

THE MAINE MASON



**MAINE MASON, COL.
JACK TWIGG, LED TEAM
THAT DEVELOPED
INVISIBLE "STEALTH"
AIRCRAFT.**

— PG. 6

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THE MAINE MASON

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Deadline for the next issue of *The Maine Mason* will be 15 March, 2021. All materials should be sent directly to the editor.

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by George P. Pulkkinen

There for the Cheering

Can any of you brethren, or anyone you know, honestly say there's a sadness that this year is rapidly coming to an end. I know I can't.

But, in spite of the sickness, the loss of jobs and the separation from loved ones, there was much in 2020 to acknowledge and cheer.

Many of the positives can be found reported on the pages of this issue of your *Maine Mason*, events and occurrences that have been made to happen by the efforts of you...and your Masonic brethren. Well done all!

In Millinocket, Nollesemic Lodge brothers continue to work to provide a public Santa venue for kids of local communities, and brave members of Ancient Brothers Lodge #178, Auburn, are again planning a New Year's Day dip in frigid Old Orchard Beach waters. They're nuts, might be a first impression, but they're doing it to raise needed funds for Maine Special Olympics. *See Page 14...you can help!*

Several lodges continue to assist the less fortunate in their communities by contributing liberally to their relief with funding for food pantries. And Siloam Lodge #92 and Seabasticook #146 in Fairfield and Clinton respectively have raised funds to provide PPE to area police, firefighters and EMTs.

Masons from Freedom, Dayspring and Greenleaf Lodges have supported the local Porter Grange in its Dolly Parton Imagination Library project, providing funds when Covid restrictions kept the Grange from holding its fund-raising suppers. *(See page 8)*

Sometimes, when we're unable to gather together for extended periods of time, it's easy to forget, or at least minimize, the precepts that have fortified our Craft for hundreds of years. Whether or not you're suffering that funk, I would urge you to read the letter, on page 28, from Brother Vince Corry. I'm certain it will fan the flame of brotherhood within us all.

From the Grand East

Richard M. Nadeau **Grand Master of Masons in Maine**

Dear Brethren:

Let us be truthful here. 2020 did not turn out quite the way we expected. We had to cancel our annual communication, the formal installation of officers, the Grand Master's banquet, the trip to the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, Maine day at the Seadog baseball park, the Maine state parade, and the exemplification of the Master Mason Degree by the Oklahoma Native American degree team. The list of cancellations both Masonic and personal is lengthy and disappointing.

All these cancellations may seem tragic in some way, but still, I am grateful. I didn't have to close my business, nor was I unemployed, sick, or suffering directly or indirectly from this COVID-19 pandemic. We all know of someone who has struggled with, or perhaps even perished from, complications of the coronavirus.

Is there anything we can do to recover that which was lost? Now is a perfect time to reset our thought process and look forward to 2021. We have a choice. We can choose to wallow in the lamentations of a challenging 2020, or we can transcend those frustrating and unsettled feelings and get off to a great start in 2021.

A new year demands that we expect the best, prepare for the worst, and then navigate 2021 somewhere between those extremes. We cannot know or predict what awaits us in the coming year, but we can anticipate and plan for it. From the experiences we have shared in the last year and how we have employed different strategies to match the unexpected conditions, we have consciously and unconsciously employed the necessary actions to pursue the "survival of the fittest." The conditions of 2020 do not have to define us. We can use our experiences of the past and create a clear vision for our future. We can target specific goals that will keep us moving forward regardless of the obstacles that may clutter our path.

Brethren, do not get caught up in the "I can't do that" mentality. Lay out your plan and commit yourselves to the greater good. Adjust your purpose and create a plan that supports your intentions and hopes for 2021.

Your vision, combined with your sense of higher pur-

pose and a willingness to employ the tools and tenets of Masonry, will pave the way for your success even in the face of what seems to be insurmountable adversity. If you commit yourself, you can accomplish the tasks at hand and reach your goals. Set those goals as though there are no obstacles to navigate, but you must have an alternate plan should you encounter the unexpected and be blindsided by adversity. Look to the future and not just at where you are currently. As you work toward your goals, you may get knocked down. Pick yourself up and continue your path to success. We cannot go over, under, or around this pandemic. We must go through it. And

our only chance at achieving our goals for the future in the grasp of such difficulty is to employ all the tools of Freemasonry. Remember the lesson of the winding staircase, that while we cannot perceive dangers that may lie around the bend, we should be prepared to alter our course in response to the unexpected while ascending or descending.

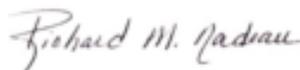
It is easy to accomplish goals when there are no obstacles in your path, but a bit more complicated when the path is cluttered.

In the past year, we have proven ourselves to be resilient. Some of our lodges have done very well in the face of adversity. We have been tested in ways we never dreamed; we must continue to commit to being who we really are. Are we going to allow 2020 to define us, or are we going to rise above the adversity and hold ourselves to a higher standard? Our tenets of brotherly love, relief, and truth are on trial, and only we can deliver a verdict. Please remember this should you begin to sing the lamentations of "woe is me."

Ultimately, we have a choice. Do we roll over and play dead while we wait for some perceived good or something positive to happen, or do we embrace the challenges and create a new vision or path on which we can work and be proud? I choose not to be the victim of my circumstances. I choose to be positive and be the master of my destiny. I hope you will follow. Be positive, be loving, be kind, be safe.

Yours in service,

Rich



Grand Master



Observations from our Grand Secretary

In what has proved to be such a challenging year, I wanted to share with you some positive thoughts about our Fraternity in Maine. Despite shutdowns, exposures, outbreaks and many obstacles we are dealing with daily, Masons in our great state have not remained silent or idle. We continue to work to make our communities better and help those in need.

No where is this more evident than with the use of the Covid-19 Community Betterment Grant. The Maine Masonic Charitable Foundation made this one time grant available to all lodges this spring. Through your efforts, 58 lodges took advantage of this grant, over \$79,000 dollars was donated and over 1800 hours volunteered. These donations benefited food pantries, PPE for schools and First Responders, the American Red Cross, churches and many others.

Even though it has been a tough year for lodges to fundraise for charity, YOU came through for those who are struggling the most in this pandemic! I am so proud to call myself a Maine Mason and these efforts further enforce that Mason's DO!

What has also been refreshing to see at the Grand Lodge level is lodge officers continuing to do the work within their Blue Lodge. Despite restrictions and some attendance challenges, most have been able to find a way to make it work, conducting stated meetings and degrees. Many were very excited and happy to be able to get back to work in June, but we still face challenges.

If you are having a hard time filling your chairs, you are not alone. Many members do not feel comfortable coming to lodge and that is ok. Don't be afraid to ask your district officers for help should you need it, especially for your degree

work. Stay positive and remember what the Grand Master has stated in his communications, We are all in this together!

Switching gears, if you use Groupable/M2, you may have noticed that you can no longer log into Classic Mori. It recently rode off into the sunset to enjoy a happy retirement. Spend some time to get to know the Groupable/M2 platform. Many new features have been added that will help you if you are a lodge secretary or officer. Call us at the Grand Lodge office if you have any questions or have your DDGM schedule a school in your district where I can come do some hands-on training and take questions. The better we can use this important database, the easier it will be for you and your lodge.

Remember to update your lodge membership records before the end of the year. Your membership record at 12 am on January 1, 2021 will be used for the per capita next year which will increase from \$17.10 to \$18.50 per member and is due with your annual return by February 1, 2021 to avoid a penalty. If you have to suspend any members for non-payment of dues, remember to give them due notice by certified mail or documented phone conversation along with Official Form 6 prior to doing so.

From my family to yours, I hope you have a safe and enjoyable Holiday Season! Let's hope for a new year that will bring our country together and continue to allow Freemasons to do the important work that we do.

Fraternally,
Scott C. Walton
Grand Secretary



Nollesemic Lodge brethren become Santa's willing helpers

On July 7th, the Freemasons from Nollesemic Lodge 205 in Millinocket proudly sponsored the Santa House motorcycle ride in town. Lodge members did all the cooking to feed the hungry participants and we had a DJ playing great music as well. Almost 40 motorcycles rode from Milford to Millinocket; a fantastic turnout. Different chapters of Widows Sons including the Low XII Riders, Temple Guards, Men of Tyre, and The Band of Brothers participated as well as the Red Knights and the American Legion Riders.

We raised \$1000 to fund the winter festivities scheduled for December 14th. The Red Knights of Maine, Chapter 8, brought Santa back to visit the center of Millinocket after 20 years. We have a little house for Santa to sit in while children from the three surrounding towns come to share their Christmas wishes with the Jolly Old Elf.

A horse and buggy will be rented for the day to provide a free old-fashioned sleigh ride around the Veterans Park. We provide coffee for the adults, hot cocoa, candy canes and cookies for the children courtesy of donations from our local businesses. We also have hats and mittens for the children that have been generously donated to us by community members.

Santa also returns for a brief visit during our 4th of July Parade. The Red Knights Chapter 8 no longer exists, but many of the riders have become Masons.



Manning the grill.

They approached Nollesemic Lodge 205 regarding interest in taking over "The Santa House" project.

Lodge brethren thought it would be a great community project, providing a fun activity while increasing the lodge's visibility within the town. This would provide an opportunity for Masons to mingle with community members and speak to our mission and possibly interest potential members who would help keep the lodge active and functioning at its highest level. This is a wonderful community project because it includes all age groups in a joyous and heart-warming manner.

Written by Val Babineau



Always a lot of preparation for a successful event.

Col. Jack Twigg, a Pioneer in Stealth Air Power

by Brother George Pulkkinen

“General Stewart summonsed me to his office, me a piss-ass major,” retired Air Force Colonel Jack Twigg recalls. The General said, “Twigg, I want you to do something; find a solution, solve the problem, do it fast, and do it cheap.”

The problem General Stewart wanted solved was the loss of American-made aircraft. 100 F4s and Navy F5s piloted by highly-trained Israeli pilots had just been lost in the October 1973 Yom Kippur war.

Major Twigg was directed, that means “ordered” when a General is tasking you, to find a way to keep those planes in the air and to carry out the mission.

Brother Twigg, a member of Bristol Lodge #74, in Bristol, knew that drones were already being flown to surveil enemy installations and POW camps. The drones were small and their size made them difficult, if not impossible, to see. “Our goal was to develop an invisible aircraft large enough for manned flight. We were tasked to do the impossible. That is to make our planes invisible.”

He put together a team of about 15 American engineers. They were so smart, Twigg says, “the best engineers we could find. I really believe that no one is smarter than American engineers.”

They had to be. Twigg’s team’s goal was to create aircraft that, in effect, made useless every enemy radar installation, stationary and hand-held. “Some said we couldn’t do it; that it couldn’t be done. But we did,” so successfully, in fact, only one American stealth aircraft has been lost to enemy fire since 1973.

The stealth aircraft were combat flown for the first time in the Iraqi war. As a measure of success, 20 stealth fighters wiped out the entire Iraq defenses in the first day.



Bristol Lodge Secretary Irv True listens attentively as Brother Twigg relates the fascinating story of developing America’s Stealth program.

