

# The Voice of Freemasonry

VOLUME 34, NUMBER 1, 2017

IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL



*Celebrating*

**A HISTORIC YEAR**

**FOR D.C. AND FREEMASONRY**

Washington  
November 18, 1793  
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AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GRAND LODGE  
OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF WASHINGTON DC



## THE VOICE OF FREEMASONRY

VOLUME 34, NUMBER 1  
2017 ISSUE



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# The Voice of Freemasonry

*the Nation's Capital*

A weekly news blog

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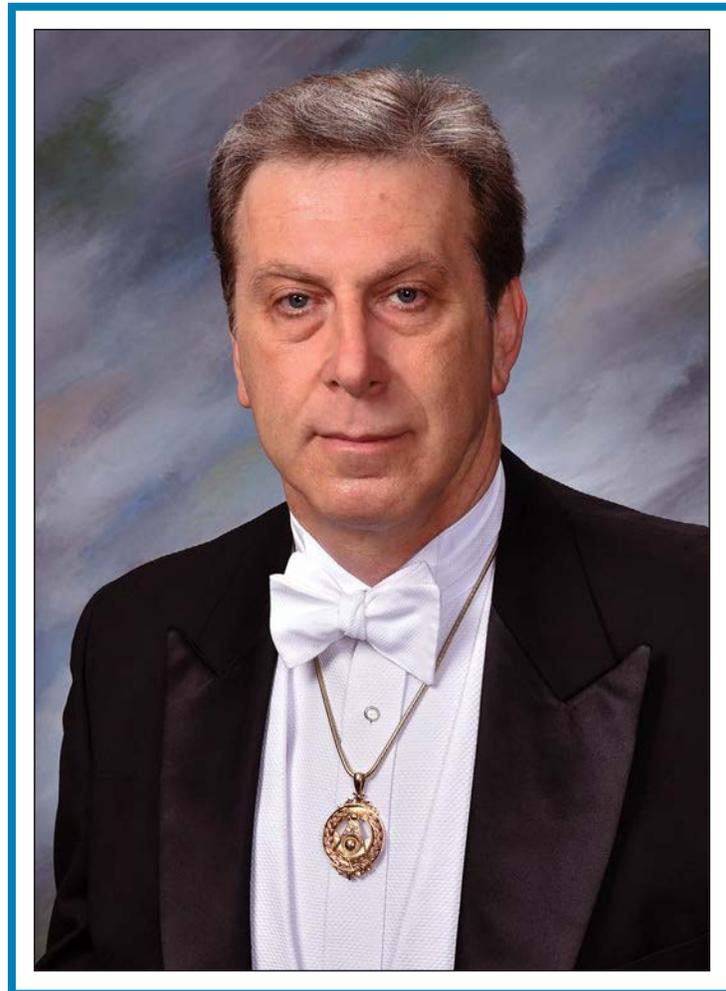
## 19 Cover Photo

The George Washington Gavel, watched over by the Grand Marshal of the District of Columbia during the historic public announcement of a joint scholarship fund at the university of the District of Columbia, financed by this Grand Lodge and the D.C. Prince Hall Grand Lodge. This is the first cooperative charitable project ever undertaken by these two Grand Lodges. The gavel is the most treasured Masonic artifact in Washington, D.C. It was used by our nation's first president, George Washington, in a Masonic ceremony to consecrate the cornerstone of the U.S. Capitol building on July 8, 1793. Today, it is held in trust and preserved by Potomac Lodge No. 5, and is a physical symbol of both our proud history, and our nation's. Photo: Jason Van Dyke

# GRAND MASTER'S Message

Quite often, in my conversations with newly made Masons or a prospective new member, I am asked what Masonry can do for them. After certain clarifications as to the meaning of “can do for them” to exclude materialistic motives, I try to explain that our Fraternity is so multifaceted, that any man may find something for him to enjoy – be it the symbolism, philosophy, esoterica, history, or charitable endeavors. Just look around, talk to brothers, ask questions - and there will be a brother, a lodge, or a unit of an appendant body that will satisfy your interests, I tell them.

For me, I have found that Masonry is important as a platform to develop or demonstrate leadership qualities. The elected leaders in our lodges should be able to facilitate and guide all of the other interests of brothers that I mentioned above. And everything that they do should be reflected through the prism of helping the brothers not only find their place in our organization, but to also help them appreciate the big picture of belonging to and to speaking proudly about our fraternity.



Most Worshipful Brother Roman Volsky

This idea of improvement and what Masonry does for a man is important to the wellbeing of our entire fraternity, as well. We need to be able to draw distinctions with other civic, business networking, or charitable organizations. And in order to do that, we have to first look inward and assess whether we practice what we preach. Do we truly practice the Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth that we profess? And are we operating on the level (regardless of honorifics)? Once we have answered these questions with a truthful “yes,” we can be sure that our Craft is distinctive and special amongst all other organizations.

In this auspicious year, when we celebrate the 300th Anniversary of modern Freemasonry, we should take a moment to assess how we project ourselves to the world. This issue of *The Voice of Freemasonry* highlights some of the events that took place in this jurisdiction that showed our face to the public, along

with writings on our history, philosophy, and unique DC Masonic culture. My sincere hope is that you will enjoy the reading, but more importantly, that you will see the positive effect that Masonry has had on you. ▲

**Our Fraternity is so multifaceted, that any man may find something for him to enjoy – be it the symbolism, philosophy, esoterica, history, or charitable endeavors. Just look around, talk to brothers, ask questions – and there will be a brother, a lodge, or a unit of an appendant body that will satisfy your interests.**

# From the Editor

## Let's Try Something New...

Posted: 10/13/2017

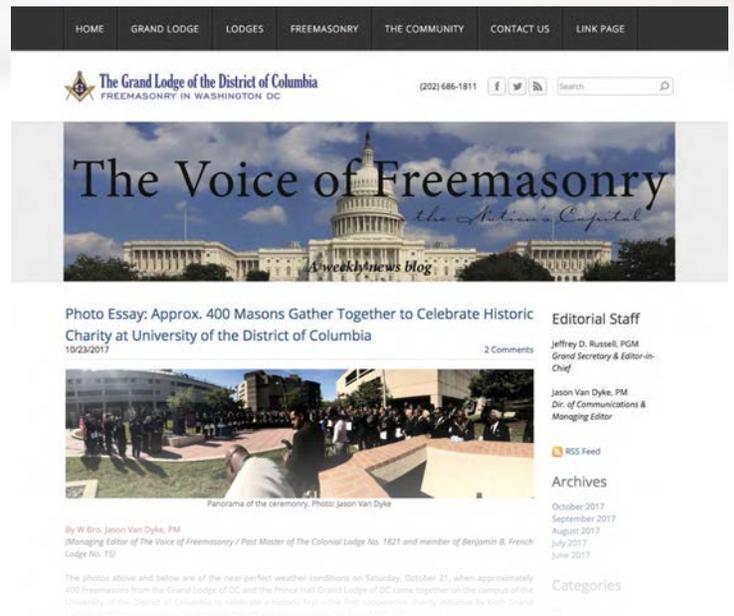
Yes, I know those are often the last words a Mason ever mutters just before he finally meets the Grand Architect of the Universe, but let's give it go, anyway...

For years, the Grand Lodge published *The Voice of Freemasonry* as a quarterly magazine for its membership. Recently, that quarterly timeframe has steadily moved to "occasional." There are many reasons for this (not the least of which is a lack of content), but I think we all can agree there is a void left in the place that our once-regular magazine occupied.

So, I'd like to propose a new idea. Let's try and publish stories by, from, and about D.C. Freemasonry in a new blog on the Grand Lodge website. These articles would come out weekly. We would post them on the website, and promote them on Facebook and our Yahoo Group.

The articles would be just like the articles from the magazine, with a mixture of subjects like history, Masonic biographies, current and recent events around the jurisdiction, etc. But they would come with a new feature – a comments section (moderated, of course), where we can talk back to the authors and each other about the articles. This gives us an opportunity the magazine didn't – the opportunity to connect to one another in a forum outside of the lodge or Masonic event. It will also drive more people to the website, which we will continue to improve and update with the latest information. Lastly, this new form also allows for shorter-length content and a faster turn-around on publishing so that articles with timely content remain relevant and don't become stale.

Then, at the end of the year, we can compile the best articles from the year and publish them in a print anthology that we can send out to our membership and around the Masonic world. This allows us to preserve the best of our articles in a physical form, and celebrates the close of the year with a retrospective of our most memorable moments.



As with all things, this idea and this form will evolve as we move forward. As we gain experience and familiarity with this new medium, we will strive to continually improve and refine it.

I hope you like this idea; I know it's new. But if we never did new things, we'd all still be living in caves and eating brontosaurus burgers on Burger Friday©.

Sincerely and Fraternally,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Van Dyke".

Jason Van Dyke, PM  
Managing Editor ▲

# The Belief in a Supreme Being

Posted: 6/1/2017

BY Q.B. DRISKELL - Asst. Grand Chaplain

I recall my very first visit to the lodge room of Naval Lodge, No. 4. I, like most, was astonished by the art I was surrounded with; the ancient Kemetic art, Coptic symbols, and hieroglyphics (the language of the Metu Neter) embroiled on the wall left me (and still leaves me) contemplating questions about the nature and the origin of Deity. It also inspired me to ponder the central importance that Deity plays in our fraternity and in the lives of its members.

There is but one key universal prerequisite in order to be initiated into the mysteries and privileges of Freemasonry in the world – belief in a Supreme Being. This is as old and as ancient as the ages; and as all such ancient traditions should, they invite us to consider deep fundamental questions: What is the origin of this prerequisite? If the prerequisite is a Supreme Being, then why the letter “G” in the East?

Let’s begin in Cush (Abyssinia or present-day Ethiopia), where civilization (and arguably Freemasonry) originated and where perhaps some of the wisest Nubians labored. They conducted their enlightenment in compliment with how the Nile River flows from south to north through, which birthed ancient Kemet (Egypt). There are no better architects and engineers than those ancient African Nubians who constructed



and built the huge pyramids, mysterious monuments that sit on 13 acres of land and in the center of the earth.

Knowledge represents an acquired amount of learning, both formally and informally, which unlike the ancient Kemites and Nubians had the profound ability to fully exercise their supreme, creative power that exist in the pineal gland, further evidence of our own great mystery relative to human physiology.<sup>1</sup> However the use of their pineal gland, located in the brain gave these ancient Africans the ability to activate and use 100% of their mental capacity, to which the brain still remains a mystery to western thought.

How these Kemites possessed the human mental capacity to construct the architectural phenomenon of the pyramids and other wonders of ancient civilization still remains unprecedented and hasn’t been duplicated since - this alone transitioned the ancient Kemites into being Supreme Deities on earth. Their imaginative power and dexterity to transcend western-world

thought and evolve into complete harmony with the terrain and Cosmos (which we may view as Operative Masonry and Speculative Masonry), is a mastery of the above and below paradigm and can never be ignored.



<sup>1</sup> Erich von Däniken. *Chariots of the Gods? Unsolved Mysteries of the Past*. 1968

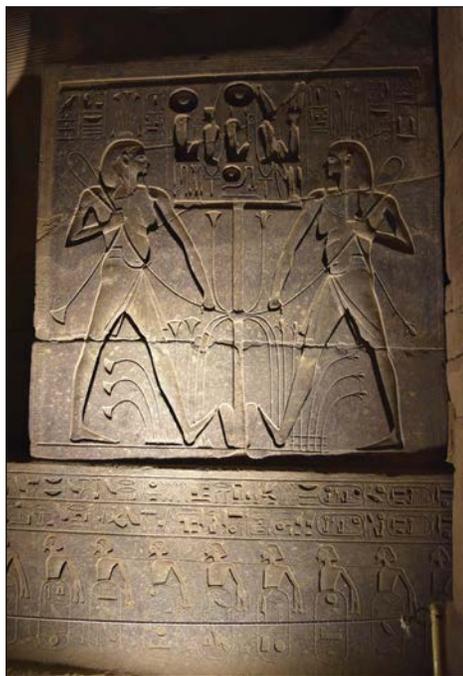
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# The Belief in a Supreme Being

(CONTINUED)

Can we modern mortals achieve the same or similar status in our ontology?

Recently, I re-watched a *CBS News* clip of myself and brothers from The Colonial Lodge No. 1821 entitled, *Inside the Secret World of Freemasons* where we were interviewed by Mo Rocca. He mentioned how *National Treasure*, a film that introduces Freemasonry to a younger generation, inspired many younger masons to join our ancient order. However, Freemasonry in *National Treasure* is presented as exciting but innocuous, with the “secret knowledge” dealing with various clues that would lead to a hoary and immense treasure. That could not be further from the truth.



The G present in the American Masonic symbol of the square and compasses can not only be interpreted as a general term for “God” or “geometry,” but I would contend for “*gnosis*”—that is, knowledge, or more specifically, a secret knowledge towards a mystical enlightenment. In fact, Freemasons are initiated into this secret knowledge that could lead to the answers of the mystery of

existence. And believing in Deity, independent of her name, means that you believe in the need for metaphysics, or something beyond the material world in order to begin the process of unpacking and “knowing” these mysteries. Its symbolism and esoteric knowledge draws us in, transforming our worldview in the hope of becoming - the *thing* itself.

Freemasonry has always had the ability to impact individuals and society thusly, but it also has the power to *transform* society into its own image and likeness; our own country is such an example.

