

GRAND LODGE, FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

THE CONSTANCY OF MASONRY

BY

MOST WORSHIPFUL BROTHER STEWART W. MINER, P.G.M.
GRAND SECRETARY EMERITUS



PRESENTED MARCH 26, 2011

MASONIC DAY OF THANKSGIVING AND REMEMBRANCE

ALL SOULS CHURCH, UNITARIAN
1500 HARVARD STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC



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by **Most Worshipful Brother Stewart W. Miner, PGM**
Grand Secretary Emeritus

The following address was presented on Saturday, March 26, 2011 on the occasion of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia's Masonic Day of Thanksgiving and Remembrance held at All Souls Church, Unitarian, 1500 Harvard Street, Northwest, in Washington City.



By the grace of the Supreme Architect of the Universe, the ceaseless labors of our forefathers, and the general appreciation of Freemasonry's intents and purposes, we are gathered today, in a house of God, to celebrate, in Thanksgiving, the 200th anniversary of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia.

In so doing we reaffirm our continuing resolve, under the observation of the All-Seeing Eye, to serve each other, as well as others in need, to the extent that our resources and capabilities will permit.

Our creed declares our purpose to be the achievement of nothing less than perfection, personal and institutional and, while striving for these goals, we aim to help people of all races, all tongues, and all nationalities obtain fair shares of God's gifts to man.

There are those, of course, who view these proclaimed goals with doubt. Some, in fact, believe them to be only specious expressions of intent, as courses of action that can not be achieved.

Such expressions of disbelief merit consideration, for thus far, no man, nor any collection of men, has been able to design a fool-proof approach to perfection. Wisely, however, Masons have never claimed otherwise.

But as Masons we have insisted that in pursuit of our objectives, which are admittedly Utopian in character, we have significantly bettered life wherever we have established our presence.

Moreover, we hold that our responses are timely and effective, and usually more so, than are the alternatives advanced by critics of the Craft.

It is therefore prudent, on this Day of Thanksgiving, to recognize the inextricable influence of the past, present, and future on the work of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia.

The propriety of doing so is suggested in scripture (*Ecclesiastes 1:9*) wherein it is claimed that things that once were are now, and that things that are now will, in time, again be.

This thought has a secular counterpart which, in the vernacular of the present, suggests that “whatever goes around comes around.”

Nevertheless there are some who doubt the value of turning to the past because of what they perceive to be a transformation of American society that is irrevocable.

But those who hold to this view overlook a basic reality; the present is, after all, but a reflection of experience, modified by time, in an orderly process whereby change is validated.

The process to which I refer has mandated change as a constant in Masonry’s response to challenge throughout the history of this Grand Lodge.

In this respect our leaders, past and present, have demonstrated uninterrupted courage and resolve as they have used the power of change to better the Craft.

The forces driving Masonic change in D.C. provide a reasonable basis for the subdivision of the history of the Grand Lodge into convenient periods of time. The first and longest of these periods, *the past*, extending from 1811 to 1989, is one in which *uniformity* dominated the work of the Craft.

The second and shortest period, *the present*, extending from 1990 to 2011, is one in which change is being driven by a search for the means to move Masonry forward through the amendment of long-standing policies and the introduction of modified or alternative concepts. It is a period in which *diversity* dominates our work.

The third period, *the future*, is already underway. Hopefully it will prove to be one in which emphasis is placed on securing *perpetuity* for the Craft. While this period is without end, futurists tend to limit their projections and predictions to the year 2040.



THE SEARCH FOR UNIFORMITY

1811-1989

During the period following the passage of the Residence Act by Congress on July 16, 1790, a number of lodges, chartered by the Grand Lodges of Maryland and Virginia, were operating successfully on both sides of the Potomac.

As time passed it was only natural that the leaders of these lodges should, in recognition of their position within a new political entity, begin to discuss the merger of these lodges into a new Grand Lodge for the District of Columbia.

Following a short two-month period of formal negotiations on the matter in 1811, the Grand Lodge of D.C. was formed by four lodges chartered by the Grand Lodge of Maryland and one lodge chartered by the Grand Lodge of Virginia.

This bold venture was undertaken in a new territory whose very existence was viewed by some in the nation with pessimism and distrust.

Moreover, the formation of the Grand Lodge occurred at a time when cohesive forces among area Masons were only starting to develop.