Development was a complex and highly secret process. First specifications had to be developed. Contractors Northrup and Lockheed responded to the rfp. Lockheed won the first competition, then the companies worked together. The cooperation “was wonderful,” Twigg recalls. “We tested day and night in Arizona, my people and the contractors.” So sensitive was the testing that a bird or even a bug could ruin the signature, could “light up” a radar scope. Back to the drawing board. Brother Twigg’s team pushed on to develop the invisible signature. The enemy’s goal, after all, was “to find you (in the air), track you and shoot you down.” The team decided that the best way to crush that goal was to develop a single pilot aircraft, small, agile and radar-reflecting. Funding was available to build two test planes.

Brainpower and commitment carried the day. That and a bit of horse trading. In order to keep costs down, off-the-shelf equipment was used inside the aircraft whenever possible. Twigg traded with the Navy for engines, and flight controls from F-11s and F-18s were re-purposed. It took 20 months from design to test. 132 test flights were flown during the Have Blue experimental program, 36 of them by

Continued on Following Page

Lockheed test pilot Bill Park; another 52 by Col. Ken Dyson. “Finally we validated tests against all threats.” So good was the stealth system that on one test flight Dyson ejected. He punched out at 0°. We couldn’t track where he landed. We sent a helicopter out to search for him, and found him sitting on a rock waving to us. “What a great pilot he was,” Twigg said with great admiration for Dyson’s flying skills.

Jack Twigg grew up in Lawrence, Massachusetts, He earned a BS in engineering from Lowell Tech in 1960 and studied meteorology at NYU. He served in Viet Nam as a meteorologist. After four years in meteorology he moved back into engineering. Col. Jack Twigg retired from the Air Force after 25 years of service.

Jack met his lovely wife Mary Lou when he was a DeMolay and she a Rainbow Girl. Among his recognitions Jack Twigg was awarded the 2015 Milton Caniff Spirit of Flight Award and has been inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame, and as a Pioneer of Stealth Research.

The stealth technology developed by Col. Twigg and his team remains a valued weapon in our country’s defense. He has written a history of early devel-



Jack and Mary Lou

opment of Stealth technology. Because of its sensitive nature the book needs approval by top military brass. When asked if his book has been Okayed for release, Brother Twigg replied with a bit of a mischievous grin, “no, it hasn’t . . . because no-one in the Pentagon knows just what we did.”



Above Jack and Mary Lou’s mantel, the message of a true patriot.

Lodges and Grange Partner to Improve Communities

Brethren from Freedom Lodge in Limerick, Dayspring Lodge in West Newfield and Greenleaf Lodge in Cornish recently demonstrated their patriotism and community involvement when they retired 65 American flags that had worn out flying on municipal buildings and homes in Newfield, West Newfield and Porter, and at private residences in Hiram, Cornish, Parsonsfield and Porter. They also place flags on the graves of veteran and first responders interred in the old Porter cemetery.

This was the third consecutive year area flags were retired by local Masons. The effort has grown from 14 flags in 2018 to 30 last year, and now 65. The official Boy Scout Flag Retirement Program is employed for the ceremony. This year the Masons were assisted by members of Porter Grange #569. Freedom Lodge Master Gary Nickerson said that about a third of Grange membership is made up Masons from area lodges.

Retiring the flags was the latest example of cooperation among the lodges and Grange members. In 2019, Porter Grange accepted the Porter Union Church as an historical preservation project and the Masons subsequently have held two St. John's Sunday celebrations there. A Christmas celebration is planned at the church



Porter Grange Members Maggie and John Lowry, Freedom Lodge Master Gary Nickerson, Dayspring Lodge Master Kurt Colwell, Greenleaf Lodge Master Walter Towle, Jeanne Nickerson and two Freedom Lodge Fellowcrafts, Mike Nichols and John Frenette, retired 65 flags on November 15.

later this month. The Grange has also hosted dinners for the Masons where Grangers become the wait-staff.

Another of the cooperative efforts is Porter Grange's sponsorship of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library project. Granger John Lowry expressed great appreciation for the Masons' efforts for the project. He noted that the lodges have made multiple contributions that have been matched or tripled by the Grand Lodge Charitable Foundation. Lowry explained that the Grange raises much of its funding for charitable projects with its public suppers, and the Covid-19 pandemic "completely disrupted" that source of funding this year. "Without the help of the local lodges and Grand Lodge we would have had to severely curtail the number of kids we support."

Wor. Brother Nickerson says about 140 local kids now participate in the program each month receiving "content appropriate" reading material from Dolly's Imagination Library. John Lowry expects that number to grow in 2021. He said he can't stress enough how grateful the Grange is for the Masons' support. "We know that the lodges have their own challenges, particularly with building maintenance and meetings this year, and we know their generosity was not without some cost." He added that when applying for grants there is often a question about "community support" on the application form. "We always cite the lodges as the best example of shared community across this area."

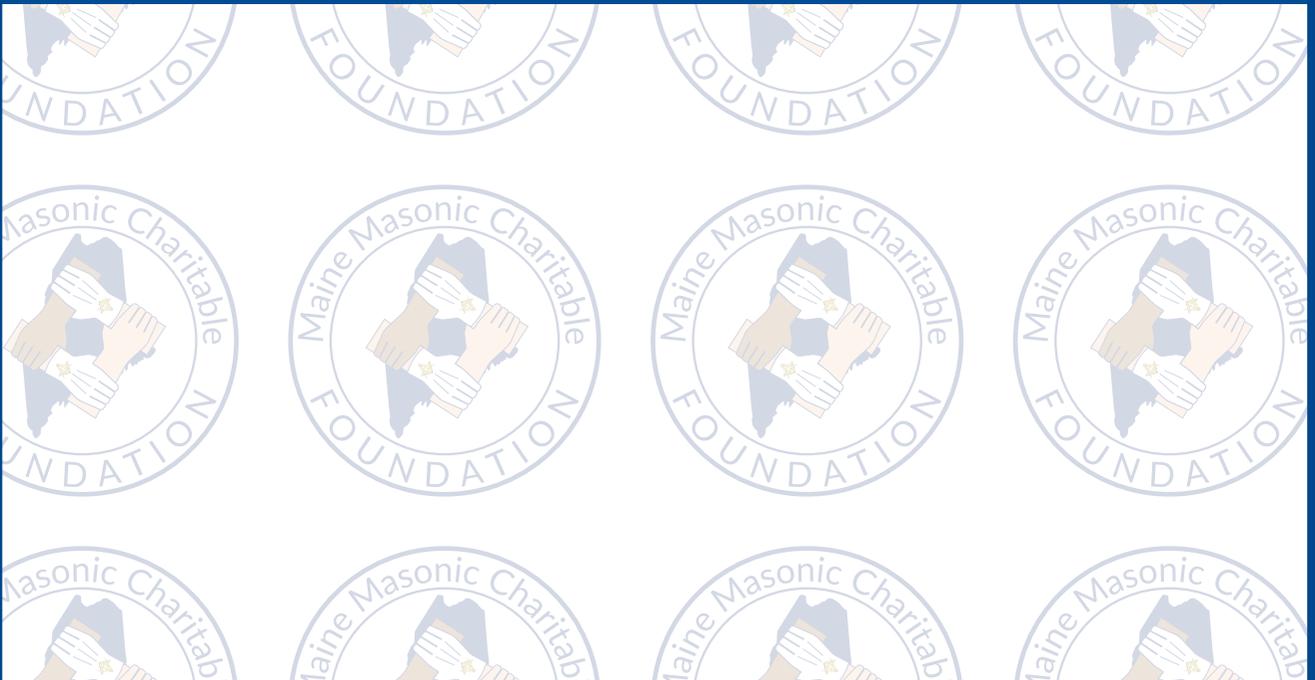


Dolly and "her" kids.

December 2020



Maine Masonic Charitable FOUNDATION



Newsletter



Helping to Build Strong Communities in Maine

DID YOU KNOW ... the young ladies and men of the International Order of the Rainbow for Girls and Maine DeMolay have joined forces this fall to raise money for our living Veterans here in Maine? The fundraising campaign was launched just before Veterans Day in November 2020 and will continue through to February 2021. They are selling red, white and blue ornaments - for donations of just \$10

- which will be displayed on large 4 ft. by 8 ft. flags. Join in the effort to honor our Veterans with an individual or Lodge donation. Triangle Lodge filled an entire flag display! They made a donation of \$2,300 (that is 230 ornaments) and their flag can be seen at

the Maine Veterans Home in Scarborough (checkout our Facebook page to see some photos). St. Aspinquid will be displaying a flag and asking for donations in conjunction with their annual Christmas Tree sales/fundraiser. York Lodge is currently displaying the flag and ornaments from the Veterans Day fundraising efforts of the Rainbow Girls, Assembly Sanford #7. They have raised over \$400 so far! For more information please visit the Foundation's website (MaineMCF.org) or email Rainbow Girls (Debbie Redmond) at debred@maine.rr.com or Maine DeMolay at info@medemolay.org. All donations will help to provide for our living Veterans here in Maine.



HIGHLIGHTS ... Knowing a good idea when you hear it. Actually, in just the past two months I have heard of two good ideas so I thought I would share them both.

#1

Siloam Lodge #092 in Fairfield initiated a community-wide effort, spearheaded by David Rancourt, which was promptly duplicated by **Sebasticook Lodge #146** in Clinton. A bottle and can drive, entitled "What you CAN, when you CAN", "raising community awareness and showing appreciation for their 1st Responders – 5 cents at a time".

Both Siloam Lodge #092 and Sebasticook Lodge #146 are taking advantage of their Community Betterment Matching Grants which will allow them to turn the first \$500 they each raise into \$1,500 to be used to purchase PPE for their communities' Police, Firefighters and EMT personnel.

#2

And how about the brethren at **Drummond Lodge #118**, they are supporting the Porter Grange "Imagination Library" program. Originally the brainchild of Dolly Parton, the program gives each child - from birth to age 5 - a specially selected book each month. An age appropriate book is mailed to their homes as "Dolly wanted children to be excited about books and to feel the magic that books can create...to ensure that every child would have books, regardless of their family's income".

The Porter Grange program currently supplies 95 children in their geographic area with books each month. The cost is roughly \$30 per child per year. Drummond Lodge used its Community Betterment Matching Grant to provide \$1,500 to the Porter Grange.



THE HOLIDAYS ARE UPON US...I think we can all agree that 2020 has been a challenge and will continue to be right up until the end. Please check in on your friends, families and fellow masons this holiday season. It is important that those in need know we are here to help.

DONOR RECOGNITION

1820 Society

There is still time for you to become a member of the 1820 Society this year!