However, Freemasonry isn't a religion (this we obviously know), but it *is* a builder of faith, because at the very least, like the ancient Africans, it embodies a willing and conscious desire to embrace the mysteries of our own divine existence to which we hopefully discover our true self and the glorious power within.

Additionally, Freemasonry is a journey of self-discovery – though it is only one path designed to point us to universal truths. And the universality of such truths ensures us that the light, the *gnosis*, is the same, regardless of our socially constructed differences.

On this path, another prominent symbol is vital – the compass. The compass is a mathematical tool that guides and gives direction, and parenthetically, let me state that as an evangelical, born-again, theologically and religiously universally ecumenical liberal progressive humanist Christian minister, I would argue that humanity has lost its way and is in dire need of a moral compass; thus, a Freemason, or colloquially put, “a traveling man” cannot, and should not go too far without this particular working tool. As they are designed to move us from the North East corner, a place symbolizing physical and spiritual death, to the East where life and enlightenment originates.

Let us aspire to that place in our enlightenment journey where we can discover that secret treasure within, in hopes of acknowledging we are indeed the *Supreme Being* we've been praying too.

Quardricos Bernard Driskell  
Grand Chaplain ▲



**Excellent article. Much to inspire ones mind, ponder and contemplate on the meaning of life - something that has eluded most of us.**

 BILAL M. RASCHID

# A D.C. Freemason in Tokyo

Posted: 6/7/2017

BY PAUL J. NADEAU, P.M. - Member: Benjamin B. French No. 15; Past Master: The Colonial Lodge No. 1821

Before I moved to Japan, I'd get frustrated with people who would only describe Japan as "different" without further elaboration, but after living here for a year, "different" is usually the best that I can do if I want to describe it to someone.

Things like language and customs are obvious, but people here will usually offer some leeway once they realize they're dealing



The strange, but true chip isle in a Tokyo convenience store. Photo: Paul Nadeau

with a foreigner. Where "different" really begins to force itself is in all the prosaic, workaday things that at one time let your head go on autopilot, like taking the Metro. Now I have to think about not only trying to game out the best car to take to avoid asphyxiation during rush hour, but also the unwritten rules about lining up for the doors, finding and defending my spot, and whether I have enough space to check my phone. It's also at this point that people stop being forgiving towards foreigners and they usually become seen as large, bearish things that crash their way into the cars and upend all order.

Buying snacks at the grocery store is another challenge. Beer is beer, except when it's highball, and it's not clear which ones are alcohol-free. Zima is also available (but not recommended, no matter what nostalgia tells you). Chips are an entirely different challenge. The fact that Japan has branched well beyond America's salt/BBQ/sour cream & onion/sour cream & cheddar/nachos continuum is good and bad—good because it's impossible to be bored with all the variety and rotating seasonal flavors, bad because sometimes those flavors are "squid intestines." But that's assuming that you can understand the images

on the bag in front of you and recognize things like foie gras or soy sauce-mayonnaise-tuna flavor. Most other times it's not clear and you're looking at bags with pictures of grinning shrimp, an abstractly-drawn grandmother with fire coming out of her mouth, a haughty-looking potato, or random piles of tacos.

In this kind of environment, you find yourself holding on to any kind of familiarity you can and that's where Masonry can help. Masons, rightly, like to point out the differences in rituals and lodges between jurisdictions, but the fundamentals are always there: Pillars are the same everywhere. When you walk in, the worshipful master and wardens are in their same spots. The East is always in the same place and serves the same function. Refectories all seem to be painted the same color for some reason. Even the things you thought were silly back home like the square-and-compass wallpaper and glass display cases of hats and jewels belonging to who-knows are strangely comforting.

And then there's the ritual. Once the gavel drops, the routine is familiar—I remember how I exhaled at that sound, thinking, for one of the rare times in Japan, I know this. The floor work may be different, which you'll find out when you go to the spot you usually would, and then see everyone staring at you from their original places, confirming that you're now that guy. But even then, it's the same fundamentals: a candidate enters blindfolded and leaves



The author eats "Sassy Potato" brand potato chips while watching men who have eaten too many Sassy Potatoes wrestle on TV. Photo: Paul Nadeau

the lodge room changed. Even when there are differences, those differences are the starting points for conversation.

So, it can't be said that Masonry is a copy of what Masons would experience back in D.C.—the ritual is in Japanese, sushi is for dinner, and vending machines line the walls of the refectory. But that's fine—I'm not in D.C., I'm in Tokyo. Tokyo Tower is down the street and the Masonic building is on the site of the Imperial Navy Officer's Club where the decision to



Entrance to the Tokyo Masonic Center. Photo: Paul Nadeau

(continued on page 30)

# Singleton Serves Up Sno-Cones and Smiles!

Posted: 6/28/2017

**BY WB ADAM TAGER** - Grand Marshal; Master: William R. Singleton-Hope-Lebanon No. 7; and Founding and current Senior Warden: The Eagle Lodge No. 1893

**& BRO. PETER BRUSOE** - Treasurer: William R. Singleton-Hope-Lebanon No. 7; Founding and current Secretary of The Eagle Lodge No. 1893; and Junior Warden: Irish Affinity Lodge, U.D.

One of the tenants of our ancient and gentle Craft is relief. We know that relief means help for the poor and destitute brother, his family and loved ones, but we also interpret relief to mean service to our communities. As Masons, we are viable members of the community. We have the means and the prerogative to help, when we can and where we can. And most of the time, we have fun doing it.

Summer's arrival brings with it a number of different community days, events, and festivals throughout Washington, D.C. These events are great for area children and families, and William R. Singleton-Hope-Lebanon Lodge No. 7 has developed a relationship with some of them as a part of our community service efforts. This summer, the first event was the 29th annual Glover Park Day on Saturday, June 3.



Not sure who liked the bouncy house more - kids, or Bro. Brusoe (left) and W Bro. Tager (right). Photo: Peter Brusoe

The quintessential neighborhood scene, like something out of a Thornton Wilder play or a Norman Rockwell painting unfolds before visitors. Kids play on the playground and interact with animals that have been brought to the event, bands perform at no charge, adults mingle and shop crafts and food made by local artisans, politicians stop by and work with the crowd. In a word, it's neighborly.

Singleton Lodge was pleased to partner with the community to sponsor a bouncy house and provide sno-cones at the festival. This was the lodge's sixth year partnering with the festival, but the second providing sno-cones and a bouncy house, and the response is amazing! Though the festival starts at 11:00 AM, kids were lining up to use the house starting at 10:30 AM, and a few came by to see when the sno-cones would be ready. Throughout the course of the day the bouncy house had a



Photo: Peter Brusoe



W Bro. Rick Chandler takes his turn serving sno-cones. Photo: Peter Brusoe

minimum of 6 kids in it at all times – sometimes with as many as a dozen, and often a long line for kids waiting to get in.

The sno-cones were also very well received. Festival attendees had a choice between cherry, grape, blue raspberry, and lime flavor, though the clear favorite was the rainbow assortment of everything! Parents appreciated the no-cost way to keep their children cool and refreshed, and kids (and some adults) loved getting to eat a classic summer treat. There is something magical about seeing a father and son relaxing on a bench enjoying a sno-cone together, especially knowing that you helped to create that special moment. At the end of the day we served 732 sno-cones in just over a 5-hour period.

As a bonus, we also had a lot of conversations around who the Masons are, and what we do. While many people thought we were a secret society, even more had no idea that we perform



W Bro. Tager serves up sno-cones.  
Photo: Peter Brusoe

community service. We were more than happy to explain that neither was true. In the end, we ended up with a lot of thanks for the sno-cones and bouncy house, and a bunch of myths dispelled.

We had a number of Brothers come by to staff the booth including MW Bro. Jeffrey D. Russell, Grand Secretary; Worshipful Bro. Adam Tager, current Master of Singleton Lodge and Grand Marshall; Worshipful Bro. Richard C. Chandler, Past Master of Singleton Lodge; and Bro. Bilal Sleiman. We also had a number of brothers from different Lodges come by to say hi and enjoy a sno-cone.

While we had a great deal of fun at Glover Park Day, there is a more important reason why continue to

volunteer in the community. The Glover Park Neighborhood is a couple miles south of the Singleton Masonic Center, and has a deep connection to our lodge. Glover Park was named for Charles C. Glover. Historians know Glover for being a prominent banker and generous philanthropist: he was driving force behind the creation of Rock Creek Park, the National Zoo, the National Cathedral, Potomac Park, and Glover-Archbold Park. For us at Singleton Lodge, we know him as our founding Master! So what better way to honor one of our founding brothers than to participate in a festival for a community named for him?

We hope to see everyone on June 2, 2018 for the 30th festival! ▲



Abe stands proudly with MW Bro. Jeff Russell, PGM and Grand Secretary (center) and W Bro. Adam Tager (right). Photo: Peter Brusoe



Abe was HUGE fan of sno-cones. Photo: Peter Brusoe

# Wherever Two or Three Were Gathered: Proto-lodges and the Early History of Freemasonry in the District

Posted: 7/6/2017

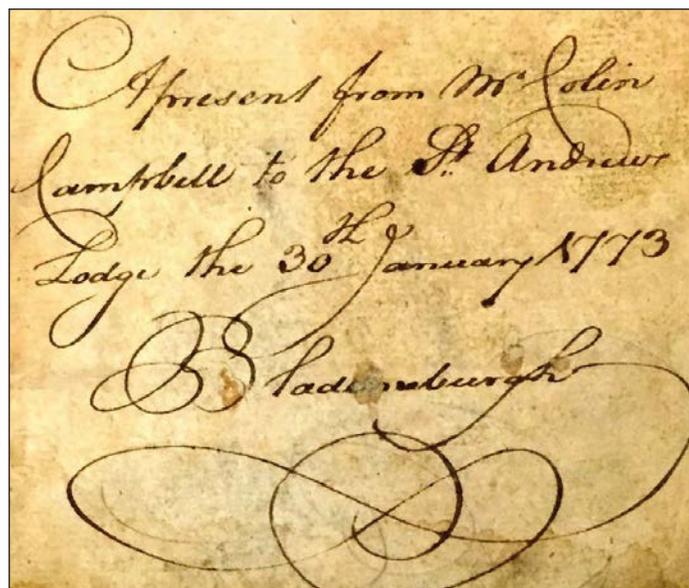
BY BRO. CHRIS RULI - Member: Potomac Lodge No. 5

The term "lodge," according to former Grand Lodge Historian Kenton N. Harper, was not only defined as an organized and continuing body common to us today, but also "a hap-hazard congregation of Masons [gathered] for a single meeting." Masonic scholar Robert Davis calls these congregations "occasional lodges," and explains that they operated wherever "two or three [masons] were gathered."<sup>1</sup>



Design for the President's house, elevation. Submitted to the White House drawing competition by James Hoban, 1792. Photo: Maryland Historical Society

A good example of this type of "occasional lodge" were any of the traveling military lodges found during the Revolutionary War. They were chartered by the Grand Lodge in England, and brought British troops and their Colonial rivals together with their common interest in forging fraternal bonds in the lodge room which eclipsed their differences on the battlefield. These original groups of Masons have gone by various names including occasional, military, army, regimental, foot, traveling, and ambulatory lodges, but for the sake of this article, I have chosen a simpler term to encapsulate all the hap-hazard and informal congregations of masons: proto-lodges.



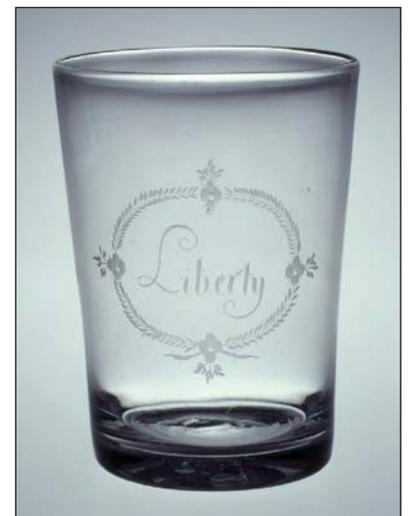
The inscription from a Bible gifted from Mr. Colin Campbell of Bladensburg to St. Andrews lodge. January 30th 1773. Photo: Chris Ruli

So how did proto-lodges operate? They met in very small groups at any given time as membership fluctuated based on travel, weather, social and/or political happenings. They met in taverns and operated under inherent right, or outside the authority of a Grand Lodge's rules and regulations – imagine an informal network of men gathered across Maryland to make Masons using the simple ceremonies they knew at the time. From

this, some lodges grew, expanded their scope, requested charters from Grand Lodges, and in one instance even reinitiated clandestine Masons!<sup>2</sup>

It's unclear how many proto-lodges existed, but surviving evidence suggests that they operated for decades before the Grand Lodge of Maryland organized in the late 18th century. In fact, Bro. Edward Shultz dedicates over fifty pages (almost the entire first section) in the first volume of Maryland history on the various records of proto and traditional lodges chartered by the Grand Lodges of Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, England, and inherent groups from Germany and Scotland.<sup>3</sup> Most of these early traditional and proto-lodges ceased to operate after several years, but their members undoubtedly traveled, participated in masonic activities, and contributed to the continuing development of the Craft across Maryland.

