taken from us all too soon but they can never be taken from our hearts.

You helped us to become better men by your mentorship, which is the first and greatest charge of Masonry.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I looked at you and saw the man that I wanted to be and I wanted to say thank you for all the good things I saw in you when you thought I wasn't looking.

Although you were never afforded the privilege of sitting in the East as Master of the Lodge, your faithful support and active presents among us helped each of us become better leaders than we would have without you.”

Every once in a while there comes a man into your life just at the right time to offer you insight and wisdom that you would not have otherwise gained. The lessons I learned from Brother Merrill still serve me today and I have become a better man because of our friendship and Brother Merrill's desire to live the ideals that are embodied in Freemasonry.

Many of us in Lodge at that time enjoyed the friendship of our Brother Merrill and even yet today we miss his presence and speak of him often. We all carry the memory of him in our hearts. I would not be the man I am today nor traveling the course in life that I am if I had not had the privilege of knowing Brother Merrill. It is a lesson we should all take to heart for we will never know the influence we have on others' lives. There may come a day long after any memory of us has passed when a young man enters the Lodge for the first time to take his obligation as an Entered Apprentice because many years before we offered our council to a Brother that set the feet on a different path. It is therefore good council to always try to reflect a positive manner when in the presence of others. Someone may be listening.

Bruce Sherman
Secretary

Upcoming Schedule

February 26th - Card and Movie Night

6:00PM - Food and Cards

7:30PM - Casablanca

March 12th - Stated Meeting

6:00PM - Dinner

7:00PM - Meeting

March 14th - 4th School of Instruction

6:30PM - Dinner

March 19th - Entered Apprentice Degree Rehearsal

7:00PM - Rehearsal

March 26th - Entered Apprentice Degree

6:00PM - Dinner

7:00PM - Ritual

March 27th & 28th - Grand Lodge Annual Communication



Rusty Masons Night



10 Past Masters were present for the event



WB Bruce Sherman



WB Loren Davis

Game, Ritual and Movie Night



Worshipful Master Jeremy Nienow



Delicious snacks and treats!



Monty Python and the Holy Grail



LODGE of SORROW 2015

And we shall become immortal by our deeds which will live on after us.



Name

Birth

Initiated

Passed

Raised

Celestial Lodge



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