*The following is a list of donors, each of whom have donated at least \$500
to the Maine Masonic Charitable Foundation
during the 2021 fiscal year (1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021)*

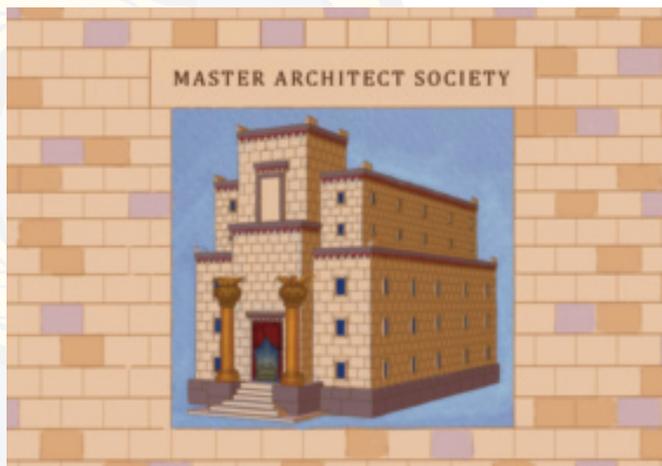
*Waterville Lodge #033
Widow Sons Knights Templar
Chapter
Mark Rustin
Thomas "TJ" Williams
Michael R. Roy
Arundel Lodge #076
Ira Berry Lodge #128
HM Payson
Diane Denk Dupuis
Nicholas G. Xenos*

*Congdon's Donuts
Widow Sons Band of Brothers
Chapter
Debora Redmond
James Pringle
Dan Fink
Greenleaf Lodge #117
Saccarappa Lodge #86
David Lewis Toothaker Trust
Scottish Rite, NMJ Valley of
Aroostook*

*St. Aspinquid Lodge #198
Widow Sons - Riders Association
of Maine
David Quist
Edward Shiembob
Anne Monks
Abner Wade Lodge #207
Webster Lodge #164
Richard Bergeron, Jr.
Maine Consistory Portland
TR*

COMING SOON... We will soon have a wall mural covering an entire wall at Grand Lodge to honor all the members of the MASTER ARCHITECT SOCIETY.

Each member's name will be displayed on an individual brass (or metal) plate which will be approximately 3x6 inches in size.



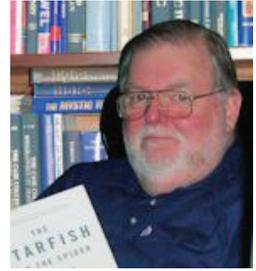
**Please ask us about becoming a member of the MASTER ARCHITECT SOCIETY.
Your support is greatly appreciated!**

Contact SUSAN SCACCHI for MORE INFORMATION
(603) 677-2436 (mobile) or (207) 843-1086 (Grand Lodge office) or
via email at DIRECTOR@MAINEMCF.ORG

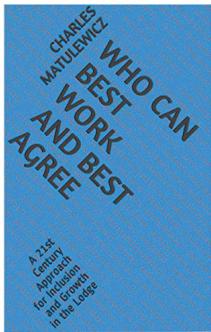
TOGETHER we can make a difference now and for future generations!

Last issue I encouraged you to read in these times of confusion and uncertainty. That admonition applies even more now! Don't let events of the day ruin your life: take heart knowing that things will get better. Reading can show you that!

The Old Webmaster's BOOKSHELF

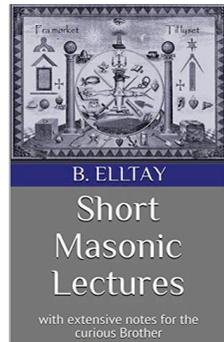


Today, anyone can write a book and have it sold at an online store with minimal monetary output. Some of these are truly great, but others would be SO much better had they been edited by someone with more knowledge of English grammar rules. The author thinks they know what they wrote, but to others it's a mass of words, often seemingly thrown on the page. Fair warning....



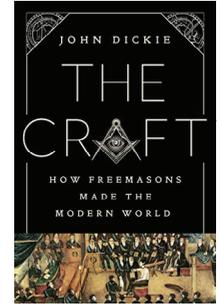
The first book for you is truly a thoughtful presentation, marginally lessened by that lack of editing. Nevertheless, it very much deserves your attention because of its relevancy to today's 'issues': "*Who Can Best Work and Best Agree: A 21st Century Approach for Inclusion and Growth in the Lodge*" by Charles Matulewicz. provides a road-map to a number of things that often perplex Brethren. (Describe Masonry! is one.) It's a short book but I'm willing to guarantee you'll come away looking at your lodge - and your place in it - with more positivity and mindful of the opportunities it offers both you and the generations to follow. GET IT and see if you don't feel better about *us*!

Also with an eye toward relevancy, "*Short Masonic Lectures: with extensive notes for the curious Brother*" by B. Elltay warmed my heart when I read that the author was going to provide SOURCES, something so often missing when someone is rambling on about Freemasonry. If you're a Lodge Education officer or someone who's not content with the "Because!" response, you definitely need to read this book. The topics are very approachable and you won't feel the need to be a Masonic scholar when you start (though you might well be when you're done!). Covering topics germane to all of the degrees, the accompanying illustrations add significantly to the enjoyment this book brings. If you're looking for a lodge presentation, start right here!



You may have seen this next book mentioned in news feeds etc. The *Times* of London did a review on July 30 and the *Wall Street Journal* had one on August 31st.

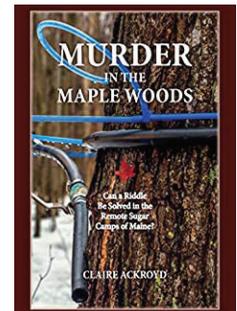
There have been others. I got my copy on Audible and listened to it while driving. "*The Craft: How the Freemasons Made the Modern World*" by John Dickie is quite similar to "*The Freemasons: A History of the World's Most Powerful Secret Society*" by Jasper Ridley published a decade earlier. Written by a non-Mason, it provides generally correct outline of the past with thoughts on the present and future of our fraternity. Like all works of this ilk, some aspects are made to appear more ominous or foolish than we know them to be. In my opinion, it's not going to provoke a great membership rush but neither is it going to deter those who might have a casual interest. If you're looking for something to fill up your 'to be read' pile, this is it.



The challenging title "*Are You Hiram?*" caught my eye - and I'm glad it did. Andy Abright doesn't disappoint when it comes to this thought provoking AND engaging work. It is at once a study of both history and the Bible leading to some serious questions about our place in the scheme of things. Although small in size, it nevertheless is guaranteed to give you pause as you weigh the premise of the title. Pick it up and enjoy. You'll learn lots of facts *and* get a healthy does of self-evaluation. Absolutely recommended.



Thomas Paine wrote, "These are the times that try men's souls." Don't let that ruin your life. Do something you've never done before or get back to something you enjoyed. Pick up a book! Here's an easy read about the far northwest of Maine and its maple sugar industry that you might enjoy. Moreover, it may get you reading rather than doomscrolling. "*Murder in the Maple Woods*" by Claire Ackroyd I found pretty darn good!



Bro. Ed King would love your suggestions and recommendations for things to read and review! He's working diligently to get a whole bunch of reviews online. Stay tuned for an announcement! E-mail him at MasonicReading@gmail.com

Solon Masons Help Keep Local Food Pantries Full

RW Bro. Robert Mercer, Master of Keystone Lodge #80 of Solon, recently presented Rich and Hope Ciccone of the Cornville/Athens Food Pantry with a donation of \$750 from the lodge and the Maine Masonic Charitable Foundation. An equal amount will be donated to the Bingham Food Cupboard.



CALLING ALL BRETHREN



Ancient Brothers #178 is at it again! We are setting a goal of \$3,000.00 to help raise funds for the Special Olympics Maine's 2021 calendar year. We are gathering a Dip Team to participate in the 2021 Annual Lobster Dip. High noon on January 1st, a team of Masonic Brothers and some family members will be plunging in to the Atlantic Ocean to support this great cause.

We are in need of bodies for both the dipping team and support. You can help by joining the team, donating as little or as much as possible. As well as in-person support at the time of the event, we need some sideline rooters and towel/blanket holders to aid us in rewarming ourselves after the dip. We plan to leave 2020 behind us and crash through the cold into an amazing 2021.

If you are interested in donating or joining the Dip Team "Ice Age Ancient Brothers" you can follow the link below and if you have any question please contact the brother following the link.

<https://secure.frontstream.com/lobster-dip-2021/team/930502>

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Wor. Daniel DiDonato
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e-Mail: Ancientbrothers@yahoo.com

Paul Revere was a very busy man. And patriot. And Freemason.

Thanks to Portland native Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, we all know about Brother Paul Revere's famous ride on the 18th of April in '75. You know the ride; the one when, on horseback, he rode to every Middlesex village and farm to alarm residents of Eastern Massachusetts that the British forces in Boston were headed out to confiscate the American arsenal at Concord and to capture Patriot leaders Samuel Adams and John Hancock, believed hiding in Lexington. The next morning the American Revolution began on Lexington Green when the shot heard around the world left several residents dead or wounded.

That's the briefest of capsules to illustrate his patriotic activity. But what about Paul Revere the businessman, and Paul Revere the Freemason.

Revere the Businessman

Revere was a worker in metals. He had apprenticed to his father's silver smith trade at an early age. Following the Revolutionary War he returned to his silversmithing. In addition to the fine silver items and his work as an engraver, he expanded his work to cast bells and cannons. It is reported that he was the first American to successfully roll copper into sheets. Later still he opened an iron foundry in Boston's North End, further expanding his offerings to the people of Boston. The steeple at First Unitarian Parish in Kennebunk houses a Revere bell cast in 1806.

Revere the Freemason

Brother Revere joined Boston's Lodge of St. Andrew in 1760, serving as Master in 1770. 24 years later, after serving the Craft diligently for 34 years, he became Grand Master of Masons in Massachusetts. During his three-year term as Grand Master Brother Revere chartered 21 lodges throughout Massachusetts and two more in what was then known as the Province of Maine.

Enter two travelling brethren, both members of Joseph T. Heard Lodge in Ipswich, Massachusetts. Brothers George Erickson and Stanley Baker had visited each of the 21 Massachusetts lodges named for Past Grand Masters of the jurisdiction. Brother Erickson reports that they so enjoyed those visitations they looked for more opportunity to visit lodges and meet new brethren. They had heard that Grand Master Revere chartered several lodges. After conferring with Brother Walter Hunt, Grand Historian, they learned 21 of the Revere lodges chartered between 1795 and 1797 con-

tinued to work. Their new visitation mission was set. It began three years ago and, 20 lodges later, ended Wednesday, Nov.11 when they travelled to Kennebec Lodge #5, Hallowell, chartered March 14, 1796.

We had lots of fun visiting the Revere lodges, Brother Erickson told the Kennebec Lodge brethren. Brother Baker recalled one story in particular. When they visited King Hiram Lodge in Provincetown they were told about the time a local banker called the lodge explaining that its 100-year lease on a deposit box in his establishment had expired and did they want to come down and open it.

The Secretary responded with surprise, "We have a safety deposit box?" The banker assured him that the lodge did indeed have the box and advised that "there's some stuff in it you might want to check." Lodge members, curious about what had been deposited many years earlier, went and opened the box. Among the contents was a complete set of engraved Paul Revere silver jewels for all the officers.

The value of the jewels is described as priceless. And, according to Brothers Baker and Erickson, so is the experience of visiting lodges and meeting new brethren.



Brothers Stan Baker and George Erickson flank a portrait of Paul Revere and hold a form containing signatures of Masters of all 21 Paul Revere Lodges. They got the final signature Nov. 11 at Kennebec Lodge #5 in Hallowell.