There are two unique proto-lodges worth noting. The first is a lodge organized under the auspices of German immigrant and glass-maker John Amelung. Amelung was considered one of the original and most successful glass-makers in the colonies. Astonishingly, Amelung brought 300 to 400 settlers with him during



A piece of Amelung glass, ca. 1788. Photo: Corning Museum of Glass

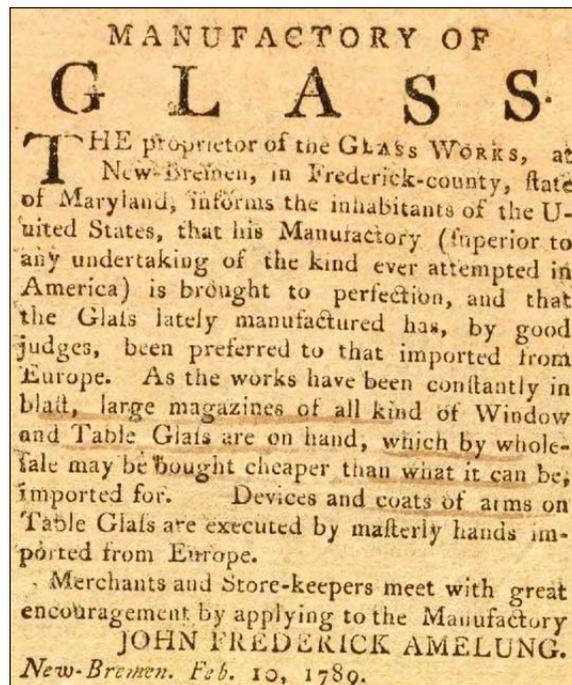
his voyage to the New World, which included doctors, bakers, shoemakers, tailors, and blacksmiths. His lodge was most likely made of up Masons from this contingent and was known to have operated around 1789 to 1799.

Though little is known about this lodge, including its name (if it had one), we do know that Amelung's glassworks were so popular that it is believed he received a personal audience with George Washington at Mount Vernon in 1789. Washington wrote an enthusiastic letter to Thomas Jefferson claiming that ten thousand pounds of glass per year was manufactured by Amelung (worth about \$1.5 million in 2017), and advertisements for his products were printed in the earliest newspapers in the District of Columbia.

The other notable proto-lodge was St. Andrews Lodge of Georgetown, which also can be considered the last of these proto-lodges. By tradition, St. Andrews was organized by Scottish masons who were the predominate emigres to Georgetown in the early 18th century. It is believed that some of these settlers moved throughout Maryland and opened branches in Bladensburg, Leonardtown, Port Tobacco, and Joppa. Shultz notes that family names of the original founders of Joppa matched the names from the earliest settlers in Georgetown.

The only remaining evidence of this lodge is a Bible currently held in the Potomac Lodge No. 5 archives. The Bible was printed in 1754 in Edinburgh, Scotland by Adrian Watkins. These editions were favored by early Scottish settlers for their low cost, abundance, and availability in shops at Port Tobacco.

We may never know the true number or impact of proto-lodges. Harper notes, "It was the custom of the early days, especially during the Revolutionary War, to keep the records of lodges on slips of paper which were, after so long a time, destroyed, to prevent the possibility of their falling into the hands of profanes, a custom peculiarly aggravating to the modern historian." There was also a global shortage of paper that



An advertisement for John Amelung's glass works originally posted in the first newspaper in the District, the Times and Patowmack Packet. Several advertisements for Amelung's work appear in this publication over the years. Photo: Chris Ruli

required early printers to reuse their supplies.<sup>4</sup> In fact, the Lodge No. 9 (the precursor to Potomac Lodge No. 5) charter was written on the back of its original petition(!), and it is possible that other old documents today may have once been used to record charters, minutes, or other lodge business.

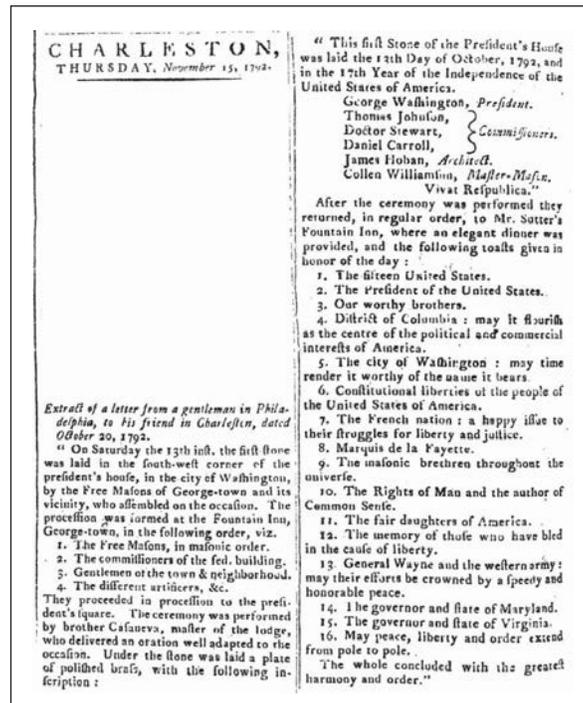
The first traditional, non-proto lodge chartered in the area was Lodge No. 9 of Maryland, who were chartered April 21st, 1789 in Georgetown (just 9 days before George Washington's first inauguration in New York). Then in 1793, a group of ten Masons engaged in the construction of the U.S. Capitol and the White House, not wishing to travel the long distance to Georgetown, applied to No. 9 for a dispensation to organize their own lodge.<sup>5</sup> Several months later, those Masons received an official dispensation from the Grand Lodge of Maryland to be organized as Federal

Lodge No. 15 and thus became the first lodge chartered in the new capital city of the District of Columbia, but still well before the foundation of that city's Grand Lodge.

On September 18, 1793, Lodge No. 9 and Federal No. 15 were two of three D.C. lodges that assisted President Washington in laying the cornerstone of the U.S. Capitol building in a full, public Masonic ceremony.<sup>6</sup> No. 9 went inactive several years later, and Federal Lodge operated as the sole Masonic entity north of the Potomac River until 1805, when several other dispensations for lodges were granted, including one from the original members of No. 9 petitioning to reconstitute their lodge under the new name "Potomac Lodge."

In 1811, five out of the six Masonic lodges in the area came together to form the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia, and charters were reissued based on the date of their original Maryland charters.<sup>7</sup>

In the beginning, the founding five lodges operated similarly to their proto-lodge pasts. The Past Master's degree was conferred onto any interested Master Mason, and financial accounts were kept in



A newspaper account of the laying of the cornerstone of the White House. Most impressive here, is the fact someone was coherent enough to remember all 16 (!) toasts. Photo: Chris Ruli

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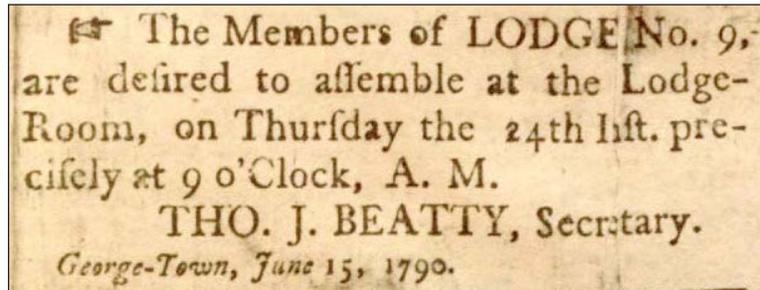
pounds, shillings, pence (Maryland currency), and later in dollars. This undoubtedly made financial business a complicated process, but was common practice before the circulation of standard dollar currency.

Members also organized around professional or social groups. Charter members of Federal No. 1 were predominately Irish and Scottish laborers, craftsmen, and stone masons working on the Capitol and White House. The Masons of Columbia No. 3 were employed in various levels of the U.S. Treasury Department, and members of Potomac No. 5 were prominent landowners and businessmen in Georgetown. Naval Lodge members were, unsurprisingly from the name, mostly Naval servicemen and shipyard employees; and they amassed the largest roster of early members in part due to the number of veterans returning from the war in Tripoli and the lodge's location near the Navy Yard, itself.

Like many of their proto-lodge and later lodge counterparts, members of Potomac first hosted meetings in a popular Georgetown tavern, and granted two dispensations while under their No. 9 Maryland charter. (Federal Lodge No. 15 and St. Columba No. 10 in Port Tobacco, Maryland).<sup>8</sup> The Grand Lodge of Maryland was initially critical of the dispensations, but eventually accepted their legitimacy.<sup>9</sup> Few details are known about when and where

charter members received their degrees. It is most likely the case that these masons were initiated at lodges in their respective countries or in various proto-lodges throughout Maryland and Virginia. Founding members undoubtedly brought with them the customs and rules once set up by their proto-lodge counterparts.

With the exception of Naval No. 4, the lodges experienced stagnated growth in the early years of their existence. None of the founding members of Federal Lodge appear on the Grand Lodge of Maryland register six years after their formation, and almost half resigned in 1811 to form Lebanon No. 7. Brooke Lodge No. 2 had its charter seized by the Grand Lodge two decades after their formation due to indebtedness, deteriorating activity, and the events of the Morgan Affair. Columbia surrendered their charter several years later, but members eventually regained their charter in 1857.



Announcement of a lodge meeting, 1790. Photo: Chris Ruli

As previously mentioned, after a short hiatus, the original members of Lodge No. 9 reconstituted their old lodge under the new name Potomac. Several decades later, the Grand Lodge of Maryland declared that No. 9 and Potomac Lodge No. 5 were, "...considered to have been the same lodge with periods of inaction." And in 1939, the Grand Lodge of Maryland returned the original No. 9 charter they had discovered several years earlier.

<sup>1</sup> Bro. Robert Davis' book, *A Mason's Words*, details the origins of freemasonry ritual and is recommended reading for anyone interested in learning more about its evolution and spread from England to the U.S.

<sup>2</sup> Occurred in Joppa Lodge No. 1. This event is documented in Bro. Edward Shultz's first volume of Grand Lodge of Maryland's history.

<sup>3</sup> The author has omitted the documented quarrels between the Modern and Ancient influences for the sake of brevity. It is believed that proto-lodges fell into the Ancient ritual category, but there is a lack of supporting evidence on this.

<sup>4</sup> The global shortage of paper, or linen-paper combinations called rags, was well-documented across the 18th century.

<sup>5</sup> They were mostly Irish and Scottish stone masons and carpenters led by the architect of the White House, James Hoban, who would serve as the new lodge's first Master.

<sup>6</sup> Alexandria-Washington No. 22 was the third lodge, and at that time, Alexandria was a physical part of the District.

<sup>7</sup> Alexandria-Washington No. 22 declined the invitation to join the Grand Lodge of D.C.

<sup>8</sup> St. Columba operated out of the Chimney House tavern in Port Tobacco for several years before becoming inactive. The Chimney House still stands, and there is a commemorative St. Columba plaque on display.

<sup>9</sup> This was most likely done by Lodge No. 9 for the sake of convenience, as travel up to Baltimore or northern Maryland for a petition was arduous.

**As a mbr of several Masonic Ed groups inc. Philalethes, this article by Bro. Ruli re: proto lodges, is one of the best I've read in a long time. Excellent research and very good prose. I look forward to more articles by him and/or similar ones from other Brothers. Thanks!**

 Gerald Edgar - Mosaic #125 AF&M @ Dubuque, Iowa

# From the Archives (Unsolved Mysteries Edition): The Case of the Mysterious Grand Master

Posted: 7/13/2017

BY BRO. CHRIS RULI - Member: Potomac Lodge No. 5

*From the Archives* highlights interesting stories of past D.C. Freemasons and other hidden historical gems found in archives of the Grand Lodge of D.C. - ed.

In the Fall of 1841, John Mason, Jr., a prominent Georgetown lawyer and businessman, submitted a petition to re-affiliate with Potomac Lodge No. 5, his Mother Lodge. Mason had applied for and received the degrees sixteen years earlier, but was forced to quickly ask for leave, as he was headed to Mexico on a diplomatic mission of the State Department.[1]

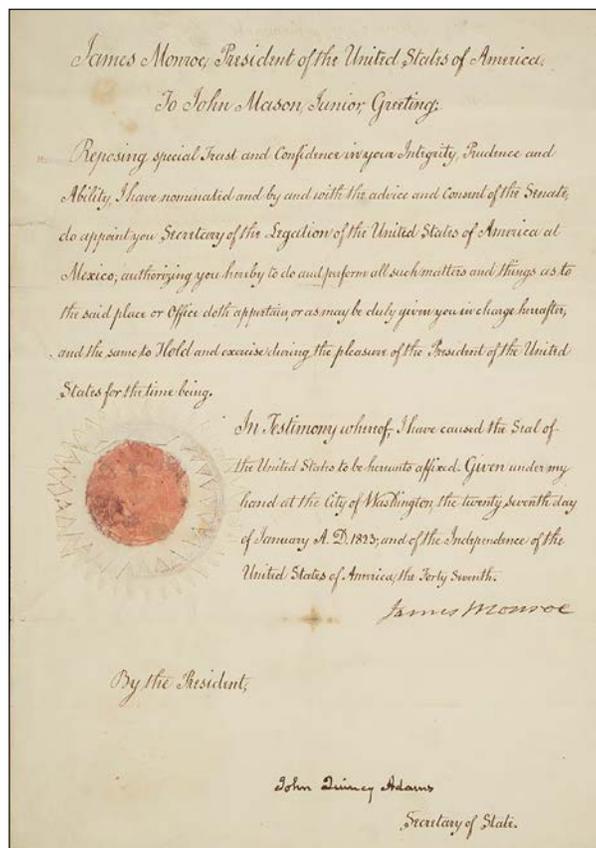
What happens next still perplexes Masonic historians: Mason was elected Grand Master of the District of Columbia. Yet, he never held masonic office and had only returned to Potomac two months prior. There are no explanations in our Grand Lodge history or proceedings, and no clues are found in Potomac Lodge's minutes.