In this setting our founding fathers deemed it proper to place emphasis on the establishment and preservation of Masonic uniformity in the Craft.

The word "uniformity," in fact, perhaps better than any other, suggests the primary purpose of D.C. Masonry during this long, formative, period of history.

The concern of the Craft about uniformity may have been, at least partially, attributable to knowledge of the dissension over administration and custom that had split the "Antients" and the "Moderns" in the mother Grand Lodge in England during the latter half of the 18th century.

More likely, however, was the fact that our forefathers, practical men of vision, recognized a need to stress unity because of the diversity of practices then prevailing in the founding lodges.

Hence they worked, ceaselessly, in periods of prosperity and recession, to create and, when necessary, to amend policies and procedures designed to insure uniformity of word and practice throughout the jurisdiction.

But they realized that the works of man are not, like scripture, above modification. They fully recognized the impact of time and circumstance. Moreover, in the face of need, they repeatedly demonstrated willingness to create and adjust programs of common concern.

So it has been in the evolution of Masonry in the District of Columbia where, because our forefathers worked in virgin territory, their every act tended to modify policies and practices in a Craft that seemed obsessed with the perfection of ongoing operations.

Thus the Grand Masters of the past tweaked the system as often as necessary in order to maximize the impact of their programs.

All of them labored, with dignity and devotion, to build on and, when necessary, add to established practices and concepts, all within the confines of self-imposed uniformity and regularity.

These Grand Masters speak clearly to us through the written record, compiled in consequence of the administrative, operational, and record-keeping systems they developed.

Through these documents they express their general satisfaction, tempered by a bit of regret, of events that evolved during their watch.

Should they be able, by some trick of fate, to look back in time, these Past Grand Masters would undoubtedly view with satisfaction a number of accomplishments including:

(a) the chartering of 52 subordinate lodges; (b) the bringing of thousands of men to Masonic light; (c) the recording of an all-time high membership of 25,334 in 1954; (d) the creation of unique programs and procedures; (e) the acquisition of inter-jurisdictional respect and position for the Grand Lodge; (f) the rendering of many services to a developing community, in which it laid more than 100 cornerstones; (g) the support, with loyalty, of the government, federal and local, particularly during times when concepts of right and wrong were under severe test; (h) the containment of differences of opinion and the maintenance of a common sense of duty and moral propriety; and (i) the construction of landmark temples at 9th and F Streets, N.W. and at 13th Street and N.Y. Avenue, N.W., (j) the fostering of a Masonic family including the Rites, York and Scottish, a host of other appendant bodies, and organizations for ladies, such as the Eastern Star; and (k) the achievement of concurrent jurisdiction, with Virginia, in that part of Virginia that was once part of the District of Columbia.

While this summarization of accomplished endeavors is not intended to be exhaustive in scope, it does suggest some of the achievements that our forefathers would probably recall with satisfaction.

The past was not entirely a bed of roses, however, for on occasion the Craft encountered perplexing difficulties. While it seems that in every decade there were impediments to overcome, some of the issues encountered were more persistent and more troublesome than others.

Hence our predecessors might well regard with some degree of regret their inability:

(a) to suppress periodic revivals of anti-Masonic attack; (b) to attain comfortable levels of financial stability during most of the period; (c) to control precipitous long-term membership trends; (d) to devise alternatives to lodge consolidations and the loss of neighborhood presence; and (e) to balance the demand for and supply of meeting space in the city.

It is to their credit that our forefathers met each of these challenges as best they could, given the limitations imposed upon them by extenuating and unanticipated circumstances.

In retrospect, however, the Masons of the past might now look with some remorse on their acceptance of inter-jurisdictional opinion on two specific issues, probably in the belief that “to get along it was necessary to go along.”

The first of these was their adoption, after several decades of debate and delay, of the principle of exclusive territorial jurisdiction.

They did so with reservation, however, and while complying, they silently retained reservations of the concept.

The second such issue, which the leaders of the past might now regret, concerned the then inter-jurisdictional view of who was and who was not eligible for membership in the Craft.

By accepting opinions on the exclusion of some of God’s children, strongly held in almost all Grand Lodges, they thus postponed full activation of one of Masonry’s most sacred principles.