Historic Hay Peabody Clock in Portland Up and Running Again

by R.W. Brother Tim Martel

I have many interests in addition to Free Masonry that some members of the Craft may find interesting. But the subject that Grand Master Richard Nadeau has asked me to discuss in *The Maine Mason* is my recent involvement in the restoration of the Hay Peabody Street Clock. This majestic 95-year-old clock is located in front of the Francis Hotel on Congress Street in Portland. The Hay Peabody Funeral Home purchased this clock 95 years ago. Nobody seems to know when it stopped working but we have yet to find anyone who has seen it working, at least until now.

Three years ago I was joined by six fellow members of Maine's Chapter 89 of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors, NAWCC. We contacted the owners of the Francis Hotel and volunteered to restore the clock movement, dials and hands on this beautiful old clock for only the cost of parts and miscellaneous items. The owners had previously requested bids for movement restoration but the bids received averaged about \$150,000, not counting restoration of the case which is made of cast iron and was also in a terrible state of disrepair. The massive ball at the top is hollow and weighs over 1000 pounds, The case walls were so thin that it's a wonder the ball which sits atop a hollow cast iron tube, had not fallen off years ago and rolled down Congress Street. The movement resides at the bottom of this monster. The cast iron structure was separated into its component sections and transported to Woolwich on a small trailer where it was blasted and restored by a for profit company.

Also, the cement pad that supported this clock was sinking into the



Dirt and grime inside.

ground and the clock was tilted like the Leaning Tower of Pisa so the pad had to be replaced before the clock and case could be returned to their Congress Street location.

The clock owners accepted our offer to restore their street clock and promised to raise the necessary funds to restore this Historic Portland Landmark. Time went by with no fund raising, so we requested permission from the owners to remove the movement from the case and to start the restoration process. Permission was granted but initially owners would not permit removal of the dial because local residents love this old clock, running or not, and the owners were reluctant to upset their Portland neighbors. Our team of horologists, (people who are interested in the science of time), pictured at left, began the systematic removal and tedious process of recording all parts. It only took us a few hours to pull the old and extremely dirty time system and begin the restoration in earnest. There are more than seven people in the photo to the left because one of the hotel owners is in it. The photographer and



The restoration team.

Continued on Following Page



Photo at left shows the system in its restored condition, running on its own in the Scarborough Hollow Clock Repair Shop.

his wife are in the photo and one other chapter member who only helped us this one day. This mechanism has 95 years of dirt and grime that had to be cleaned. We took the system to Scarborough Hollow where one of our members owns a repair shop. We totally disassembled it and yours truly started cleaning.

After removing the filth, we soon learned that the escape gear had a damaged tooth. A pinion gear had to be made on a lathe by one member of our team. Then the entire system had to be painted, oiled,

mounted on a test stand and run. This is a weight driven clock that had been converted to electricity many years ago so a person would not have to wind it. We wanted to restore this clock to its original configuration. To accomplish this we installed an electrical system for the sole reason of raising the weights so that there would be no need for human intervention to keep the clock running under its own power.

The next step of the journey was to reinstall the system in the newly restored case, install the four 36in. diameter glass dials that we had hand painted, install the minute and hour hands on the four faces, install the motion works, bezels and outer glass. Then the movement was taken to the site of the restored cabinet and installed in its new home

Chapter 89 of NAWCC is composed of 50 men and women who are avid collectors; some of us also repair antique clocks. We meet regularly at United Lodge #8 in Brunswick and we love meeting there. The average age of the restoration crew was about 73 years old.



Photos by Phil Carthage

One last thing, I have collected and restored hundreds of antique clocks since 1976 but the Masonic Clock at left is my all time favorite. It was the graduation project of an English Clockmaker Apprentice in the 1800's. As you can surmise from the photo, he obviously passed his exam and probably worked as a Master Clockmaker for many years thereafter.

This clock embodies most of the key symbols of Freemasonry. The front and back plates that hold the movement together are approximately 1/4 in. Brass Squares and Compasses. The Winding Key is a Trowel, the clock's striking tool is an Axe head representing the Freemasonry Setting Mall and it strikes a bell to register the clock's time. The clock has a miniature Level at the base and it is obvious to me that its creator was a Master Mason who learned his Masonic lessons well. If you have any questions about either the street clock or my Masonic Clock, please feel free to contact me at timbev70@comcast.net or at 207-729-1433



Voila, this stately Portland Landmark has been brought back to life and the owners held a virtual dedication ceremony on Facebook and Youtube. Both links are available below.

clock <https://www.facebook.com/avenuemedia11c/videos/383449159458569/>
<https://youtube/aVqxwhZv4nU>

A Casual and Convenient Mason?

*by Brother Dan Bartlett
R.W. Deputy Grand Master*

Before we get to the point of this writing, I hope this finds you, your families and friends faring well during these challenging times. If you (or a Brother you know) are careening towards a challenging situation financially due to illness, loss of work etc., please reach out to your lodge as there are financial resources available through the Maine Masonic Charitable Foundation for those who have a demonstrated need. Remember, the process starts at your lodge so reach out to your lodge first. If you are unsure how to contact your lodge, contact the Grand Lodge office at (207) 843-1086 during normal business hours and they can help you with contact information. Now, on to the article...

Think about this question for a moment: Have we become a fraternity of casual and convenient Masons? While you're thinking about that I will immediately add that I recognize we have many hard working and devoted members of the Craft but, are there enough of them? I would say that the answer is a hard "NO". Let's start with a look at some definitions:

Casual (adjective) 1. relaxed and unconcerned.
 2. not regular or permanent.

Convenient (adjective) 1. fitting well with a person's needs.
 2. involving little trouble or effort.

A common theme heard around the state from the men who are at their lodge for a meeting is that they are tired. Not necessarily physically tired but tired of always being part of a small group that seems to do everything and the expectation that they will continue to do it. Whether it is a supper, building maintenance, a fundraiser of some type or degree work, it is time after time the same few guys who are there. This is not news to anybody. We as a group have long bemoaned not enough members support their lodge beyond paying their dues. This results in a lodge relying on the core group of another lodge in the area to help them when the need arises. Where are the members of that first lodge? I would offer that some of those members have become casual and convenient Masons.

We all recognize that life is busy. We have brethren who have work or family commitments. I am not convinced though that in a lodge with 75 members, that is lucky if 7 show up, has 68 members that are elder, infirm, live outside the area or have work or family commitments. Somewhere in that group of 68 there is a sizeable number who have lost interest to the point of becoming a

casual and convenient Mason.

This is not unique to Freemasonry. We know that fraternal organizations, churches and other volunteer groups suffer from a lack of participation. And consequently a few end up doing all the work. Growing up in a small farming community my family's church held suppers during the summer months to raise money to pay for oil in the winter. They were well attended by townsfolk even though there were 2 additional churches in town. As the years went by, some of those steadfast helpers passed away, or just couldn't physically do it and by the last year my folks were helping there were 4 people, all in their 70's trying to put these suppers together. My folks would spend several days doing food prep work prior to the supper on Saturday and when I commented to my Dad at one point about how much work he and my mother were doing despite their own health issues he didn't hesitate and said "if your Mother and I and Charlie and Marge don't do this, it won't happen. Nobody else will do it". Any of our brethren who are involved with their volunteer fire department knows the same struggles. Finding folks who will freely give of their time and energy in the service of others is an uphill battle.

So, what do we do about it? First, we recognize that there is enough failure on all sides that creates this problem. Remembering that a lodge is not a building but a group of men, it is the responsibility of lodge leadership to make sure there is value in coming to lodge. Nobody, me included, thinks going to lodge to pay the bills and say hello is a worthwhile endeavor. There must be more. Whether it's a program of some type at a meeting or a work party to get a few things done around the lodge we have to provide value. We all know this makes a difference because we have lodges around the state who are engaged in their communities and the lives of their brethren and are collectively enjoying the fruits of their labors.

There is just as much responsibility on the member to not be a casual and convenient Mason. Effort is required. Be serious about your association with this great group of men in your community. Put your differences aside and remember the phrase from the closing charge that "Every human being has a claim on your good offices. Do good unto all."

I am not writing anything that nearly all of you do not already know. We are all part of something much bigger than ourselves. We need each other to show up and be counted to ensure our fraternity thrives, not just survives long after we are gone.

Where the Graves Have No names

Captain Alexander Ross was a ship master and a leading merchant of Falmouth, now Portland, in 1762 when he received the first charter to form a Masonic lodge in the District of Maine. Business endeavors and sickness prevented him from acting upon the charter.

Colonel William Tyng, son-in-law of Ross and a sixth generation descendant of George Cleaves who first settled the area, was the first Master of "The Lodge at Falmouth" in 1769. He later served as the first Master of Ancient Land-Mark Lodge No. 17 and thus served as Master of 2/3rds of the lodges which now form Triangle Lodge No. 1 (*The third lodge was Atlantic No. 81.*)

The memorials for these Brother Masons have suffered from vandals and natural causes. Neither memorial bears the name of the Mason buried there. There have been no family descendants to care for them for over 200 years. We, as Masons, are their family in the 21st century!

Long ago Ross' table tomb lost its table with his name inscribed there on. It has become just a collection place for broken stone. Recently, a tree growing within it had to be cut out.

Tyng had been a proscribed Loyalist who was allowed to return from New Brunswick. His memorial was made of sandstone and was the first to be topped with an obelisk. Long missing are the four die walls bearing his personal information; all that remains are the two plinths and the broken obelisk.

Brethren, let's not give Bono and U2 cause to write a song about our founders entitled "Where the Graves Have No Names."

Your purchase of an envelope or just a donation will help us to repair the burial sites of these Founding Fathers of Maine Masonry.

"It's What a Mason does for a Mason."

A Maine Masonic Bicentennial Collectible Envelope Personalized for You



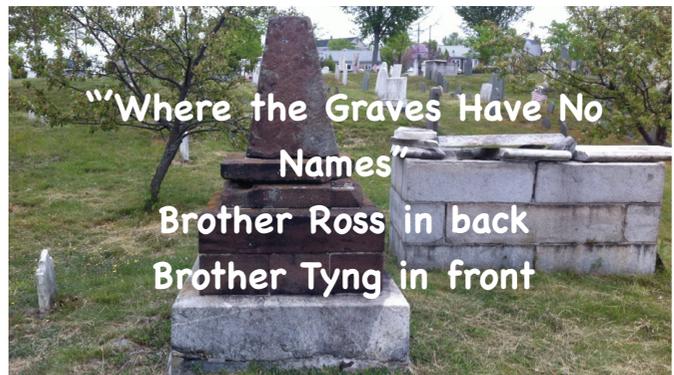
(Title) Your Name, Br./W. Bro. RW Bro. _____
Address (or Lodge Name) _____
Town _____

The above information will be typed on your collectible envelope if requested.

Your personalized envelope will be sent to you in its own enclosure.

Your \$7.00 purchase will help restore Masonic grave sites in Portland's Eastern Cemetery for RW Bro. Alexander Ross and RW Bro. William Tyng.

Make checks payable to The Maine Lodge of Research, mail to Richard L. Rhoda, PO Box 743, Houlton, ME 04730





An **entablature** refers to the superstructure of moldings and bands which lie horizontally above columns, resting on their capitals.

The College Briefly...