In the official history of D.C. Freemasonry, WB Harper writes "[Mason's] active membership in his lodge was remarkably brief and his selection to preside over the Grand Lodge can only be attributed to some special conditions, hidden by the lapse of years, but among which it may be surmised his prominence and the unsettled period were powerful factors."

Here we have some historical proof that indeed, Mason was a prominent figure in the District. His grandfather was a famous officer in the Revolutionary War (none other than George Mason, himself), he served in the Continental Congress in 1777, and he drafted the Virginia Declaration of Rights in 1776. His family's estate on Mason's Island (now known as Theodore Roosevelt Island) was considered a social center of early D.C. In fact, the King of France, Louis Phillippe I, lodged there on one of his trips to



MW Bro. John Mason, Jr., Grand Master of Masons in the District of Columbia, 1842. Photo: Chris Ruli



the United States. And as for the rest of his family, Mason's uncle was the first Governor of Michigan and his brother, James M. Mason, was a Virginia Senator from 1846 to the Civil War and represented the Confederate States of America as commissioner to the UK and France during the Trent Affair. So, it's easy to see that Mason was undoubtedly a prominent and important figure wherever he happened to be during his lifetime.

But the best place to understand who he was as a Freemason would have possibly been written somewhere in his Lodge's minutes. Unfortunately, in 1963, a fire destroyed the Masonic Hall in Georgetown, and with it, any direct clues to the mystery of Mason's lighting fast rise to Grand Master.

Add to that the rarity of original source material from the time, and we find ourselves in a difficult position when trying to find out why Most Worshipful Brother Mason ascended to the Grand Oriental East so quickly. However, hopefully, as more resources move online, future historians will have a better picture of Mason and what is surely his remarkable life story.

[1] Mason's official Letter of Appointment to his diplomatic post in Mexico. The letter was signed by President Monroe and attested by then Secretary of State John Quincy Adams. It is part of UNC: Chapel Hill's Wilson special collection. ▲

John Mason, Jr.'s letter of appointment as a diplomat of the United States to Mexico, signed by the Secretary of State and future president, John Quincy Adams, 1823. Photo: UNC Chapel Hill, Wilson Special Collection

# So, You're a Traveling Man?

Posted: 7/18/2017

BY NICKY SAMPOGNA, P.M. - Past Master of The Colonial Lodge No. 1821 & Fraternity Lodge No. 54

I've always had this idea of what a traveling Mason would look like. The idea was inspired by equal parts of the tales of Knights Templar riding throughout Europe to the Holy Land, Scottish workmen approaching Rosslyn chapel, and movies like *The Man Who Would Be King*.

I pictured these sojourning Masons as wary travelers, carrying only their membership patents and a thin rolled-up apron, should they ever have the chance to meet a Brother on their travels. These Companions of the Mystic Tie would prove their membership through a secret token or a strand of words that would have them accepted into fellowship by their newest friends and brothers. That was my idea...my vision.

However, since starting my career with WWE and traveling throughout the country and the world, it seems I have become the traveling man in my vision (albeit with much less horseback riding and many, many more frequent flier miles). In fact, my job has me traveling to a new place every week, so I am seldom able to enjoy the experience of my own mother lodge for a stated meeting or a degree. So in this sense, I am quite literally a traveling Mason.

But I've tried. I've been a traveling officer and a traveling Master (which I can assure you, is only possible if you have a competent and hard-working officer line who can assist in the completion of a lodge's goals and the execution of lodge responsibilities), but I assure you, it's not the same.

So to make up for missing the experience at home, I try and visit a Masonic Lodge, Scottish Rite Cathedral or Shrine Center where ever I am, even if it's just their exteriors, to keep me connected to the Fraternity. When it's available, I'll take a tour, like at the United Grand Lodge of England; or I'll take a peek in, like visiting a DeMolay ceremony at the

Grand Lodge of South Dakota. While this may seem simple, they allow me the chance to share a conversation with members from various Grand Lodges, where we can discuss their Masonic experience and the similarities (and differences) of ours in the Grand Lodge of D.C.

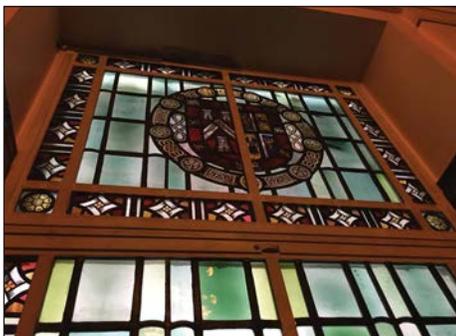
But the Lodge rooms; oh how beautiful it is to see how Masons meet from around the country and around the world. It's interesting to see the variations in styles of architecture, and the different emphases placed on lighting, organs, seating, and accessibility to the brethren. Each room, while sharing similarities, feels different and local. From the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, where every Masonic body has a room dedicated to its practices to the old Scottish Rite of Los Angeles, whose external structure depicts the entire history of Freemasonry, it is amazing to see how Masons everywhere celebrate our honorable and gentle Craft.

These quick interactions, however, should not (and cannot) act as a substitute for a true Masonic experience. What that is, I leave up to each Mason to decide for himself and can only share my thoughts, opinions, and experience – and that is: The time spent away from Lodge activities and Brethren has given

me a renewed focus on the daily aspects of Freemasonry to which our ritual alludes. So many members forget their Masonic obligations, or feel like they exist only when joined together with others or in the most extreme of circumstances, but we should never forget the decorum with which we must act and the standards we must keep when we are abroad in the world.



WB Sampogna in his native environment. Photo: Nicky Sampogna

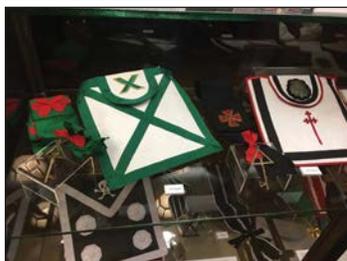
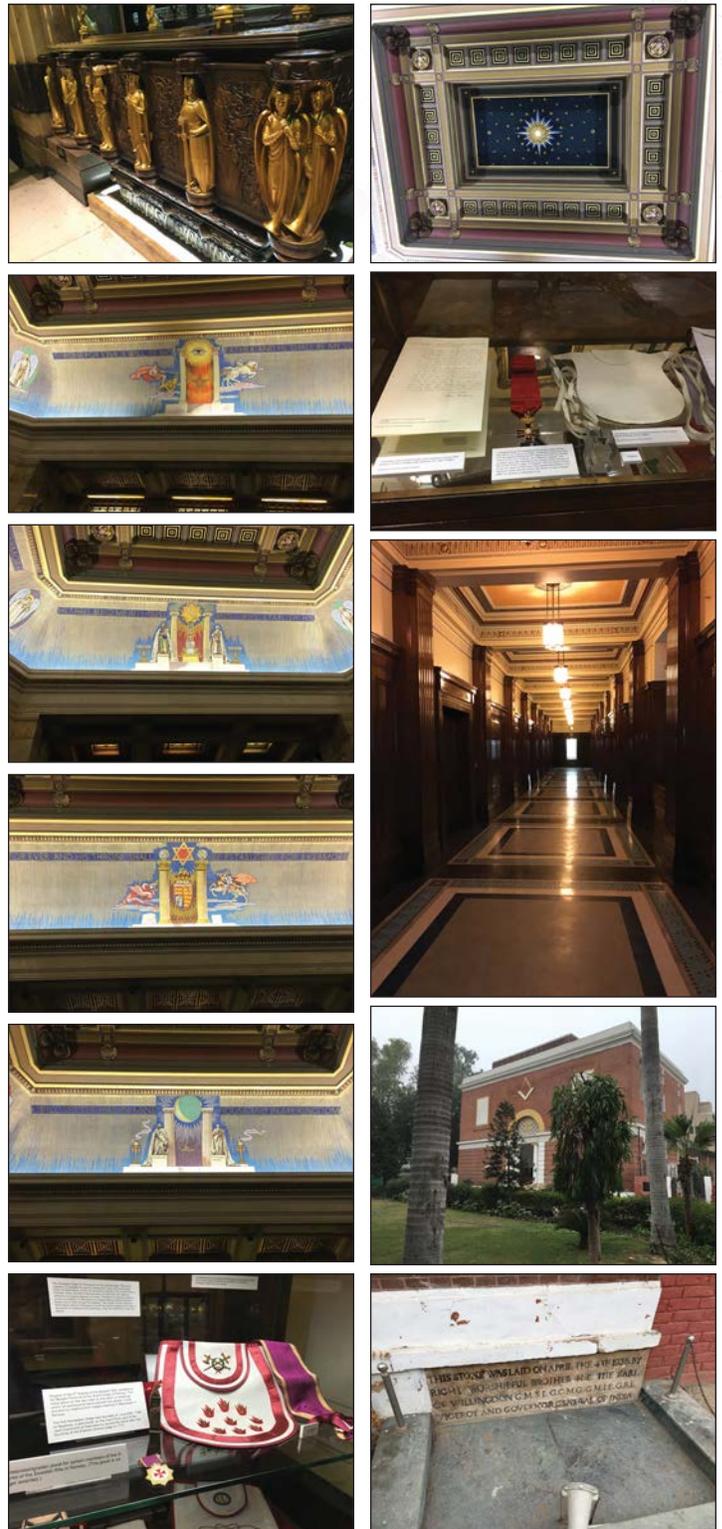


All photos by Nicky Sampogna

We should strive to fit in with the cultural norms and practices of the lands in which we inhabit, striving to be a productive member of society, all the while treating our fellow man with respect and admiration. Far too often our species immediately looks to discern the differences between ourselves, but with the Grand Architect of the Universe's guidance, it is quite necessary that Freemasons are the pontiffs, the bridge builders of men across the globe.

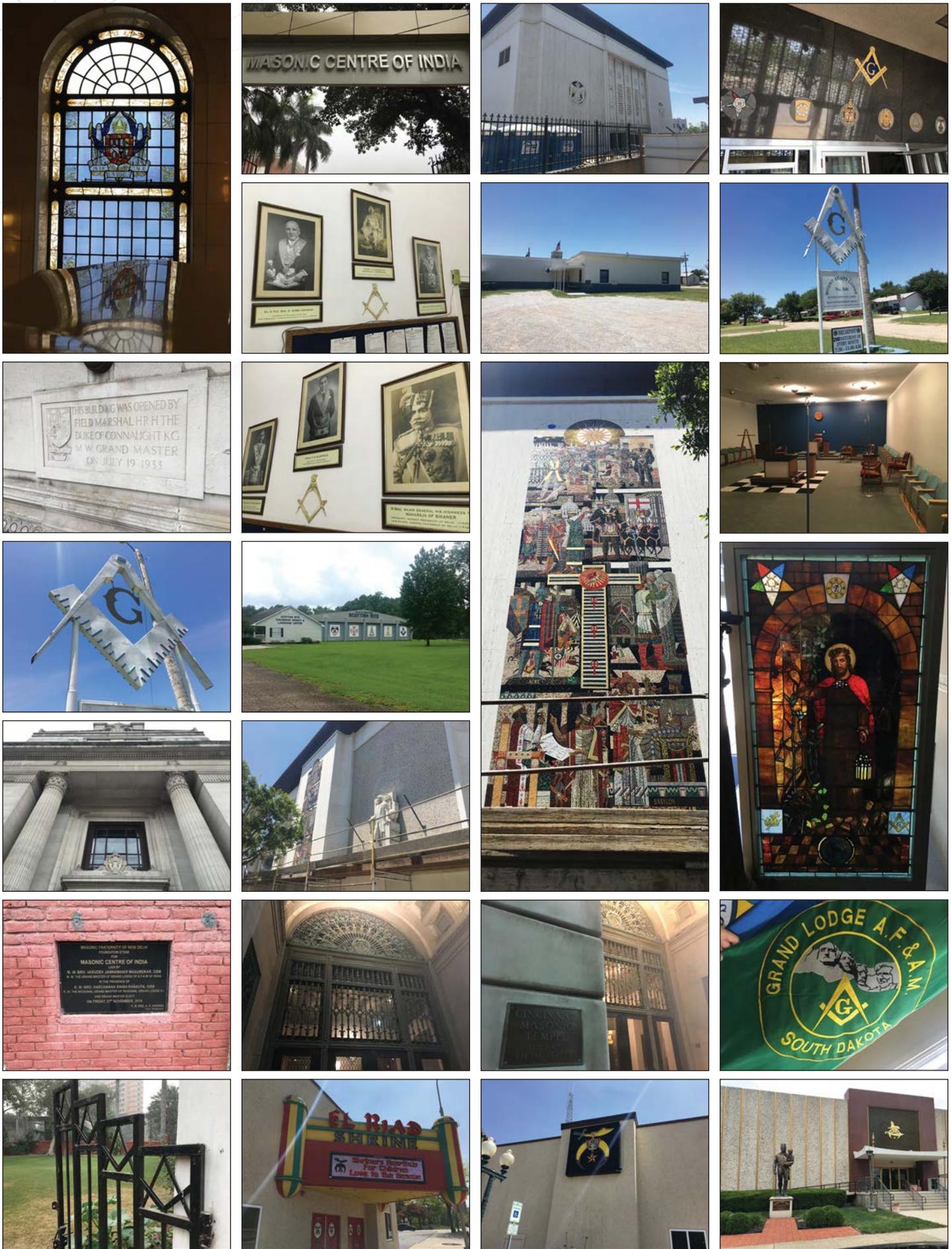
As you have probably guessed, I have a great deal of time to reflect when traveling. Usually, I reflect on the blessings with which I've been afforded and the opportunities I will find to do good in my future travels. And although I may be many miles away from home and the lodges of men I call "Brother," every foreign Masonic facility I come across serves a templum – or a reorientation towards the Grand East – the place from where all direction and education derives and where Freemasonry shines its brightest light! ▲

The following photos are a collection of the Masonic sights I have seen as I have traveled the world. I hope you enjoy them as much as I enjoyed visiting these incredible places.