With thanks to the Supreme Architect for the rectification of that error in time, we can now express gratitude to our forefathers for the richness of our heritage.

They bequeathed us with a worthy institution, time tested through long periods of prosperity and depression.

They taught us the power of unity, imagination, loyalty, dedication, and frugality in the fulfillment of Masonry’s mission in the District of Columbia.

Unfortunately, by 1989, the number of constituent lodges and of Masons in the jurisdiction had been alarmingly reduced.

This led our leaders to recognize a need for exploratory thinking about issues of common concern in the Craft.

Thus ended an era in which the driving force was the search for uniformity in D.C. Masonry.



THE SEARCH FOR DIVERSITY

1990-2011

This brings us to the present, the years from 1990 to date, a period in which diversity has eclipsed uniformity as the motivating force in Masonry in the District of Columbia.

In this period we find ourselves poised to give full meaning to the concept of brotherly love that is so richly exemplified by our ritual.

This is not to say that the Grand Lodge no longer strives for uniformity; obviously it does to the extent that is necessary and proper.

But by using the past as an anchor and not as a sail, the Grand Lodge has, perhaps for the first time ever, openly encouraged the Craft to focus attention on the visions rather than on the dreams of its members.

The consequence has been truly transformational in scope.

I have often wondered how any of our past leaders, especially those of the 19th century, would react if by some stroke of magic, they could, in the manner of the legendary Rip Van Winkle, observe Masonry in this city today.

How would they respond? Would they be elated or dismayed?

Many of you will remember that Washington Irving's "Rip", after cavorting with the ghosts of Henry Hudson and his crew, fell into a deep sleep on the edge of a forest in the Catskills of old New York.

Twenty years later he awoke and cautiously made his way back to his village.

"Rip" was astounded by the changes that had taken place; many of the landmarks he remembered had disappeared, as had most of the people he had known.

He even had difficulty finding vestiges of his own family. Some had died; others had moved away.

If some of our ancestors, say a Valentine Reintzel, a Benjamin Brown French, a Carl Claudy, or one of more recent service, like Frank A. Kenyon, were given a "Rip Van Winkle" opportunity to observe the Grand Lodge of D.C. today, how would they react?

Undoubtedly they would be amazed at the magnitude of changes that have taken place here in D.C., also in a 20-year period, even as they attempted to evaluate and appreciate what they were now privileged to see.

In such an imagined visitation by representatives of Masons of the past, there would be jubilation over the registration of a recent net gain in membership, the result of continued effort, over several years, to end a 56-year period of decline.

While that gain was indeed small, they would certainly express hope that it would prove to be an omen of future good fortune.

Elation over the redirection of the membership curve, at least for the present, would lead our visiting select committee of Past Grand Masters to note that the recent demographic good fortune might be attributed to the efforts of the Grand Lodge to maximize diversity, within the constraints of custom and propriety, in its operations.

The diversification process was initiated by Grand Lodge approval of the 1990 application of a group of Iranian Masons for a charter that would permit them to work in the Farsi language. By this action *Mehr Lodge No. 90* became the first new lodge to be chartered in 47 years.

The only other lodge working in an alternate language, at that time, was *Arminius Lodge No. 25*, which had been operating continuously in German since 1876.

This decision proved inspiring and within a few years similar appeals were received from several other linguistic groups.

All were accorded hospitable receptions and now we have chartered lodges that work in Spanish, French, Italian, Armenian, and the Turkic language.

Since 1990 a total of 22 lodges have been constituted by the Grand Lodge, and of that number 20 remain in operation.

Listed in the current inventory of constituent lodges is *Phoenix Lodge No. 1001*, consecrated in Beirut, Lebanon on October 30, 2010. This is the only lodge on the register of the Grand Lodge that operates in a foreign country, where jurisdiction is now shared with two other Grand Lodges.

No longer subordinate to this Grand Lodge, are three lodges chartered during the period: *Massis No. 99*, *Azerbaijan No. 2002*, and *Baku No. 2008*. All became founding lodges of newly-created Grand Lodges.

Therefore *Massis Lodge* is now on the register of the National Grand Lodge of Armenia and *Azerbaijan* and *Baku* Lodges are now on the register of the National Grand Lodge of Azerbaijan.

Our hypothetical guests from the past might also note that the Grand Lodge has added to its inventory of constituent lodges by chartering several special interest or affinity lodges, some quite small and others fairly large.