Our name inspires us to a 'higher educational calling.' We are not a bricks and mortar school but a "Temple of Knowledge," offering a growing variety of learning opportunities in various modalities

We believe that Freemasonry is relevant in society today, helping to create a continuum of knowledge for those who are interested in personal enrichment.

Masonic ritual exhorts us to broaden our knowledge of the seven liberal arts and sciences. Thus, our programs include topics of interest to anyone with an inquisitive mind: ethics, astronomy, logic, public speaking and more. We have molded the Maine Masonic College on the best features of not only traditional and modern Masonic-oriented education but also "senior college" and lifelong learning endeavors.

In addition, we are developing audio and video material along with reading lists and more. At the Maine Masonic College, we encourage your input, your recommendations and - most of all - your...

INVOLVEMENT!

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Facebook



MW Brother Walter Macdougall, right, was inducted into the Philalethes Society as a Fellow at the 2020 Maine Masonic College Virtual Convocation. MW Brother Claire Tusch was on hand to perform the physical presentation while MW Brother Richard Fletcher presided virtually from Washington DC. Brother Macdougall is the fourth Mason to be inducted from the State of Maine in the 90 year history of The Society and only the 227th in the world. Brother Macdougall also received the 2019 Award of Literature from the Society at the same time. Congratulations to MW Brother Walter Macdougall, FPS, from the Maine Masonic College and all the Masons of Maine!! For the curious, the other three Maine Masons inducted into the Society were M.W. Brother Benjamin Ela in 1968, M.W. Charles R. Glassmire in 1988, and Wor. Edward L. King (our *The Old Webmaster's Bookshelf*, creator) in 2001.

**Maine Masonic College Starting Again
In January 2021**

See course offerings and other information on Page 22 of this issue.

#32 The Minutes of “Old Builders Lodge #1000”

Brother George M.A. Macdougall

This is one article in a series on the people who created, discovered or redefined how modern architecture, engineering and science came about.

In this edition of ‘The Minutes’ we are going to veer off from our usual course and talk about a duo who had more to do with advancing Architecture, Engineering and Science than any one person. We will be talking about the history of Writing and Paper!!

I watched a show that was very eye opening on this topic and my wife suggested doing my next article on this topic so here it is!

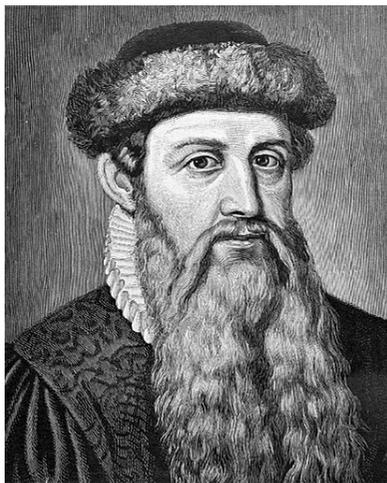
The Romans did not have paper as we know it today. They wrote on Papyrus. This worked well and was very plentiful. Papyrus is made by weaving strips of the papyrus plant together and then pressing them over time. This material did not lend itself to being used in books but it was great at being rolled up so it made super scrolls. Here is the first thing that opened my eyes. This made scrolls very plentiful, so much so they had ‘book’ stores and libraries. Being able to read this early in history was not as selective as I thought!! In fact, in Rome, toward the end of the republic, it became the fashion to have a library as part of the household furniture. And Roman booksellers carried on a flourishing trade. A law was even passed granting to the scribes (people who wrote the scrolls) the ownership of the material written which may have been the beginnings of the modern law of copyright.

In Medieval Europe, they had neither papyrus nor paper so they used Parchment or hide which was actually very rare. Parchment was made by stretching the animal hide on a frame and scraping it until all the fat was gone. It was expensive and time consuming but it allowed for the making of books. These books were very rare and expensive. Scribes could do 2 pages a day or about a book a year. These books were works of art with hand-scribed writing and hand-done pictures in color. This made the cost of a book about equal to the cost of a

house!!! And with books rare, reading was rare as well. This material was used long after paper because it was so durable; in fact it was used into the 1700’s for valuable documents such as the Declaration of Independence (as mentioned in the movie National Treasure). Before the Reformation and the introduction of printing, scribes and stationers who sold books formed guilds. Some of these stationers had stations built against the walls of cathedrals. (Maybe abandoned Masonic Lodges when the brothers moved on to build other cathedrals??)

China had the ability to make paper and the knowledge was very well guarded. The process was actually very inexpensive and their paper was very plentiful. So plentiful that they put together blank pages to form notebooks in order to record their thoughts.

The Islamic world, however, did manage to acquire the knowledge to make paper. They added a new twist, they polished the paper with stones to make it smoother to write on. They could produce a million sheets a day in their ‘paper making region’. This allowed them to write down a multitude of information they learned from their observations such as in Astronomy. This allowed them to become the knowledge powerhouse of the day! During the Dark Ages, all walks of life had to go to the Islamic countries to learn such things as the Builders Secrets or Geometry. So what happened?



Johannes Gutenberg

Well, in 1450 Gutenberg developed the printing press. He could produce 2,500 printed sheets a day!! (Remember, handwriting was 2 sheets a day.). He combined his press with some hand work and some of his books were mistaken for manuscripts until quite recently! Now, why did the Islamic countries lose their information powerhouse status? English made the transformation to block lettering (literally a tiny wooden block with a letter on it called type) extremely easily but Arabic is more like our cursive writing in that letters are connected in words and never could be satisfactorily printed on a press and produced in mass form. Therefore, the printing press far out produced what the Islamic printers could publish.

In the next issue of the Builders, we will discuss another duo who set their sights higher than anyone else had!



Wilton Lodge #156 received a donation from R.W. Harland Harnden's estate, A check for \$10,000 was presented by Bro. Harndon's son Ben. In photo, left to right: Ben Harnden, R.W. Harold Beisaw, Treasurer W. Nye Mosher, R.W. Clinton H. Coolidge, and Secretary W. Richard Lumb.

Maine Masonic College Courses starting again in January

Brother Luke Shorty, Dean of Academic Affairs

The Maine Masonic College is intending to go back to in-person courses starting Jan. 2021. Each month will offer two courses to be given at lodges around the State. Each course will be following all Maine CDC and Health guidelines to ensure the safety of our students and staff. We also announce the return of Brother Eric Kuntz's *Symbolism and Esoterics* and *Symbolism and Alchemy* courses back into our rotation on an "as requested basis for the months of January to April.

January	Brother Dan Gaucher - Secret Geometry of Art	Brothers George Macdougall and Don McDougal - Critical Thinking
February	Brothers Doug and Karl - Tenets & Cardinal Virtues	Brother Luke Shorty - Introduction to Geometry
March	Brother Dan Gaucher - Secret Geometry of Art	Brothers George Macdougall and Don McDougal - Critical Thinking
April	Brother Luke Shorty - Geometry	Brothers Doug and Karl - Tenets & Cardinal Virtues

If your lodge would like to request one of these courses please email info@tobringmorelight.org

Also check out our website <https://www.masoniccharitablefoundation.org/programs/maine-masonic-college/> and look for announcements from Grand Lodge for more information on these upcoming classes.

TRUTH

*by Wor. Dannel H. Starbird
Abner Wade Lodge #207*

“Truth” in today’s world has been increasingly defined as “relative”, depending on the perspectives of social media, special interest groups, and influential personalities. Conspiracy theories, opinions, propaganda, and the like, are promoted as though “gospel”.

Historically, Freemasonry has played a significant role in the unfolding of Western society. While Freemasonry is not originally American, institutions in the United States are profoundly influenced by Freemasonry. The strength and clarity with which the values of

Freemasonry have been established and maintained have allowed them to serve as an evolving foundation in the maintenance and continuing development of American society. There has not been a time in recent history when an active role for Freemasonic values and practices would seem more beneficial than now.

Freemasonry rests upon principles, values, beliefs, practices, common understandings, and traditions concerned with raising men to a higher standard of life and conduct. We learn to walk in an upright fashion before God and man, to act upon the square, to do unto others as we would have them do unto us, to practice charity, and to treat our Masonic brothers, and all others, with justice, fairness, and honesty. Our toolbox contains the plumb, allowing us to recognize what is upright and proper, a square to recognize what is true, and a level reminding us that the righteous expectation of upright and true conduct applies to all our dealings with humankind. Most importantly, Freemasons take an oath or obligation to recognize, respect, and practice our own principles, supporting and living by their application in the world at large. We are, by oath and obligation, living examples of these principles of truth.

Perhaps the world, and most particularly, the United States of America, needs Freemasonry for its guiding prin-

ciples as much now as when the Declaration of Independence was framed, and the constitutional government in our democracy outlined. We, as members of a demanding, self-governing entity, can offer to the world what we expect of ourselves: truth!

We respectfully appreciate that truth exists. Truth is manifest in facts: facts that are demonstrable through evidence. This is certainly a core message of geometry as it applies to philosophy. A right angle is “true”, if it is in fact and indeed, a right angle. If consistent, repeated measurement establishes a right angle, the evidence points to the truth of that right angulation. And if that which is NOT a right angle is claimed to be a right angle, that claim is untrue, and can be proved as such. What is untrue may be an error, misunderstanding, misapprehension, delusion, fabrication, or an outright lie. Measurement of that angle demonstrates the truth or non-truth of the assertion. This is the paradigm for truth. What is asserted, accepted, and believed to be truth, must be verifiable by recognizable, acceptable and replicable EVIDENCE (facts).

This conception of truth emerges intact from The Enlightenment, and is the model upon which science and our legal systems are built. Evidence distinguishes truth from belief, conception, faith, opinion, and consensus, no matter how strongly held these are.

To believe a thing to be true is a powerful impression, yet that belief may follow from baseless theories, conspiracies, or ideas, promoted by others to manipulate or support a certain agenda. Countless tragedies throughout history have been instigated by such means.

This is not to downplay the value of beliefs, faith, religious principles, or related systems of thought, which play powerful and important roles in human experience. It is simply to establish that truth, in its core relationship to fact and evidence, is a value and principle of Freemasonry. The corollary is that claims not supported by fact or relevant evidence, are, from a Masonic perspective, not necessarily true.

More important than ever before, it is by asking and answering the difficult questions about Truthfulness, that Masonry has established, and can renew, a potential guardianship role in the evolution of American democracy.

Redefining the Three Great Pillars

by Bro. Thomas (TJ) Williams

Originally published on the Midnight Freemason blog

As an Entered Apprentice, we learn that a Lodge's supports are the Three Great Pillars: Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty. The lecture states,

“Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty are said to support a Lodge because it is necessary there should be wisdom to contrive, strength to support, and beauty to adorn all great and important undertakings.”

While I agree these are the Lodge supports, what if we were to redefine and give the pillars further meaning?

A reflection of my time in the Craft, traveling experiences, and exploring more light on my own, I've attributed other things to these three pillars to support a Lodge: Education, Fellowship, and Ritual.