All photos by Nicky Sampogna

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All photos by Nicky Sampogna

# D.C. Freemasons Participate in Royal Arch Day of Service

Posted: 7/18/2017

BY BRO. PETER BRUSOE - Treasurer: William R. Singleton-Hope-Lebanon No. 7; Founding and current Secretary of The Eagle Lodge No. 1893; and Junior Warden: Irish Affinity Lodge, U.D.

Freemasons participate in our fraternity in several different ways. Several belong to additional Masonic organizations like the Scottish Rite and York Rite. The Royal Arch, part of the York Rite, recently held a day of service to give back to their community. Masons from Federal Lodge #1, Potomac Lodge #5, Singleton Lodge #7, Washington Day Light Lodge #14, Albert Pike Lodge #33, Jerusalem Lodge #3000, Naval Lodge #4, Eagle Lodge #1893, Irish Affinity Lodge UD, East Gate Lodge #34, L'Haitienne Lodge # 925, Petworth Lodge # 47, Sojourner Kilwinning Lodge No. 1798 and Fiat Lux Lodge No. 1717 came together for this day.

Meeting at Singleton Masonic Temple the Masons performed a number of different service projects for worthy DC charities including Martha's Table, Children's Inn at National Institute of Health, and the Little Sisters of the Poor.

Martha's Table provides several different services, including after-school enrichment programs, and a series of healthy markets located in "food deserts" in DC that are set up to fight food insecurity in these communities. Two critical food insecurity programs they run include McKenna's Wagon, which is a mobile soup kitchen serving people across Washington, DC, and Saturday Seniors, which brings meals to seniors in their homes. In addition to the healthy hot meal, they also provide sandwiches. To help Martha's Table in their laudable efforts, the Royal Arch Masons of DC switched from trowels to butter knives, and made almost 200 sandwiches to be passed out to the less fortunate in our community.

Children and their families come from around the world to be treated for disease at the National Institute of Health. To make

families feel more at home NIH operates a lodging facility for children and their families, called the Children's Inn. The Inn has a program where the children staying receive a small gift in their mail box.

For this organization, the Grand Chapter decided to donate to each child a teddy bear bank. The Grand Chapter painted over 70 different bears. Some bears were pandas, grizzlies and some



Bro. Peter Brusoe



Photos by Peter Brusoe



were fanciful. Each bank was given a penny to help start the child's savings. Plus for those who know something about Royal Arch Masons, we like our pennies.

Little Sisters of the Poor are a group of amazing religious sisters. They provide care for elderly and infirm people at their Jeanne Jugan residence. In keeping with the patriotic theme of the July 4th holiday, the Royal Arch Masons made each resident a patriotic sun catcher to help brighten their room.

In addition to doing these service projects, the Royal Arch provided Masons from all of these different DC Lodges the opportunity to share brotherhood, hear about the programs their Lodge is undertaking, and other upcoming opportunities for partnership and collaboration.

This day of service helped to connect the hundreds of Royal Arch Masons across DC in

one unified day of service to give back to the community and leave their mark on their fellow man. Plans are already underway for next year's! ▲

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All photos by Peter Brusoe

# Annual Universal Brotherhood Celebration Marks 300-year Anniversary with Big Events

Posted: 7/19/2017

**BY RW BRO. MORGAN P. CORR** - Junior Grand Steward, Master of Irish Affinity Lodge, U.D., and Past Master of Federal Lodge No. 1 and The Colonial Lodge No. 1821

This year our Grand Lodge celebrated the 26th-annual Universal Brotherhood Celebration (UBC), bringing together Brothers from throughout the world to highlight the diversity and camaraderie of our noble Craft. Of particular note this year, is that 2017 marks the 300th anniversary celebration of Grand Lodge Masonry, coinciding with the founding of the Grand Lodge of England (now the United Grand Lodge of England) in 1717. This unique facet was woven into the fabric of this year's celebration, held June 15-17th.

The ceremonies kicked off with a variety of events on Thursday, June 15 — including a welcome reception for dignitaries at the historic Belmont Mansion in Dupont Circle, home of the International Order of the Eastern Star. Also that evening, several of our constituent lodges held unique Stated Communications tailored for UBC. Naval Lodge No. 4 and Arminius Lodge No. 25 held a joint meeting, sharing the history of their lodges and the founding of our first lodge operating in another language - Arminius Lodge has operated in German since 1876. And finally, Compass Lodge No. 1811 featured a special guest speaker from the Grand Lodge of Uruguay.

On Friday June 16th the ceremonies continued with a historic morning at the National Cathedral where the Grand Master of Masons, Most Worshipful Brother Roman Volsky planted an English Oak in the garden, while Right Worshipful Brother Derek Dinsmore, the Grand Chancellor of the United Grand Lodge of England, and James Long, Deputy President of the Board of Trustees of the same, planted an acacia tree, as well. This ceremony reaffirmed the long and durable friendship between our two Grand Lodges, and our two countries.

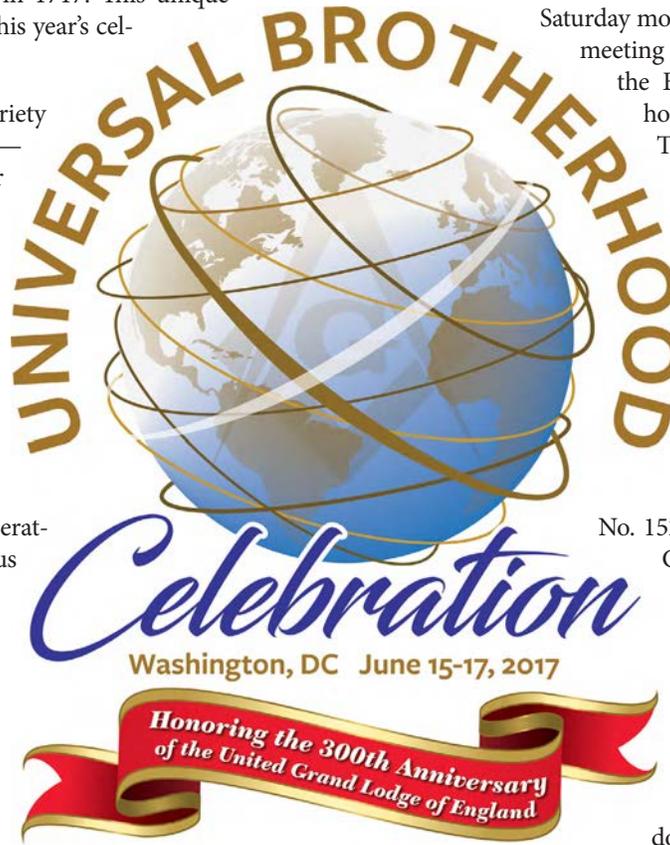
Prior to the tree ceremony, a delegation of officers from both Grand Lodges visited the United States Capitol building to lay a wreath at the memorial to Winston Churchill, honorary American citizen. These activities were capped off with a luncheon at the House of the Temple.

That evening the brothers of Sojourner-Kilwinning Lodge No. 1798 celebrated their lodge's 25th anniversary, and the unique Scottish Rite ritual they bring to our jurisdiction. Most Worshipful Brother Len Proden was the featured speaker, and made particular note to celebrate the rich diversity found in the Craft, most especially in this jurisdiction.

Saturday morning the traditional Universal Lodge meeting was held. The lodge was opened on the Entered Apprentice degree to a full house at the DC Scottish Rite Center. The cast for the opening, the conduct of business, and the closing comprised a range of Masters and senior officers of the various constituent lodges, with more than 10 languages spoken in the various stations and places of the lodge. During the program, the Grand Master recognized dignitaries and delegations from throughout the world, and commemorated the official twinning of Maynilad Lodge No. 1521 with two lodges from outside this Grand Jurisdiction - Fil-Can Cable-tow Lodge No. 189, of the Grand Lodge of Manitoba and Philipinas Lodge No. 1180, of the Grand Lodge of Illinois.

The weekend's festivities ended with Universal Brotherhood Banquet at the Capital Hilton hotel downtown. Most Worshipful Brother Joseph Crociata, PGM was the master of ceremonies for the evening, and oversaw a rousing evening of fellowship and brotherly love. The evening began with a parade of the flags of all the dignitaries from foreign jurisdictions, wielded by the Rainbow Girls of Hope Assembly No. 12, Germantown, Maryland, who were escorted by their Grand Worthy Advisor, Blake DeVaney. After dinner, entertainment was provided by the Prince Havelly band.

Overall, the weekend's events were a huge success, especially amongst our many guests. Grand Lodges from Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, England, Haiti, Illinois, Manitoba, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Philippines Portugal, Romania, Ukraine, and Uruguay were all represented.



(continued on next page)



## A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ALL WHO WERE INVOLVED IN THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD PLANNING COMMITTEE:

MWB Kenneth D. Fuller, PGM  
MWB Joseph S. Crociata, PGM  
RWB Michael D. Nicholas, JGW  
RWB Daniel Huertas, JGD  
WB Carlos Landazuri, PM

WB Robert A. Maxim, PM  
WB Paul Dolinsky, PM  
WB Darren Moore, PM  
WB David Cornwell  
WB Adam Tager

WB Phil Patlan  
WB Michael Spencer  
WB Juan Tassano, PM  
Bro Larry J. Von Weigel



The following photos from the various events during the Universal Brotherhood weekend. As you will see, we had a great time celebrating not only the 300th anniversary, but our Grand Lodge's unique concept of Universal Brotherhood, too.

### *Universal Brotherhood Celebration Kickoff and Welcome Reception*





# Tree Planting Ceremony at the National Cathedral



(continued on next page)





# Universal Lodge Meeting



# Universal Brotherhood Banquet



# D.C. Masons Proudly Celebrate the 4th of July

Posted: 7/19/2017

BY WOR. BROTHER ADAM TAGER - Grand Marshal; Master: William R. Singleton-Hope-Lebanon No. 7; and Founding and current Senior Warden: The Eagle Lodge No. 1893



National Parade attendees take possession of our balloon with the Capitol dome in the background. Photo: Adam Tager

There are many events that D.C. Masons engage in throughout the year that get us in front of our community. We clean up parks, we go to the V.A., we meet with staff on the Hill, we process around the mall, and we sponsor events, just to name a few. However, there are no other annual events that give us as much pride and visibility as our participation in Independence Day parades around the city.

Every year, the Grand Lodge Independence Day Parade Committee

from different parts of the country, we marched down Constitution Ave. while thousands of parade attendees lined the streets and cheered when they saw our inflatable Old Glory pass by.

Up the road in Palisades, our Grand Master joined other Grand Lodge Officers and Brethren from Wm. R. Singleton-Hope-Lebanon No. 7, Justice-Columbia No. 3, The Eagle No. 1893, National-Stansbury-Dawson No. 12, Potomac No. 5, Harmony No. 17, and Compass Lodge No. 1811, among others, who were also hard at work. The Palisades parade effort is dual-pronged. While some of the Brethren march in the neighborhood parade, handing out hundreds of American flags to attendees, others hang back at the recreation center to cook the thousands of free hot dogs that hungry community members will consume over the course of the next few hours.



WB Tager is a SUPER patriot. This picture makes that point crystal clear. Photo: Jason Van Dyke

starts working as early as February to get registered for four different parades around the city. We march in the National Parade, the Palisades Parade, the Takoma Park Parade, and the Capitol Hill Parade. Participating in these parades allows us to celebrate our great country while representing the Craft, and sharing that experience with friends and family who march with us.



Palisades Parade attendees take a break from the grill to pose for a group picture. Photo: Adam Tager

This year, by 10:00 a.m. on July 4, over 20 Masons from Maynliad No. 1521, Albert Pike No. 33, Wm. R. Singleton-Hope-Lebanon No. 7, Magnolia No. 53, and St. Johns Lodge No. 11, among others, as well as their family and friends, had gathered on the National Mall to begin preparing for a 11:45 a.m. National Parade step-off. By 10:30 a.m., we took possession of our American Flag balloon, and eventually, stepped into the street. Sandwiched between two high school bands



Capitol Hill Parade attendees pose with Councilman Charles Allen Photo: Adam Tager

Across town, Brethren from Hiram-Takoma No. 10, Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin No. 45, L'Haitienne No. 925 and Osiris-Pentalpha No. 23 partnered with Eastern Star chapters and other Takoma Masonic Center residents to participate in one of the nation's oldest Independence Day parades.