Included in this group are *Magnolia No. 53*, *Fraternity No. 54*, *Cincinnatus No. 76*, *Freedom Military No. 1775*, *Lodge of the Nine Muses No. 1776*, *Compass No. 1811*, *The Colonial No. 1821*, and *Jerusalem No. 3000*.

Another such lodge, *Maynilad Lodge U.D.*, which addresses the interests of Masons having interest in the Philippines, is currently operating under dispensation and awaits charter.

Among the lodges newly created are two which are distinguished by the fact that they are primarily the creations of African-American brethren. I refer to *Sojourner-Kilwinning No. 1798* and *Fiat Lux No. 1717*.

Many of the lodges that have been added to the Grand Lodge Registry are small when compared to those created in the past.

In most of them there are less than 100 members, and in some, much less, gravitating downwards to as few as 15.

Numbers, as such, however, are not always meaningful, and in some of our smaller lodges, participation is unusually pronounced.

The Grand Lodge promoted the newly chartered lodges by permitting them to meet less regularly than the customary once or twice a month.

Hence many lodges now convene quarterly, semi-monthly, or on some other approved schedule.

Further, a few meet, with Grand Lodge approval, in structures shared with other fraternal organizations.

The expansion of the number of lodges has been accommodated by the willingness of the Grand Lodge to permit foreign language lodges to use the emulation ritual in their work.

By this decision a decades-long effort to insure ritualistic uniformity in this Grand Lodge was brought to a close.

At the same time the Grand Lodge has suggested inclusion of additional Holy Books as part of the furniture of all lodges in the jurisdiction, thereby satisfying the spiritual demands of all members of the Order.

The expansion effort has been further promoted by the willingness of the Grand Lodge to modify several long-standing positions:

- (a) by publishing and distributing a coded version of the D.C. ritual; (b) by introducing and promoting a truly revolutionary concept now known, throughout the country, as the Grand Master's Class; and (c) by permitting constituent lodges to conduct business while open on any degree.

By these acts the Grand Lodge was fundamentally restructured in preparation for the subsequent modification of a few of our old and proven practices and for the initiation of new initiatives.

Included among the latter are some selected efforts of the Grand Lodge:

- (a) to participate in the formation and operation of the World Conference of Grand Masters; (b) to present and dedicate the D.C. obelisk at the Medal of Honor Grove of Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge; (c) to initiate and sponsor the annual Universal

Brotherhood Celebration in Washington, D.C.; (d) to financially support the youth organizations of the jurisdiction; (e) to initiate a number of public relations initiatives and (f) to lay cornerstones at the George Washington and American Universities and to reenact the laying of the cornerstones of the White House, the Congress, and the Washington Monument.

As these developments evolved, negotiations that led to the establishment of amity between our Grand Lodge and the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Washington, D.C. were begun.

That initiative, successfully culminated by the signing of a protocol of agreement on September 11, 2000, was thereafter approved in Grand Lodge by a resolution, unanimously sponsored by the Past Grand Masters of this Grand Lodge, on November 4, 2000.

These acts lead me to believe that the Grand Masters of our past would take pride in recognizing that in the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia all Masons, without restriction, are considered eligible for and have been elected to the office of Grand Master.

They would rejoice in the fact that many brethren of the Jewish faith have already distinguished that office; that the first Muslim to serve as Grand Master of a regular Grand Lodge, anywhere in this country, did so as Grand Master in this Grand Lodge in the year 2000; and that the first African American to serve as Grand Master of a regular Grand Lodge, anywhere in this country, was elected and served in that office in 2009.

This summarization of what has occurred in our Grand Lodge since 1990 is, of course, intended only to suggest the dynamism of the present.

Time precludes anything more than recognition that our current leaders, like their predecessors, are trying, within the bounds of propriety, to fix or amend that which is passé, and when that approach appears impossible, to introduce workable alternatives.

As with their predecessors, their success will be determined in time yet to come.

In the meantime it is proper to express appreciation on this Thanksgiving Day for imaginative leadership which has led:

(a) to the restructuring of our Grand Lodge; (b) to the development of procedures, within the constraints of code and custom, to improve operational practices; (c) to the enhancement of the position of the Grand Lodge, nationally and internationally; and most importantly, (d) to the implementation of long overdue adjustment of social and moral practices in the Craft in D.C.