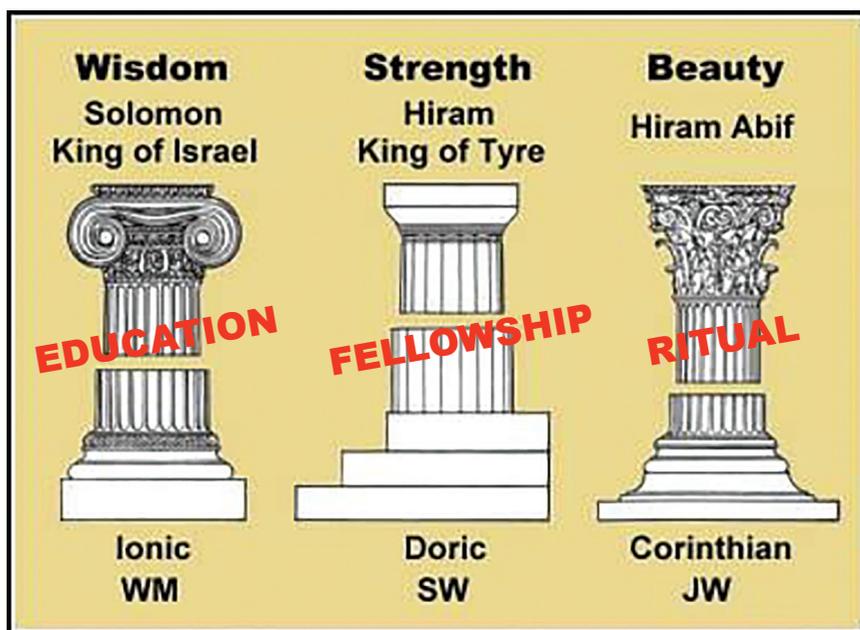
Education - We should always be in pursuit of more light in Masonry. Over and over again, I've seen lodges confer degrees and continue business without spending a bit of time sharing knowledge amongst the Brethren. If we're a fraternity that is taking good men and making them better, how is it happening? It doesn't need to be rigid like a college course; it should be fun and beneficial! Listening to a podcast episode, reading a paper related to a Masonic topic, or just gathering to have a free-flowing discussion about thoughts behind our symbols and ceremonies can invigorate a lodge. This is an opportunity to reach out to our Brothers we haven't seen in a while and keep the new Brothers who are eager to learn more. Education should NEVER be discounted.

Fellowship - We are the world's oldest Fraternity, connecting men of different backgrounds and cultures. Whether inside or outside of the Lodge, there should be an opportunity to build and expand these connections. I don't know about you, but I didn't join to only confer degrees,

read minutes, and pay bills. I want to feel genuine relations built with the men around me and the community we live in. Fellowship can take different forms: going out to a pub with Brothers and their families, an intellectual evening exploring the esoteric concepts of the world, rehearsing for degrees, and participating in community events. There are plenty of ways to get the ball rolling. At the end of the day, one should feel comfortable enough to approach someone else without anxiety about how the conversation may go because there's little relationship there.

Ritual - The ceremonies to bring candidates into the Craft are beautiful. We should strive to provide the best to our new brothers. While word-for-word presentations of the ritual are great, it's not about reciting a novel to the new initiate. There should be meaning behind the presentation. Bringing it back to education, it's also essential to understand the ritual and not recite it.

While these are just my own musings on supports of a lodge, I think an honest reflection on these three areas within your Lodge may prompt a discussion on how to adjust how things have always been done to how things could be to make the Masonic experience better.



Thoughts on the Need to Improve Masonic Ritual Lessons

By Bro. Charles W. Plummer

I have spent considerable time reviewing the important and meaningful lessons that are taught candidates for the purpose of enhancing their moral and ethical lives as they interact with others. This has led me to believe that some important changes need to be made in the ritual that will result in a successful rite-of-passage. This, in turn, motivated me to write this article covering some of those areas of instruction that I think can be improved upon of which there are many.

First, I think the accepted candidate should be told that he will be embarking on a Rite of passage and how it differs from a number of other rituals that are not rights-of-passage. Other areas of instruction that I believe can, and should be improved, include: Aristotle's four cardinal virtues, a number of words in the ritual that should be clearly defined, certain areas of instruction that are not historically factual but are based on the use of myths, metaphors, allegories, and legends, and that there are more than seven liberal arts and sciences.

As it relates to Aristotle's four cardinal virtues, temperance, fortitude, prudence and justice, the candidate is informed as to what they are but not why they are called "cardinal virtues" which means that they are the foundation of all other virtues of which there are a number, and which the candidate should be informed of. This should be followed with instruction on how to practice them in their daily lives as they interact with others which includes the practice of gratitude and empathy. Gratitude reminds us of what is important in life and makes us more aware of our relationships with others and how to reach out to them to offer help in time of need. Practicing empathy helps us connect with other people, to better understand what motivates them, and it teaches us a lot about ourselves. It can be thought of as a curious balance between one's self and others while at the same time resisting the urge to make the assumptions that they think as you do.

In terms of words that are used in the ritual that should be defined, "exoteric" and "esoteric" immediately come to mind as they relate to Masonic symbols. Another word is "hieroglyphical" as it relates

to the marble monument erected in Hiram Abiff's memory. In addition to these, there are a number of others. This in turn leads to the need to differentiate certain parts of the ritual that are legends and not historically factual including the death of Hiram Abiff who died of old age.

As it relates to the use of metaphors, one example is the phrase, "to be brought from darkness to light." Metaphorically speaking, this means to be brought from a state of not knowing to one of enlightenment which means to now know and understand.

In drawing to a close, if I have caused any readers to think about our Masonic ritual, what it means and ways it might be improved, then I have achieved my objective and leads me to day "so may it be" instead of using the ancient word "mote."



The Broken Column Monument by Amos Doolittle published in 1819 in the *True Masonic Chart* by Jeremy Cross.

Civility of Members of Revolutionary War Military Lodges

by Bro. Donald McDougal

The Maine Masonic College held its annual Convocation October 24, 2020. RW Bro George Macdougall made the following announcement.

“In continuation of the Civility theme that we have been exploring for the last few years in past Convocations, speakers at this year’s “gathering” will examine the circumstances that led lodges to take root in the north Atlantic colonies and the reasons for Freemasonry’s popularity in New England and the Canadian Maritimes during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. They will reconsider the late British colonial world from a non-US perspective, which might help us to better understand Maine’s place in a northeastern borderlands that includes Canada.”

There are many stories about the existence of civility and exhibitions of Brotherly Love among men-at-arms of both sides of the American Revolutionary War. After the battle of Camden, S. C. in which Brother, the Baron de Kalb fell in the American cause, his Masonic funeral rites were led by Brother, the Earl Cornwallis, the British Commander who ordered his ambulance brought up and who stayed by Bro deKalb until he expired.

The following was taken from:
“Military Lodges in the American War of Independence” Jay Callahan

“The 17th Regiment was captured at Stony Point (New York) on July 16, 1779 whereupon Brother and General Samuel H. Parsons, a member of American Union Lodge (Connecticut Line), returned the charter and regalia chest to his enemy brethren with the following letter:

*West Jersey Highlands, July 23, 1779
Brethren:*

When the ambition of monarchs or jarring interest of contending States, call forth their subjects to war, as Masons we are disarmed of that resentment which stimulates to undistinguished desolation; and however our political sentiments may impel us in the public dispute, we are still Brethren, and (our professional duty apart) ought to promote the happiness and advance the weal of

each other. Accept therefore, at the hands of a Brother, the Constitution of the Lodge of Unity No. 18, to be held in the 17th British Regiment which your late misfortunes have put in my power to restore to you.

*I am your Brother and obedient servant,
Samuel H. Parsons”*

The Masonic chest of the 46th Regiment of Foote fell into the hands of the Colonial Troops. Reported to Washington, he directed a guard of honor to take charge of the chest and other valuable articles belonging to the 46th and return them to the Regiment.

Also by Bro Callahan: *“Few Freemasons who ever lived in America have been so condemned by some authors and praised by others as Joseph Brandt, the powerful and influential Mohawk chief who sided with the British during the American War of Independence. On some occasions, he practiced Masonic virtues of brotherly love and charity. On others, he was ruthless. After the surrender of the American forces at the Battle of the Cedars on the St. Lawrence River in 1776, Brandt exerted himself to prevent the massacre of the prisoners. In particular, one Capt. John McKinstry, a member of Hudson Lodge No.13 of New York, was about to be burned at the stake. McKinstry gave him the Masonic sign of appeal which secured his release and subsequent good treatment. He and Brandt thereafter remained friends for life, and in 1805 he and Brandt together visited the Masonic Lodge in Hudson, New York. On another occasion, Brandt had saved a prisoner from the Sullivan Expedition against the Indians, Lt. Boyd. Boyd and a Private named Parker had been spared when Boyd identified himself to Brandt as a Freemason. Both were taken back to Beard’s Town where they were turned over to the Loyalist Colonel Butler of Butler’s Rangers. In Brandt’s absence, Col. Butler had them killed after they refused to answer questions during interrogation”.*

Callahan lists 55 of the British regiments serving within the conflict as having working Masonic Lodges, and nearly half, 74, of Washington’s Generals were known to have been Freemasons.

Several sources including: armyhistory.org, [**Continued on Following Page**](http://revo-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

revolutionarycharacters.org, newenglandhistoricalsociety.com, revolutionarywar.net credit our Brother General Henry Knox, who later settled in Thomaston, with attempting to play the role of mediator in the so called “Boston Massacre.”

“History.com” described the incident that started on March 5, 1770 as a brawl between a group of colonists and a single British Soldier guarding the Custom House. Brother Knox, being nearby, tried to intervene between the lone soldier and the angry colonists. The soldier fought back injuring one colonial rock thrower with his bayonet.

The crowd then continued to grow and a relief squad of British soldiers arrived to protect the original guard. The growing mob changed from rocks and snowballs to sticks and Clubs. The confrontation continued to escalate while Brother Knox continued his efforts pleading with the troops not to fire and for the crowd to stand back. His efforts were to no avail. The crowd continued their attack and someone fired a first shot. The result was 5 colonists killed and six wounded.

The British officer in command was arrested and stood trial on charges of murder. Bro Knox testified in his defense stating that he did not give the command to fire. By so doing he saved his enemy’s life. Two soldiers were convicted of manslaughter and were branded on the thumb in compliance with British penalties. After the war in the fall of 1784, Bros Knox and Lafayette met in Boston then sailed along the coast of Maine south of Penobscot Bay. Brother Knox died October 25, 1806 from an infection which developed after he choked on a chicken bone which got caught when he tried to swallow it a few days earlier.

Not all who lived during that time period necessarily shared the same lofty ideals & integrity. Lest we get discouraged, we must keep in mind that humanity has always had areas for improvement trying to follow social mores of their time. As in the following court case heard in Carleton County New Brunswick.

Carleton County NB Council Records 1791 – April
1719 General Sessions

“ _____ a gentleman of St. George was a Lieutenant in the 80th Regiment, Sundry Bills and Presentments found by the Grand Jury: — Lewdness: — Jurors of our Sovereign Lord of the King upon their oaths and affirmation present. That for some time past divers persons have been and still continue to be in the practice of Committing Fornication with Lewd & Infamous Women kept by them for that purpose, within the said county, Whereby bad example is held up to the Community in general, and the peace of his Majesty’s good subjects greatly disturbed by the unlawful practice. Wherefore the Jurors aforesaid, to prevent Evil Consequences which may probably ensue unless the offenders are brought to condign punishment – Present: _____ now or late of the said county, Gentleman at St. Georges aforesaid has lived and now lives in habits of Lewdness and Fornication with one _____ ...” He appears to have been in dire need of mentoring by a Sr. Warden’s advice, guidance, and counsel in the proper use of the Compasses.