Over in Capital Hill, brethren from Naval No. 4 and Washington-Daylight No. 14 represented the Craft in their Capitol Hill parade, citing an excellent turn out and great logistics from the D.C. Metro Police.

All-in-all, it was an amazing day to be a citizen of the United States and a proud Freemason. I want to thank the members of my committee for planning and executing what was, by all accounts, a fun and successful day.

See you next year! ▲

# And Now, A Poem in the Style of Robert Burns

Posted: 7/25/2017

BY ROBERT HEFFELFINGER, P.M. - Past Master: Hiram-Takoma No. 10; Secretary: Potomac No. 5

The following poem was written and constructed after a day of very long delays and cancellations at the Houston airport, where our dashing poet had just lectured on the Robert Burns Phrenology Scull at the Houston Scottish Rite. After what had turned into a 18-hour journey, the poet felt both he and Bro. Burns needed a dram for good measure.



Here the author is clearly pleased with his poetic product.  
Photo: Scott Jacobs

## *Early In the D.C. Morns'*

I once had a drink  
With the poet Robert Burn.  
Well, really it was his head,  
Early in the DC morns.

We had both been down to Texas,  
Talking of his life and times.  
And had a long travel back  
Over lighted story skies.

Once we broke the threshold  
We sought the bar table.  
Proceeded to open a scotch bottle,  
The one with the '14 year' label.

I had to myself a shot  
He drew a dram and a half.  
Toasted safe travels and the one  
conversation,  
And retired with a laugh

The best laid days  
May soon go awry,  
But its best to your living  
Afore your bones go dry.

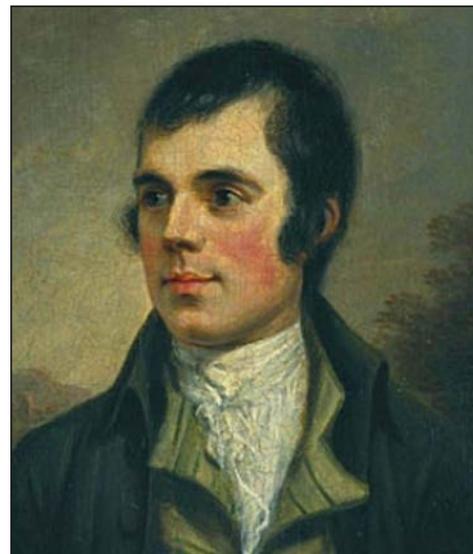
Previously to you ending  
Behind wood or glass case  
While you still have a song in  
your heart,  
...and Scotch has a taste. ▲



A bronze cast of Burns' skull.  
(They did weird stuff in those days.)  
Photo: Robert Heffelfinger



Skull, Scotch, and Dram - the ingredients from which this poetry sprang.  
Photo: Robert Heffelfinger



Bro. Robert Burns

# Charles Fierer: Tinker, Printer, Soldier, Mason

Posted: 8/3/2017

BY BRO. CHRIS RULI - Member: Potomac Lodge No. 5

*From the Archives* highlights interesting stories of past D.C. Freemasons and other hidden historical gems found in archives of the Grand Lodge of D.C. - ed.

On the evening of Christmas Day 1776, General George Washington and the Continental Army crossed the frigid Delaware River enroute to Trenton, New Jersey. Colonial spies had informed Washington that an army of Hessian mercenaries, who were supporting the British, were garrisoned in the city, but unprepared for a colonial attack.

The following morning, the fledgling army scored a small but decisive victory against the Hessians in what is now known as the Battle of Trenton. Among the 800 Hessian mercenaries captured as a result of that victory was Karl "Charles" Fierer, the first man to lead a Masonic lodge in what is now the District of Columbia.

And that's not even the most interesting part of the story...

## Fierer: The Soldier

To spur more support to the American cause, Washington and the Continental Congress enacted a plan to encourage Hessian mercenaries to defect. Fierer was part of the first group to accept the offer as he had grown an appreciation for America while serving several months as prisoner of war in Dumfries, Virginia. There he befriended Washington's Aide De Camp, Colonel Greyson, and received a rare personal audience with Washington to accept an offer to fight for the Continentals. Impressed by Fierer's zeal, Washington personally wrote to the President of the Continental Congress recommending his appointment. His request was accepted and Fierer joined Pulaski's Calvary Legion as a Captain and fought in the Battle of Savannah.

Fierer then accepted a new post in the Virginia Calvary, where he was promoted to the rank of major. This turned out to be a short stint, as he sustained a significant injury during battle that incapacitated him from further service. He was soon discharged, and by November 1781, he made his way back to Germany to seek medical treatment. Unfortunately, when he arrived, Fierer discovered that he had been labeled a traitor and defector. The Prince of Hesse-Cassel seized his property and deprived him of all rights to his titles and estates.

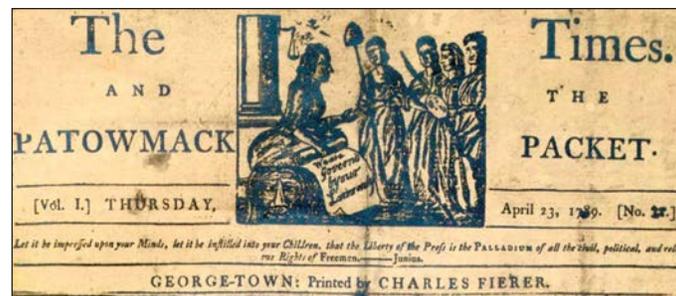
Still ill, and now destitute, Fierer made his way back to the United States and eventually to Georgetown. There he set up the first print shop and printed the District's first newspaper, *The Times and the Patowmack Packet*. He associated himself personally and professionally with prominent businessmen, landowners, and civic leaders, and in 1789, Fierer and two other businessmen submitted a petition to

the Grand Lodge of Maryland to form Lodge No. 9, which after a period of inactivity, eventually became Potomac Lodge No. 5.

Unfortunately, Fierer's health deteriorated and his print business proved unsuccessful. He returned to Dumfries, VA, where he had once been held as a prisoner of war, and set up another print shop before passing away in 1794. He was buried by Masons and members of the Society of the Cincinnati (a fraternity composed of officers who had served under Washington). Among Fierer's personal effects were a simple masonic apron and two land warrants for two thousand acres.



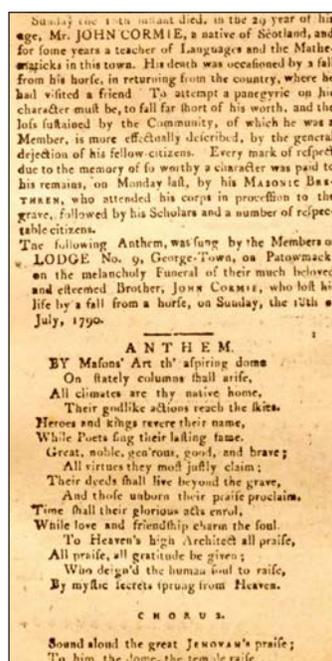
Bro. Ruli is a deep thinker and a dapper dresser, to boot! Photo: Chis Ruli



## Fierer: The Printer and Freemason

Much of what we know about Fierer can be found in his personal letters and his newspaper, *The Times and the Patowmack Packet*. Information about his masonic career is scant. It is believed that he was raised a Master Mason in Virginia during his time there as

a P.O.W., and his Masonic connection could be one of the reasons he was able to receive a personal audience with Washington.



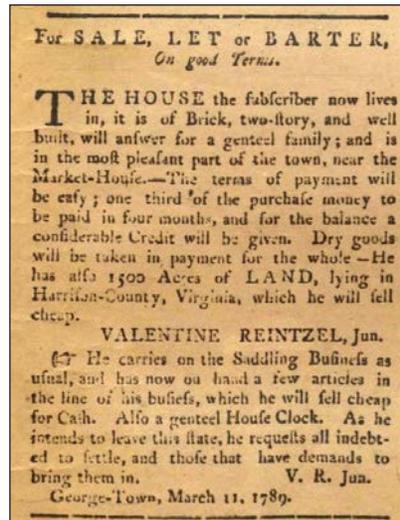
His writings and work in *The Times and the Patowmack Packet* (TPP) provide us a profound insight into his character and his dedication to ideals of Freemasonry and America. He is a staunch advocate for free speech, art, music, science, literature, rule of law, and education. In fact, in his second edition of the TPP, Fierer makes his declaration to these principles. A picture of the female personification of Law, sitting on a chair with a lion, holds a paper with the inscription "We are governed by our Laws only" (a comment against rule by a monarch), while she speaks to the personifications of Liberty, Literature, Art, and Music. Behind her are the scales of justice on a column. The text below the picture says: "Let it be impressed upon your minds, let it be instilled into your children, that the liberty of the Press is the Palladium for all the civil, political, and religious Rights of Freemen. — Junius."

Fierer goes on to fill portions of his paper each week with the writings of famous Greek and Roman artists, politicians, and satirists. He documents the

special and political events around the District, mentions interesting events abroad, and pays careful attention to the travels and actions of America's founding fathers.

Masonically, Fierer broke away from European customs by publishing Lodge No. 9's meeting notices, and even documented Masonic events like an early Feast of St. John and the funeral of a lodge member – John Cormie – complete with a rare, published masonic funeral song:

Fierer was also not shy about posting business notices for the other members of Lodge No. 9. The following is a notice from one second edition



of the TTP featuring the District's first Grand Master, Valentine Reintzel.

### Fierer: The Legacy

We may never know exactly what kind of impact Fierer had as Master of Lodge No. 9, since its minutes have been lost. But based on his work in *The Times and the Patowmack Packet*, it's clear that he espoused the same virtues and values that Masons today are taught all around the world, and he's a great example of what Freemasonry still looks like in the District: a diverse and international collection of good men, from various socio-economic backgrounds, coming together to make good men better. ▲

This was a very interesting article. It's always good reading about our lodge brothers who helped to form our country into what it is today.

 Georgs Whetzel

## 2017 Congressional Breakfast

BY MICHAEL D. NICHOLAS - Junior Grand Warden; Past Master, Lafayette-Dupont Lodge No. 19

The 2017 Congressional Breakfast was held from 8 to 9 a.m. on Wednesday, May 3, in the Lyndon B. Johnson Room (S-211) in the main Capitol building. The goal of this annual event is to promote “civility” in Congress and to provide an alternate communications outlet where Congressional Members and Staff can utilize their shared membership in our Craft to “meet on the level,” and reach across the aisle for honest discussion of critical issues.

The breakfast is deliberately limited to Freemasons who are Members of Congress, Congressional Staffers, or the Capitol Hill Police, due to the size of the room and the requisite security procedures. But our Grand Master also wished to primarily focus on getting Members and staffers in the room and encouraging their interaction - versus many Masons who do not work on Capitol Hill. It was a pleasant surprise to learn that so many of the Staffers were happy to attend, because most Freemasons work on Capitol Hill with no knowledge of other Freemasons, and they have no resource to discover each other.

The time and day of the week were also deliberately selected in order to maximize the small window of time available to Members. There were approximately 70 people in attendance, including our Grand Master,

several Grand Lodge Officers, and the Prince Hall Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Philip David. The Members of Congress who attended were: Bro. Senator **Charles Grassley** (IA), and Bro. Senator **Mike Enzi** (WY). Unfortunately, Bro. Congressman **Joe Wilson** (SC), Bro. Congressman **Charles “Dutch” Ruppertsberger III** (MD), Bro. Congressman **Robert Latta** (OH) and Bro. Congressman **Gus Michael Bilirakis** sent regrets, since there were many important committee meetings on that morning; however, Ruppertsberger and Bilirakis helped our efforts greatly by signing a “Dear Colleague” letter that was distributed to all Members of Congress who were identified as Freemasons.



(From L to R) MWB Philip David (Prince Hall Grand Master), Bro. Senator Chuck Grassley (IA), and MWB Roman Volsky.  
Photo: James Frederique

Recognition and gratitude is certainly due to the members of this Committee who worked diligently to organize and promote the event: Brothers **Isaiah Akin**, **Michael Yancey**, and **Jacob Wood**. Their understanding of the functions of the House and Senate were critical to the success of the event. They helped to pick the proper date, based upon the very busy calendars of both the House and Senate. They also helped with securing the necessary Congressional sponsorships, and approached and identified the Congressional Members who could help reserve a room for the breakfast. ▲

# An Affinity for Affinity Lodges: An Introduction to Academic Lodges

Posted: 8/10/2017

BY WB JASON M. RICHARDS - Member of The Colonial Lodge No. 1821, Master of Acacia Lodge No. 16 in Clifton, VA, and Co-host of The Masonic Roundtable Podcast

Freemasonry provides unparalleled opportunities for brethren to customize their fraternal experiences. Whether a brother prefers the solemnity of Traditional Observance, the fraternal fellowship of country Lodges, or the focus on scholarship and academics present in research Lodges, Freemasonry provides each man the opportunity to tailor his Masonic experience to fit his personal needs and interests. This custom-tailoring of the Masonic experience has led, at least in part, to a growing number of “affinity” Lodges, wherein Masons band together according to a given affinity, or specified interest – especially in Washington, DC.