THE SEARCH FOR PERPETUITY

2011-2040

Just as the past of this Grand Lodge was focused on *uniformity* and the present on *diversity*, it is presumed that in the future the focus will be on *perpetuity*. We labor not only for ourselves, but also for our descendants, who will, hopefully, regard our deeds as foundation stones on which they will, in turn, continue our mission.

In a recent issue of the *Voice of Freemasonry* I wrote to this obligation by reference to Sir John Templeton's observation that it is man's duty to concentrate more on where he wants to go than on where he has been.

But, to get to where we want to go, we must realistically appreciate where we are and agree on the destination that we want to reach.

In this task we could use a Masonic-oriented GPS system to guide us to our destination.

With or without such a system, however, it is essential that we now spend as much time preparing for the future as we spend in revering the past.

Now is the time to critically evaluate our fraternity and its workings in order to more completely appreciate what we are, what we do, and how effectively we perform.

The pay off is not in what we claim, but in the completion of work, for our own benefit as well as for those who are our wards. Self criticism is essential to progress.

Such an evaluation will probably assign high grades to much of what we now do. Of that I am certain.

But it may also reveal weaknesses that suggest a need for the imposition of more modifications; Masons, unfortunately, have a reputation for retaining programs long beyond their usefulness.

Now is the time, therefore, to amend and/or eliminate programs and practices that no longer serve the purposes for which they were organized.

Among those that draw my personal attention is our continued adherence to the now fractured conception of "exclusive territorial jurisdiction."

We have for more than 10 years enjoyed amity with another Grand Lodge in this jurisdiction; is it not time for us to codify the reality of this relationship?

Also deserving of critical evaluation is a code-driven requirement that has preserved, since the first decade of the Grand Lodge, a practice designated as "the Grand Visitation."

It is apparent that neither the brethren in the constituent lodges nor the members of the Grand Master's suite now render unequivocal support to the Grand Visitation as currently implemented.

It would seem, however, that the purpose of the Grand Visitation, to monitor lodge operations, is as important today as it was when introduced in 1818.

Isn't it time then to determine how we want to use the Grand Visitation to assure that lodge practices are in accord with prevailing Craft norms?

These practices, and there are undoubtedly others, are deserving of respectful attention during this Bicentennial Year.

Thus, in looking to the uncertain future, it may be beneficial to critically evaluate a number of prevailing attitudes pertaining to:

- (a) the creation of a planned and coordinated membership cultivation program;
- (b) the establishment of efforts to establish a neighborhood presence for Masonry;
- (c) the anticipated role of the ritual and its presentation in the future;
- (d) the assurance of long-term financial stability in the Grand Lodge;
- (e) the possible modification of the place, form and functions of the Masonic meeting;
- (f) the innovative use of communications systems, including the possible use of video to record communications at all levels;
- (g) the dispensation of charity, institutional and private;
- (h) the impact of changing family relationships on the support of Masonry;
- (i) the continued enhancement of inter-Grand Lodge relations, possibly by forming an Inter-Grand Lodge Commission within the District of Columbia; and
- (j) the development of programs to enable the Craft to achieve the purposes its members sought on initiation.

These suggestions do not by any means exhaust the list of issues that might profit from study. But they do suggest that we should reexamine many practices in hope that the process will lead to the improvement of all that survive examination.

But clearing out the deadwood from our fraternal forest is only the beginning. More significant to the future is how we replace and/or update that which is removed.

In that process we will learn, as did Abraham Lincoln, that "the best thing about the future is that it comes one day at a time."

That observation seems especially apropos now, when major sectors of the globe are being raked by the strains of political, social, spiritual and economic challenge.

Imposing as these threats may seem, they can and will be contained, given willful application of experience and imagination in the search for enlightenment.

That search, however, may be complicated by those who opt to maintain the status-quo.

Perhaps, with this in mind, Arnold Toffler, a well respected futurist, has observed that "the illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn."

It would therefore seem that the work of the Masons of this day must be scheduled in anticipation of a world in which life will be immensely more complicated, one in which there may be:

(a) as many as 9 billion people in 2040, up from the current population of 7 billion; (b) more countries, many of them small; (c) fewer spoken languages; (d) more urbanization; (e) more hunger; (f) more disease; (g) less tolerance, and in consequence, (h) more need for the stability that is offered by beneficent institutions like Freemasonry.