We might all hope to leave some measure of an inspirational legacy but not one that “Inspires” snickering.

Brother William “Bill” Bryant, left, was presented his 50-year Veterans Medal at Orient Lodge #15, Thomaston, on August 4th. Participating in the presentation were DDGM/9 RW Russell Thompson, right, and lodge Worshipful Master, Wor. Steve Gibbons.



The letter below is a "must read" for all Brethren. I ask each of you to compare Brother Corry's thoughtful message with your own Masonic experience. If your's parallels Bro. Corry's, you are, as I am, richly blessed. If it doesn't I urge you to reflect, re-think, re-engage, or maybe finally seek and find the Masonic principles which have guided, and rewarded, millions of brethren for hundreds of years. —Your Maine Mason Editor

Subject: A True Brotherhood

Date: September 11, 2020 at 9:51:07 AM EDT

Good Morning Brother George,

I just finished reading Grand Master Nadeau's letter in the latest edition of the Maine Mason magazine. In his opening paragraph, he aptly summarized the divide our Nation is currently suffering which prompted me to tell you my story.

My name is Vince Corry. I moved to Maine in 1989 after retiring from the US Navy. Soon after living in Maine i noticed that several of the men with whom I worked and socialized were Masons. I knew nothing about Masonry other than I was a Catholic and the Catholic Church would not allow me to be a Mason, or so I thought. One day I was at work and asked the question, how do I become a Mason. That question opened the floodgates of support and encouragement from my Mason coworkers and friends. I decided to join. At my first meeting at Hancock Lodge #4 in Castine, I was welcomed by the Brothers and one of the officers, Bob Wallace who was Black, took me under his wing and taught me what I needed to know and do to become a Mason. Eventually I was raised to Master Mason by Bob Wallace who had now become Master of the Lodge. Shortly after becoming a Mason, I wrote the Bishop in Maine asking why the Church was against Masonry. He immediately wrote back and explained that I was laboring under some old misconceptions and that there was no restriction. He even encouraged me to join.

I eventually became Master of the Lodge. While sitting in the East, I remember thinking to myself, here I am the Master of the Lodge, a Catholic who was raised by a Black Man. My Masonic journey made it abundantly clear that Maine Masonry could care less about your race, religion or politics. Its only requirements are that you adhere to the values and principles of Free Masonry. It is a true Brotherhood and exactly what our Nation needs during these troubled times.

I had to leave Maine in 1999 and move to New Jersey because of my Dad's illness. Subsequently, and sadly, Hancock Lodge #4 was disbanded sometime after that because of insufficient members. The remaining members including myself were taken in by Rising Star Lodge in Penobscot. I continue to maintain my membership with Rising Star and hopefully someday will visit Maine and my Brothers.

Thanks for reading,

Vince Corry

Marton, NJ 08053

WW II Flag Honors Springvale Lodge Servicemen

During World War II, blue star flags, similar to this one, were placed in the windows of homes of those who were at war. The flags were of a red rectangle with blue stars on a field of white, one star for each man or woman serving in our country's military.

Recently this flag was discovered by lodge Treasurer Wor. Bob Riding among the stored artifacts of Springvale Lodge #190. Its stars represent the Honor Roll of lodge brethren of the "Greatest Generation" who served our nation during that terrible war. Servicemen's names were recorded in the lodge's records.

Pictures from the era indicate the flag hung in the diagonal window of the lodge, visible to all who passed by Springvale Square.

As the war continued other names were added to the roll when brethren joined the service or when men on active duty were raised to the Third Degree. By the War's end, 27 Springvale Lodge brethren had taken up the cause to defend the nation and fight for freedom around the world.

Brother Riding, digging through minutes of war-time lodge meetings, found that the lodge waived dues of all those serving throughout the war, and also sent Christmas boxes to the families of overseas service members.



The Servicemen's Flag, now blocked and framed, hangs proudly on the north wall of Springvale's lodge room.



St. Croix Lodge honors Veteran Mason

In September St. Croix Lodge #46, Calais, awarded WB Harold Silverman a 65-year Service Award. Bro. Silverman is the oldest living Past Master of St. Croix Lodge. St. Croix Lodge is 196 years old this year and Bro. Silverman's tenure is certainly another lodge milestone. His father was a Mason and insisted he join when he turned of age at 21. He has never regretted the decision and is very proud of all the achievements the lodge has made. Pictured here are DDGM/2 Jamey Gower who made the presentation, WB Silverman, and WM David Feiner.

In Memoriam

Most Worshipful Brother Mark Edward Rustin



**Our 99th M.W. Grand Master
Served 2019-2020**

Born Jan. 4, 1948 Raised Dec. 14, 1985 Died Sept. 3, 2020

Freemasonry in Maine – The Brotherhood, The Book

Freemasonry has been in the Northeast corner of our land since 1762 and has been a vital part of our state since Maine gained statehood in 1820. It has bonded men of disparate religions, nationalities, vocations and political persuasions. We are united based upon what we have in common and as we should disregard those differences that might otherwise divide men, as we are instructed by our Masonic teachings.

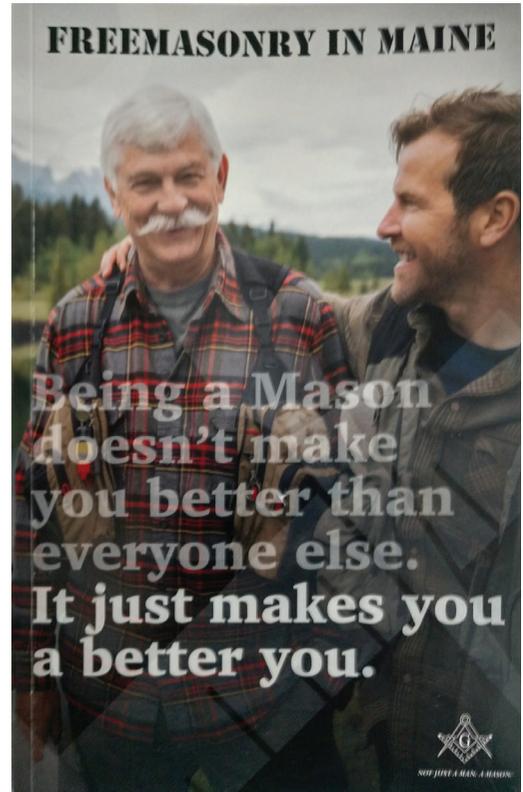
We all looked forward to 2020 to celebrate as Mainers and Masons. Without doubt, we all now look forward to putting 2020 forever in our rearview mirrors. COVID-19 caused illness and death; financial distress; shutdowns; lost jobs; masks; and the inability to meet as friends and brothers due to government regulation and concern over our health and that of people we love. Another reason for being glad 2020 is over is the seemingly unavoidable incivility surrounding the country's quadrennial elections.

Yet the pandemic did not stop brothers from caring for one another, of helping one another, of reaching out to one another. Many Lodges and individual brothers kept in touch with others in our fraternity – checking on them as good friends. Many stepped up to give gift cards to local grocery stores or other types of assistance. Freemasons have exemplified our tenets in action.

And others reached out in another way – by giving a copy of the new book *Freemasonry in Maine* to every member of their Lodge, together with a letter thanking their Brethren for being loyal, just and upright Masons; for making our Masonic tenets a driving force in their daily lives; as well as their continued support for their Lodge and Brethren. And finally, urging them to stay safe until we can again meet in our Lodges as Brothers have done for hundreds of years.

Since our Grand Master was installed in early May, some 3,000 copies of the book have been purchased by Lodges and individual Brethren. At least ten Lodges (and counting) or individual Brothers have purchased a book for every member of the Lodge, thereby sharing more light in Masonry and thanking their Brethren for being faithful Masons and Lodge members.

You too may purchase copies of *Freemasonry in Maine* by calling the



Grand Lodge office at 207-843-1086 Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Or you may buy books by contacting Bro. Tom Pulkkinen at TEPulkkinen@aol.com / 207-350-9525. The book is available from Grand Lodge for only \$5 plus shipping charges. It's a great way to tell our families and friends about Freemasonry, why we are faithful Masons and why they might want to consider joining too.



Brother Wayne Ashby was presented his 50-year Veterans Medal By RW Frank Theriault, PSGW and WB Larry Jones, Master of Washington Lodge #37 in Lubec. Brother Ashby was raised to the Sublime Degree of a MM on 10/24/1970 and attended an EA degree at his lodge on his anniversary date, 10/24/2020, to receive his 50-year medal and pin. Brother Ashby is a 3rd generation Mason. His son and cousin also belong to Washington Lodge.

Photo courtesy of Bill Ashby

Examining the Bones of the Maine Lodge of Research

The following explanation of Maine's Masonic Research Lodge was presented to the Masonic Education and Lodge Service Committee by RW Richard Rhoda, PSGW, and PM MLR.

The lodge was chartered in 1981 to enable the Masonic explorer in all of us to satisfy our Masonic curiosity, while learning from each other. We deal not only with the historical and philosophical aspects of Masonry, but also with the challenges confronting the Craft. Unlike many Masonic research lodges and societies, we do not have a particular focus of study, but instead let our members determine our work via their interests. The range of our work is as vast as the dimensions of the lodge and we welcome you to become a part of it all.

May I share with you an Essay on "Concept of Masonic Renewal - What does it mean to you now and in the future?" Let us consider, "Anderson's First Charge & Masonic Cardinal Virtues"

The essence of our Masonic future lies in our history – that is Anderson's Constitution of 1723, First Charge, "Concerning GOD and RELIGION." In fulfilling our First Charge, we must ensure that "...Masonry becomes the Center of Union and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must else have remain'd at a perpetual Distance."

As we move further into the 21st century, all Americans must consider how we will accept and integrate immigrants of the Islamic faith and other various cultural backgrounds into our communities, rather than allowing them to remain beyond the pale in segregated ones. No organization, I repeat, no organization across America is better suited to meet this challenge than Freemasonry. The challenge is ...will we?

It is incumbent upon us to speak of our time-tested values as found in our four cardinal virtues. These values exist in all cultures in one form or another. They fill a need in a person's life, especially when one is adrift in a new culture. Those who would have remained at a perpetual distance need to be told of our values and how they coincide with their heritage, regardless of our particular religious beliefs. We need to share with them that Freemasonry has a value system which suffuses all cultures.

Evolution of Freemasonry

Freemasonry evolved from a Christian heritage in a Christian culture to engulf the world behind England's Union Jack. In 1717 Masonry brought together Lords and Noblemen of the Church of England with members

of the artisan classes who were composed largely of religious Dissenters – i.e. the Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and Anabaptists. Both groups had become dependent upon and needed the other to be successful. In a Masonic lodge, with no discussion of politics or religion allowed, they could get to know one another for the persons they were. Then as now, where better to rub elbows and to form acquaintances which can grow into friendships and brotherly relationships?