Some notable examples of affinity Lodges include Radio Fraternity Lodge No. 8040 UGLE, whose members are all amateur radio operators, Shotokan Karate Lodge No. 9752 UGLE, whose members all practice the martial arts, and closer to home, Arminius Lodge No. 25, our German speaking Lodge (and the oldest of our affinity lodges, chartered in 1876). One might also easily argue that Traditional Observance and Research Lodges fall into this category of affinity Lodges, of which Washington DC has several of, as well.

One category of affinity Lodges that has been growing substantially over the past several decades is the Academic Lodge. These Lodges base themselves close to a given university or academic center. The brethren that compose these Lodges all retain a specific tie to the university to which the Lodge is linked, and the activities and charitable purposes of the Lodge often directly tie to the university community.

While the number of Academic Lodges has increased greatly in recent years, thanks in great part to the United Grand Lodge of England “Universities Scheme,” the idea of forging links between Masonic Lodges and universities is nothing new. The Trinity Tripos manuscript, a satirical oration given at the University of Dublin in 1688, provides the earliest extant evidence of the existence of an Academic Lodge. In the manuscript, it is proposed that, “for the honour and dignity of the University [of Dublin], there should be introduced a society of Freemasons...who shall bind themselves by an oath, never to discover their mighty no-secret; and to relieve whatsoever strolling distressed brethren they meet with, after the example of the fraternity of Freemasons in and around Trinity College...” While the suggestion that a Masonic Lodge be set up in and around the University of Dublin is clearly satirical, we have no reason to doubt the existence of the Trinity College-affiliated

Masonic Lodge that was satirized in the manuscript.

## A Short History of Academic Lodges

The oldest Academic Lodge still in existence today is Apollo Lodge No. 357, an affinity Lodge serving the Oxford University community, which held its first meeting on 10 February 1819. The Lodge, which has to date initiated over 3,200 brethren from the Oxford community (including Bro.

Oscar Wilde), set into motion several practices that contemporary Academic

Lodges emulate, to include the initiation of members under the age of 21 and charging current students a lower dues structure than those brethren who have graduated and moved on. Isaac Newton University Lodge followed Apollo Lodge’s example in 1861, replacing Scientific Lodge No. 88 (chartered in 1854, originally in London) as the primary Lodge to which students at the University of Cambridge gravitated.

Together, Apollo Lodge No. 357 and Isaac Newton University Lodge formed the inspiration for a formal United Grand Lodge of England initiative that has sparked the formation of Academic Lodges across the world. The United Grand Lodge of England “Universities Scheme,” which began in 2005, seeks to actively forge links between university and Masonic communities to make Freemasonry available to those younger men who might be interested in joining the fraternity, but might not know where to look or who to contact in order to do so.

Official membership in the Universities Scheme has grown to 73 Lodges as of 2017, three of which are located in South Africa and one of which is located in Jamaica. To make Freemasonry more accessible to university-aged men, the United Grand Lodge of England both reduced the minimum initiation age of men in Universities Scheme Lodges from 21 to 18 (by dispensation), and halved dues fees for students. In addition, any Lodges who wish



This image of WB Richards makes this article feel like the Wall Street Journal, so you know you’re in for authoritative and sober reporting.  
Photo: Jason Richards



Bro. Oscar Wilde in his Apollo Lodge dress - which he often wore in public, and is still worn by members today. Photo: Pietre Stones

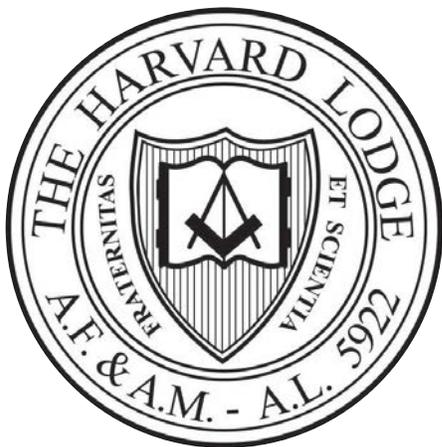
to participate in the Universities Scheme must adhere to the following rules and regulations above and beyond those required of regular Lodges under the jurisdiction of the UGLE:

- Universities Scheme Lodges must have representation at the annual Universities Scheme conference, where academic papers on Freemasonry are presented;
- Lodge costs--especially dining costs--must be suitable for young members;
- Lodge meeting times must be convenient for young members and students;
- Lodges must have a dedicated mentoring program in place, or under consideration, prior to admittance into the Universities Scheme; and
- Lodges must have a dedicated Lodge website that conveys updated and appropriate information.

Other Grand Lodge jurisdictions across the world, to include the Honourable Fraternity of Ancient Freemasons, a women-only (femalecraft) Masonic organization, have set out to replicate the success of the UGLE Universities Scheme.

### Academic Lodges in the United States

The Academic Lodge system first arrived in the United States in 1921 with the chartering of Richard C. Maclaurin Lodge in Massachusetts, which grew out of the “Masons at M.I.T.” Masonic club which had been operating at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The Harvard Lodge, which grew out of a number of Masonic clubs that had been operating at Harvard University since the early 1900’s, soon followed with its chartering in 1922; and later, Boston University Lodge rounded out the three Academic Lodges currently falling under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. In early 2015, the Grand Master of Massachusetts gave a dispensation to organize an Academic Lodge at Northeastern University; however, the status of the founding of that Lodge is currently unknown.



The Seal of Harvard Lodge in MA.  
Photo: The Harvard Lodge

Here in the Washington, DC metro area, we play host to four Academic Lodges. They are as follows:

- The Colonial Lodge No. 1821, with an affinity to The George Washington University in Washington, DC;
- The Patriot Lodge No. 1957, with an affinity to George Mason University in Fairfax, VA;
- The Eagle Lodge No. 1893, with an affinity to American University in Washington, DC; and
- Terrapin Lodge No. 241, with an affinity to the University of Maryland meeting in Beltsville, MD.

These local Academic Lodges, along with others across the east coast, will come together in October for the 2nd Annual Mid-Atlantic Convocation of Academic Lodges, a conference showcasing scholarly discourse and papers related to Freemasonry, modeled after the annual Universities Scheme Conference in England. ▲



Members of The Colonial Lodge No. 1821 (The George Washington University) pose for a picture in their lodge room in the House of the Temple. Photo: Jason Van Dyke



The Eagle Lodge No. 1893 has their charter signed.  
Photo: Grand Lodge of DC

# Masonic Dharma Transmission

Posted: 8/18/2017

BY W. BRO. EDWARD "TED" BERRY, PM - Past Master of Benjamin B. French Lodge No. 15 & Fiat Lux Lodge No. 1717

Freemasonry states that its tenets are brotherly love, relief, and Truth. [Capital "T" used on purpose.]

Brotherly love is our fraternal aspect – the meeting on-the-level, so to speak, by which Masonry conciliates true friendship, etc. Relief and our charitable works are known world-wide and don't need extrapolation.

We are told that Truth is the foundation of every virtue. However, we are left without specific guidance as to what constitutes Truth. So, we how do we know when we've found it?

There is a traditional saying that the map is not the territory. There are many ways to draw maps. For example, you can use different symbols to represent features and characteristics of the territory you are mapping. And when you attempt to draw the map, your equipment may be imprecise - it may even be defective. Your map, therefore, may be only partly correct or it may even be completely wrong. But regardless of the accuracy of your map, in fact no matter what, the territory remains unaffected.

Another illustration of this concept is the story of the blind men and the elephant, where several blind men each experience different parts of an elephant only through touch, and their attempts to tell each what they are feeling. One thinks it's a snake, the other a tree, the other a rope, etc.

The obvious lesson here may be that no blind man had a complete picture of the elephant, and could only draw his conclusions based upon his own experiences. Yet, I would suggest the more powerful lesson, relative to understanding Truth, is that regardless of the experiences and conclusions of these individuals, the fundamental nature of the elephant - of its elephant-ness - remains unaffected. Just because you believe it's a snake, doesn't change the Truth that it is an elephant.

In Buddhism, one of its jewels, or treasures, is called *dharma*, which is most easily understood as the fundamental core of the most sublime teachings that comprise Buddhism's Truth. Within Buddhist schools, there is an act called dharma transmission, by which a Master conveys to a student the dharma. This is a very sacred act, and is often combined with the passing of official lineage to that student - perhaps even turning over the school from an old Master to a new one.

Freemasonry has two parallels within the Buddhist example.

The first, and most obvious, is the importance of lineage. All new Lodges and Grand Lodges must be born of existing Lodges or Grand Lodges. These must all exhibit some form of "regularity." Regularity, in this respect, focuses on the general structure and activities of the Masonic Lodge and its adherence to a certain set of standards which are passed down through its several iterations.

The second similarity, is that of transmitting teachings from one practitioner to another (e.g. from Worshipful Master to Entered Apprentice). This transmission is a fundamental purpose of our degree system – it is designed to make a deep and lasting impression upon our candidates and impart wise and serious truths.



WB Ted Berry. (That's the cleanest his office has been in weeks.) Photo: Ted Berry



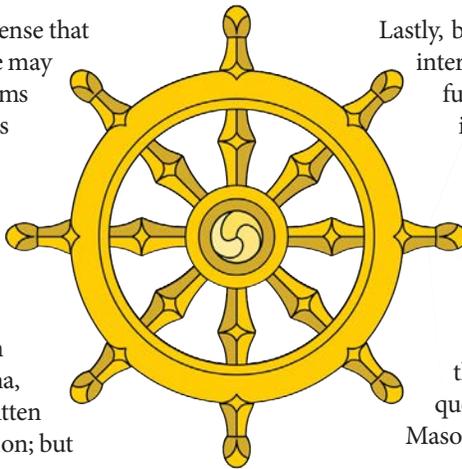
Japanese print of The Blind Men and the Elephant, circa 1700. Photo: Wikipedia

A significant difference, however, is that there is no formal method for the receiver of this *dharma* of proving his proficiency, other than the surface-level memorization of words, signs, grips and obligations. These proficiencies only demonstrate one's ability to repeat what is presented – they don't endeavor to determine the Brother's actual understanding and comprehension of the material.

So, with respect to determining Truth and transmitting Truth, we are missing two significant elements.

The first missing element is determining what constitutes Truth, in a Masonic context. Our symbols and rituals are not completely defined for us. They are presented incompletely, requiring us to reflect on and decipher their meanings for ourselves. This is made even more difficult with the significant variation in ritual across Masonic Grand Jurisdictions. For example, some Grand Lodges have Ancient Landmarks, others don't. Given this level of variation, it seems that there is no agreed-upon Truth. [Note: It is important to note that there is similar variation between Buddhist lineages, as well.]

Secondly, we have no Masonic Masters in the sense that there are no accepted “gurus” at whose feet one may study. Lodges might have mentorship programs or Lodge Education Officers. Grand Lodges might provide a set of curricula for Masonic education, or have district Orators. However, that is not really the same as the concept of dharma transmission. For instance, we can read Pike’s work but we can’t study with him, and we can’t study with Masters who learned from him. He never passed his teachings on in any formal way. His book, *Morals and Dogma*, states that no one need accept what he has written – they only need to give it objective consideration; but this instruction leaves a large set of questions in its wake.



In Buddhism, Dharma is often represented as the wheel. Photo: Wikipedia

Lastly, by leaving our symbolism so open to individual interpretation, do we leave our degrees devoid of fundamental meaning? This existential question is perhaps the easiest, and the hardest question to answer.

One possible way to tackle this question is not to regard Freemasonry as a *school of instruction*. Rather, we might be better served to consider it as a *school of inquiry*. Accordingly, the mentor’s job is to help the candidate down the path of asking himself and others important questions on what it means to be a man and a Mason. This never-ending process of inquiry, study, and contemplation in an unfettered way is perhaps why Freemasonry is celebrating its 300th year this year. ▲

For example, without a specific set of ideas that constitute Truth, what would a Masonic Master pass on to his student? Was Albert Pike presenting the fundamental nature of our Craft, or was he merely stating his opinion?

Moreover, in a Lodge context, how would such a Masonic Master, if we had such explicit gurus, help the Brother through the degrees and afterwards? Would he help the student use the Masonic Working Tools, symbols, and principles for the purpose of self-investigation to help him extract the truths or Truth found within? How would we know if the student “gets it” or even what the “it” is that he “gets”? Who would be authorized to make such determinations?

**Nicely done, Brother Ted!  
I love the distinction about  
being a school of inquiry.**

 **Chuck Dunning**

## A D.C. Freemason in Tokyo

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

attack Pearl Harbor was reached. There’s no point in expecting the familiar anywhere in Japan, and that applies to Masonry as well.

What makes Masonry stand out in the white noise of everything that’s unfamiliar is that the lodge gives everyone a common start with the same ritual, the same furniture, and the same experiences. Unlike the profane world, where the confusion and differences start with what were once the basic, the most boring parts of your

life, in Masonry the basic parts are what’s familiar and the differences are built on top of that.