Now is the hour for us to recognize that in Masonry it is not what we get, in terms of honors and titles, that count; rather it is what we give, materially and spiritually, to those who, for whatever reason, are less well endowed.

It is therefore my prayer on this Day of Thanksgiving that we will dedicate ourselves anew to making life as comfortable as we can, for as many as we can, wherever we can, and for as long as we can.

Seventy years ago our then president, Franklin D. Roosevelt, a member of the Craft, called for the realization of what he termed the fundamental freedoms that all people, everywhere in the world, ought to enjoy.

Today millions of people still search for the freedoms that Roosevelt called for - the freedom of speech and expression, the freedom of worship, the freedom from want, and the freedom from fear.

Many years later Miriam Therese Winter, a Sister in the Roman Catholic Church, updated Roosevelt's appeal in a hymn entitled *O for a World*.

In that hymn, which we will sing in a moment, Sister Winter poetically expresses her hope for a world in which mutual respect, and love, and justice will prevail.

Those are objectives for which we also yearn as Masons, as Americans, and as world citizens.

Our purposes and hers are identical.

Our purposes and hers are attainable.

Our purposes and hers are essential.

Let us therefore be justly proud that we are of one blood - regardless of race, tongue, nationality, or sex. Moreover, on this Day of Thanksgiving, let us look forward with anticipation, as did the prophet Micah (*Micah 4*), to a blissful future - to a time when peace, and love, and brotherhood will prevail everywhere - to a world that can be, if we so will it, truly wonderful.

So mote it be

Amen.

O FOR A WORLD

by Miriam Therese Winter (1987)

*O for a world where everyone
Respects each other's ways,
Where love is lived and all is done
With justice and with praise.*

*O for a world where goods are shared
And misery relieved,
Where truth is spoken, children spared,
Equality achieved.*

*We welcome one world family
And struggle with each choice
That opens us to unity
And gives our vision voice.*

*The poor are rich, the weak are strong,
The foolish ones are wise.
Tell all who mourn; outcasts belong,
Who perishes will rise.*

*O for a world preparing for
God's glorious reign of peace,
Where time and tears will be no more,
And all but love will cease.*

Most Worshipful Brother Stewart Wilson Miner was born in Syracuse, NY, on October 7, 1921. Brother Miner earned a Bachelor of Education Degree at the New York State College for Teachers at Oswego, N.Y.; a Master of Arts Degree at Syracuse University; and a Master of Philosophy Degree at Columbia University in New York City. He served with the 12th Air Force as a B-25 pilot during World War II, and he is now a retiree of the U.S. Air Force and of the U.S. Civil Service (Central Intelligence Agency).



Brother Miner was raised (1957) in Cherrydale Lodge No. 42 (VA), where he served as Worshipful Master in 1965. He went on to serve as Master of three other lodges including Justice-Columbia Lodge No.3 in the District of Columbia (1979). He served the Symbolic Craft in Masonic Year 1974-75 as Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, following which he was elected in 1975 to the office of honorary Past Grand Master of Masons in the District of Columbia. Among his Masonic affiliations are the York Rite and Scottish Rite Bodies; Shriners; National Sojourners; Order of the Eastern Star; and the Tall Cedars of Lebanon.

Brother Miner served as Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of D.C. from 1987 through 2004 and thereafter, from 2005 through 2010 as Grand Historian of the Grand Lodge of D.C. On retiring as Grand Secretary in 2004 he was elected to the office of Grand Secretary Emeritus. Brother Miner holds the Distinguished Service Award and the Valentine Reintzel Medal of the Grand Lodge of D.C.

While he was Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of the D.C., Brother Miner served as secretary-treasurer of the Conference of Grand Secretaries from 1993 through 1997 and as president of that organization in the year 2000.

He and his wife Gertrude are the parents of two daughters: Dr. Beverly Rae Leffers, medical examiner in New York City, and Ann Shipman Miner, attorney-at-law in Pickens County, South Carolina. Now living in the Greenspring Retirement Community in Springfield, Virginia, Brother Miner recalls with particular pleasure the years he served Freemasonry in the nation's capital as Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia (1987-2004).