By 1740 Jews were joining Freemasonry and held positions of leadership. Freemasonry's principle of universal toleration was well established and allowed the Craft to follow the Union Jack around the world. Today the issue of religious toleration, for us as Masons, requires that we again commit ourselves and Freemasonry to adherence to Anderson's First Charge.

The Maine Lodge of Research

In 1997, the Master of The Maine Lodge of Research sought to put emphasis on discussion of relevant issues rather than just researching old tomes for yet another paper, not unlike another degree evening with emphasis on perfect ritual rather what the candidate could do with it. This calls to mind Bro. Edgar Guest's classic poem "I'd Rather See a Sermon Than Hear One Any Day," changing "Sermon" to "Lecture."

Today, my concept for Masonic Renewal means that I must espouse this core principle from my Masonic experience which has shaped my life as I have matured.

It means to me that Freemasonry in America can be presented, encouraged, challenged and, if needed, prodded to embrace and pursue its First Charge, without which we very well may be just another organization. Freemasonry has been the template for other fraternal organizations but none have claimed such a Center of Union as Freemasonry has in its First Charge.

Bishop Joseph Gerry

In November 1997, Bishop Joseph Gerry of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland addressed the Maine Lodge of Research. It was a first in Maine; it only happened because Masonry opened its door and invited him in. After that, he formed a committee which met and dialogued with three Maine Masons for a year, following which he reported to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops that Masonry was not a religion.

Continued on Following Page

While this initial program was being pursued, one prominent Maine Masonic Building Committee would not allow use of its lodge room because the speaker, an Islamic university professor, was going to speak on toleration from the point of view of his religion. If Masonic Lodges will purposely open their doors to members of the Islamic faith and other cultures, we may be able to say as did Bishop Joseph, "We did something, didn't we?"

Since that time, Masonry in Maine has continued to have Catholics come into its lodges. It has had Muslims join, and one has served as an Assistant Grand Chaplain because of the leadership of a younger Grand Master who understood the effects of discrimination.

While I will again quote Bishop Joseph, it strikes me as a most ironic and welcomed advancement that, some 20 years later, I am quoting a Roman Catholic Bishop for the advancement of a Masonic Renewal at this time! It is happening because Masons asked him to come in and he did. The following was reported in "The Maine Mason," in 1997.

"He told the Masons that he was struck by what appears to be 'outward similarities of religious practice and devotion.' On the other hand, he had also had the experience of feeling 'that all sides bring with them memories of historical events that were anything but respectful of the dignity and sacredness of the human person. With these memories there is still present in the hearts of those who strive to dialogue many suspicions and much distrust. These suspicions and distrust create a real chasm in outlook and perspective, so much so that they make it difficult, even for the most dedicated listener of good will, to really grasp the sense of what the other person is trying to say.'

'Because the starting points for the discussion are often so familiar to the speaker, while at the same time not within the experience of the hearer on the other side of the table, it can sometimes feel during the dialogues like one is a fish asked to explain what water is like to someone who has only lived in a desert,' he declared." Two years after the Bishop spoke, the Master pursued the same program on religious toleration in his Blue Lodge. The meetings were open to the public and were well attended. The only Muslim adult male in town attended and subsequently joined the lodge.

Seeking Masonic Renewal down this path will certainly be controversial in some quarters and, perhaps quickly rejected in others, but it is the right thing to do! We must pursue it if we want to be true to our First Charge.

The Path Forward and Our Four Cardinal Virtues

Let us also consider our four cardinal virtues, which

are meant to instill in us a habitual and firm disposition to do good: ¹

1. "Temperance to moderate the attractions of pleasure;
2. Fortitude to ensure firmness in difficulties and consistency in the pursuit of good;
3. Prudence to use practical reason to discern our true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it; and
4. Justice to possess habitual fairness of conduct equally with respect to all persons and for the common good of all."

The importance of these concepts for Masonic renewal is supported by the survey report of "The Path Forward, Plans for Member Service and Member Growth," conducted by the Northern Masonic Scottish Rite in 2017-2018.

As potential members for Masonry, the generations of "Boomers" and "Gen-Xers" were found to have high regard for the Scottish Rite values of Justice, Integrity, Toleration, and Reverence for God. These are all integral parts of the First Charge and of Masonry's cardinal virtues.

"Boomer" men, ages 52-70 years, possess the experience and maturity we need for a strong Masonic revival. The four values listed above rank highly with them as a group.

The report showed that, "72% of respondents would be interested in an organization where men form deep lasting friendships, regardless of race, religion, culture or geography."

Anderson's First Charge and our cardinal virtues teach of the essence of Masonry. These will be of more than passing interest to new immigrants to America, and the Boomer generation. They can bring together all men who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance. These subjects must be an integral part of any Masonic Renewal as we go forward. Actions, not rote ritual, must be the order of the day.

May I leave with you with my opening salutation as a course for our Masonic Renewal:

May "Shalom, Peace, Salaam be upon us" as we meet and as we part.

So mote it be.

1. **The Virtues of Freemasonry at www.mn-masons.org**

My Lodge is Turning in its Charter, and I'm Proud

By Rt. Wor. Scott Whytock

Governor William King Lodge #219 is the second youngest lodge in the state. Our charter was issued on May 3, 1961 and the lodge is named after Maine's first Governor and our first Grand Master. He and his brother were influential politicians born to a successful family of ship builders in Scarborough. When the lodge was created, the name was a clear choice for the membership who came together from surrounding towns to form this lodge. It had a successful run after being established as they worked to affiliate and raise a great number of candidates. A founding member once told me that they were working degrees almost weekly for the first year. As the years past, new membership slowed and the lodge became many of the same faces each month, much like other lodges.

I came to this lodge in 2003 and found a quiet setting that I personally thought lacked vibrancy. As time went on, we had the good fortune of attracting a number of men who knew each other from Anthem, a large employer nearby. It started to give the lodge a cohesive feeling through this collection of men with diverse Masonic interests. Some came for the history, others for an affinity for ritual, and others for the opportunity to participate in community service projects. And it worked, quite well. Various Masons from the district felt the changing tides and affiliated. They came because the ingredients for a successful lodge were evident and they wanted to be a part of it. We had fun, we bonded, and we developed our lodge's identity. As soon as this all happened, it also started to unravel. We had a few long standing members step away, we had key people either move or take a job that prevented their previous level of participation, we had others who had personal situations that required their focus, and we had a few key members pass away. Every lodge experiences these ebbs and flows, but this hit quickly and severely. From there, the work of the lodge fell to a smaller number and we didn't adapt well. Those who attended lodge regularly began to become burned out.

Don't assume that I or anyone from our lodge would take the concept of turning in the charter of our lodge lightly. When I allow my mind to wander into what this will mean when it happens, I get choked up a bit. This lodge and these people mean a lot to me. They have been there for me as my personal life changed. My Brothers expressed their concern for me while I was going through a divorce, one even checked in on me while he had received the news that his cancer was terminal. They allowed me the opportunity to better myself as a man and a Mason. They gave me advice and asked my advice. They were kind enough to have a table lodge for me, which is one of the greatest honors I've ever received. The men I've met at my lodge have been quite

influential in my life, whether they know it or not. This place means a lot to me, which may cause one to wonder how I could be proud of where we are now.

Nobody took this result lightly. I am caused to recall a portion of a lesson from our EA degree where we state that "sincerity and plain dealings distinguish us". This was reflected in our discussions around how to move forward as we had a series of meetings regarding the future of our lodge. Would we rally and develop a clear plan, would we be able to execute that plan, should we merge, should we fold, or find another solution? Keep in mind, we'd been struggling for years. The weight of the work that rested on our collective shoulders was getting heavier by the day. We raised a few new Masons who undoubtedly sensed our situation. Our lodge had overburdened established Masons and failed to inspire newer Masons which is a trend no lodge can or should sustain.

Our discussions on the future of the lodge initially indicated a desire to rally. Plans were formulated that focused on addressing the missing qualities of our collective lodge experience. Good ideas were flowing, yet our lodge never lacked for ideas. We lacked the initiative to take the ideas from pen and paper and turn them into action. We'd done this on a smaller scale numerous times over the years. Inspirational ideas gave way to the quiet acknowledgement that inevitable inaction and the absence of accountability to each other would keep plans from becoming a reality.

The difference this time is that we'd hit the end of the road. But we'd hit it together. We knew that we'd done what we could for as long as possible and we weren't showing ourselves, our candidates, and our community the best of what Freemasonry can offer. My only regret is that we didn't have these discussions at an earlier point where we may have had the energy to execute a successful redemption story as some other lodges have. Our mistake was putting off today's known problems to be addressed by someone else at an unknown future point in time.

At the time of this writing, we're weeks away from being a former lodge. I hope that other lodges will be able to learn from our example. Our members had the courage and respect to have frank, open, and honest discussions. Of that, I'm very proud. I'm proud that we have elected to take the difficult road so that we may focus on what Freemasonry is to us individually. I'm not encouraging another suffering lodge to turn in its charter or merge. I'm encouraging your lodge to discuss and discover a plan of action that works for your members and then to take meaningful action toward a stated goal. If done with respect and openness, then whatever decision you make will cause it to be the right decision.

A Holiday Recipe for Friendship...Applicable All Year Long

Dear Editor,

In going through my mother's old recipe book from her years as a Kindergarten teacher, I came across a "Recipe for Friendship" with some direction as how to perfect a lasting friendship:

1 Cup (8 fluid ounces).....Loyalty
4 Tablespoons (2 fluid ounces).....Reliability
¼ Cup (2 fluid ounces).....Consideration
3 teaspoons (.5 fluid ounce).....Generosity
½ Cup (4 fluid ounces).....Sympathy
1 teaspoon (0.167 fluid ounce).....Warmth

ADD SPICE, an element providing interest and excitement, for me, Freemasonry.

1 teaspoon (0.167 fluid ounce).....True Fondness

Directions:

To "stir well and bring to a full boil" made me reminisce on my advancement in the three Masonic degrees as I learned again the importance of loyalty, reliability and consideration in a relationship.

To "blend well and simmer until thickened" caused me to remember that it took time and perseverance to truly comprehend and appreciate my Masonic lessons.

To "remove from stove" represented to me my life, upon leaving a lodge meeting, in my family, my profession, and my community.

To "add flavoring" called upon me to add kindness, concern, and charity for others in my life experiences.

"One teaspoon warmth" made me realize, that while a teaspoon is but a small part of a Tablespoon, its importance lies in always acting with it to some degree, today, always today.

The spice to be added is me, the person I am and seek to become as I strive each day to be a better man.

The teaspoon of true fondness is my sharing of the blessings that have been bestowed upon me and enhanced my Masonic experience.

My "Recipe for Friendship" is stirred well with my Masonic membership, my attendance at lodge and more especially with my meeting the needs of a Brother. Masonry does have a special flavoring and spice to it which brings a unique flavor or meaning to those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance.

I have tasted, savored, and enjoyed an inestimable gift in Freemasonry. May the same be served, consumed and be treasured by you.

Is this not the kind of friendship we all long for as a five-year-old in Kindergarten?

"Thanks Mom."

Bro. Anonymous



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