Of course, my time spent in lodge is infinitesimal compared to my time spent in the rest of Tokyo where I’m confronted with a perpetually different place all over again. But it’s grounding to know there’s a place like a Masonic lodge in the midst of all of this. ▲



Banner view of the Tokyo Masonic Center, located on the site where the attack on Pearl Harbor was planned. Photo: Paul Nadeau

# Exit... Stage West: 10 Tips to Improve Your Ritual from a Pro Actor

Posted: 8/24/2017

BY SCOTT BROWN, P.M. - Past Master of Federal Lodge No. 1 and Deputy Director of Work for the Valley of Washington, Orient of the District of Columbia

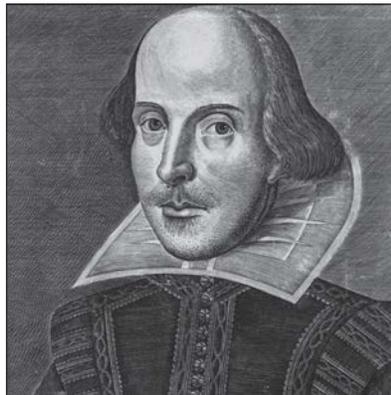
Ritual is hard. Whether you're a newly-made Mason or have been a member for years, Masonic ritual will always be a challenge. Like a scary beast hiding in a dark cave, only a handful are brave enough to enter and face the trials that await them. But, if Masonic ritual was easy, everybody would be doing it. Those that have mastered the art of ritual are held in high regard, and Lodges that put on beautiful degree work hold reputations like rock stars (wielding the gavel instead of a guitar).

A large part of why I joined Freemasonry was to be involved in ritual. I went to school for Theatre and received my Bachelors in Acting and Directing, and I've been a working professional actor in DC for over ten years now. Back in 2008, I jumped in head-first in Blue Lodge ritual and joined the D.C. Scottish Rite where I now serve as the Deputy Director of Work. But I'm here to tell you that even though I've studied acting for years, traveled the world performing for thousands, been a professional mascot in front of 71,000 screaming fans, and participated in countless degree conferrals... the cave still scares me.

That said, over the years of participating, I have learned some things along the way. So, I wanted to share my top ten tips and tricks to make Masonic ritual a little less scary in hopes that come the day of the degree, you are prepared to give the best performance you can give. Not all of these tips will make you the Meryl Streep of the Middle Chamber lecture, the De Niro of De Third Degree, or the Denzel of the Senior Deacon role, but hopefully you'll be able to nail your part and leave a lasting impression on all those watching and listening.

## 1. Understand what you are saying.

"What the heck does this mean?! Nobody talks like this anymore!" Often, Masonic ritual can be dry and not always clear about the message that it is trying to convey. Like Shakespeare, a person can read a line of text and not ever understand what the heck it means. But have you ever seen a performance of Shakespeare that was done so well that all the words made sense because of how the line was delivered by the actor? The same goes for the words in your cipher. If you don't understand what the words mean, you'll never be able to deliver the line effectively. Reach out to your Grand Lecturer or another member of your Lodge to truly under-



THE Bard.  
Photo: Wikipedia

stand the words that you are saying. Once you understand the meaning, you might change the way the line is delivered, the inflection and emphasis on certain words, etc., and it will make better sense to the person listening.

## 2. Practice early and practice often.

You would think that giving a tip to practice is an obvious one, but it still needs to be given. In our fast-paced lives it's hard to find time to pay our bills, let alone practice for a degree, but you need to make time. Even if it's for 30 minutes a day, every little bit helps. Also, don't wait until a couple days or the night before to start practicing your lines. Everyone can spot someone in a degree that waited to cram their lines the night before, so be sure to practice well before the degree date.

## 3. It's okay to mess up, but keep going.

I can't tell you how many times I've messed up during a degree conferral. It happens and it happens often. Part of the thrill of theatre is that every performance is different and you always need to be on your toes. Mistakes happen but it's how you recover that sets you apart from everyone else. Mind go blank? Pause, take a deep breath and focus to get your line back. Didn't say the line perfectly? Continue with confidence and nobody will notice (unless your name is Chip Mahaney). No matter what happens, just keep going.

## 4. Teamwork makes the dream work.

Another reason I love theatre is that it really takes a team to pull off a great performance. Everyone has a part to play. You rely on the person next to you just as they rely on you to know your part. An audience will remember the one person that fell on their face and failed so don't be that guy. A great performance is remembered when everyone nails their role.



Scott Brown is a working professional actor and dancer here in Washington. (And yes, it is unfair that he's so smart and good looking.)  
Photo: Scott Brown



Good teamwork, but the performance was still wooden. (RIM SHOT!)  
Photo: pxhere.com

## 5. You're allowed to be nervous.

Like I mentioned before, I've been performing for a long time and I still get nervous. Anytime you're in an auditorium of hundreds or even a small lodge room of 30, when the spotlight is on you it can be a scary thing. Remember that nobody in the room wants you to fail. Being nervous means you care about what you're doing and you want to do a good job. But don't let the nerves consume you. Deep breaths are a great way to shake off the nerves. I tried using the trick of picturing the audience naked one time but I do NOT recommend it (yikes). The best way to get better at ritual is to participate again and again. The more you perform, the less nervous you will be.

## 6. Aim for perfection.

While I mentioned before that if you mess up to keep going, this doesn't mean you should improvise an entire monologue on the importance of masonic tools and their symbolism. The words in your cipher are written the way



The Grand Lecturer WILL throw darts at you if you say "water ford." Photo: pxhere.com

they are written for a reason and we should honor that by aiming to deliver them exactly as they are written on the page. Will you ever deliver them perfectly? Doubt it. But in a world with fewer and fewer traditions that get passed on as generations come and go, there's something special about the words of Freemasonry surviving and thriving for hundreds of years so do the best you can to get it right.

## 7. Commit.

If you say that you're going to participate in a degree as a specific role (no matter how large or small), show up. Show up to rehearsals and show up early for the degree. Some might say, "I'll have my part down for the degree date, see you then" but it does a disservice to the other performers in the degree. People interact with other people during the degree and not having you there hurts the performance of the other actors. If for some reason your work schedule or life is going to get in the way of committing yourself to be there, don't sign up for the degree. Again, it takes a team effort to pull off a fantastic degree so everyone needs to commit.

## 8. Eat glazed donuts.

A recent medical study shows that eating glazed donuts helps with memory and retention so eat as many glazed donuts as you can. Okay, this one isn't true. I just wanted to see if you were still paying attention.



Mmmmmmm donuts. Photo: pixabay.com

## 9. Drama, drama, drama.

Sometimes, ritual opens the door to throw in some dramatic flair to spice up the action on stage. Whenever I direct a degree I get a lot of questions of "how big can I make this" or "should I show more emotion during this part". I'm a big fan of drama and recommend that if there are parts of the ritual that calls for something dramatic, step it up and go for it. When certain lines are delivered from an emotional place it will resonate with the audience more. However, don't be too dramatic. If you're over-selling a line with extreme emotion it can turn into comedy very quickly and distract from the beauty of the ritual. Soon you'll hear laughter from the sidelines and the ritual train will hop the tracks in an instant. During rehearsals, deliver your lines as you would in the final performance so that the director can tell you to dial it back if needed. Don't suddenly crank your emotions up to an 11 on performance day. Degrees are too important to throw in surprises.

## 10. You may not get an Oscar, but you are still a star.

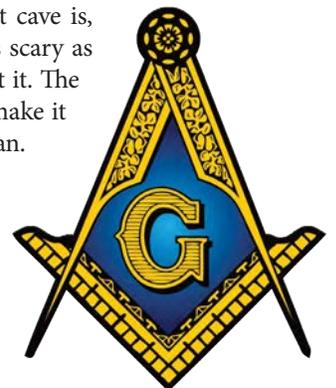
If you participate in degree work, you are a superstar. Witnessing other people with no performance experience step up to take on something that absolutely scares them to death and knock it out of the park is incredible. It goes to show you that with practice and preparation, anyone can succeed at ritual. To put yourself out there takes guts and though you may not receive an award for your performance, the Masonic community is giving you a standing ovation. Bravo!



#Squadgoals. Photo: Jason Van Dyke

Hopefully utilizing some of these tips will help you in your Masonic journey as you participate in the degrees. If you're reading this and have never signed up to play a part, start small and work your way up. You'll be amazed at what you can accomplish if you simply try to put yourself out there. No matter how dark that cave is, know that the beast inside is not as scary as you think if you're prepared to meet it. The good news is that you will **always** make it out of that cave alive and a better man.

So sharpen your sword, eat a glazed donut, grab your torch and charge into that cave screaming. I'll meet you inside. ▲



# Step Back, Claudy, We're Going...

Posted: 8/31/2017

BY BRO. CHRIS RULI - Member: Potomac Lodge No. 5

*From the Archives* highlights interesting stories of past D.C. Freemasons and other hidden historical gems found in archives of the Grand Lodge of D.C. - *ed.*

In 1903, Orville and Wilbur Wright successfully tested their flying machine at the Kitty Hawk airfield, launching man into the age of aviation. Seeing an opportunity to apply this technology in the battlefield, the United States government invited the brothers to test their new military flyer at a public event in Fort Myer, Virginia. The event became a spectacle and a young Carl Claudy, a future Grand Master of D.C. working as a reporter for the New York Herald, was sent to cover the story.

Most Masons today know Claudy through his written work. Specifically, the short series of educational booklets, informally known as "Claudy Books," that are given to candidates for further

instruction, but his publications outside of masonry have often been over shadowed, though they are just as notable. (He even wrote for D.C. comics!)

After living in New York and working for the Herald, Claudy moved to D.C. and became a very active Freemason. He was raised at Harmony Lodge No. 17 and served as Grand Master of the Jurisdiction in 1943.

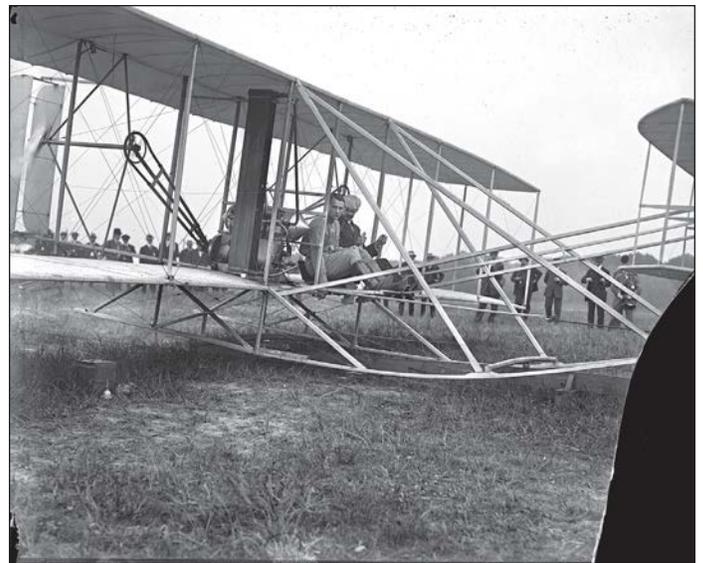


Chris Ruli: once ranked by Cirque du Soleil as the worst audience participant ever.

Claudy arrived at the airfield at Fort Myer on September 9th, and immediately got to work photographing the event. (His glass plate collection can now be found online via the Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum's Digital Archives.) The test flight that day was well attended, to say the least. In fact, President of the United States and Freemason, William Taft, as well as several members of congress made an appearance to see the new "areoplane" fly.



Bringing the Wright Military Flyer onto the field.  
Photo: Smithsonian Air & Space Museum.



Selfridge and Wright moments before disaster.  
Photo: Smithsonian Air & Space Museum.



Taft arriving at the field. (Interesting note, he weighed more than the plane!) Photo: Smithsonian Air & Space Museum.

Unlike the first Wright flyer, their military prototype was smaller, but allowed for two pilots. Lt. Thomas Selfridge joined Orville Wright on the flight in Fort Meyer as an official observer. This was, unfortunately, Selfridge's first and last flight as minutes after takeoff, a propeller shattered and sent the flyer hurtling out of control. It crashed several seconds later. Selfridge died hours later

(continued on page 37)

# Book Review: The Meaning of Masonry, Part 1

Posted: 9/14/2017

BY R.W. BRO. ALAN GORDON - Senior Grand Deacon, Past Master - Temple-Noyes-Cathedral Lodge No. 32

Some months ago, my daughter, Adrienne, found a book in a yard sale near her home in El Cerrito, CA which she bought and sent to me. The book, *The Meaning of Masonry*, is by W.L. Wilmhurst, PM 275; Past Provincial Grand Resgistrar (West Yorks), UGLE.

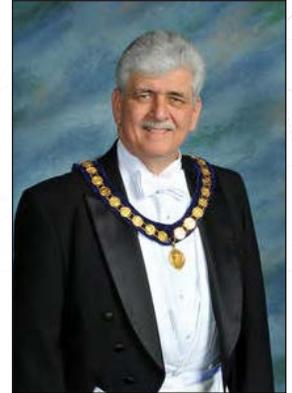
I have to confess that, as I am not as well-versed in the esoteric aspects of Masonry as I maybe should be, it was difficult to get started reading this book. However, on a recent vacation, I found more time to delve into it. So far, I have only completed reading the first two chapters (or, as he calls them, lectures) of the book. So this article will not expound on the book as a whole, but rather on the portions of which I have completed in my study, so far.

Throughout the reading, WB Wilmhurst draws parallels between Masonic teaching and that of religious teaching, particularly Christianity, referring multiple times to the Holy Trinity in his description of the use of various aspects of Masonry, i.e. three lesser lights, three pillar officers, and the three great Master-builders of the Temple. Having said that, the author states in part that Masonry is "...not in itself a religion; but rather a dramatized and intensified form of religious process inculcated by every religious system in the world."

Today, we espouse the teachings of all religions and have the books of faith for most major religions on the altars of our lodges. The parallels WB Wilmhurst draws solely to Christianity are not without merit, and should be considered for the non-Christian faiths, as well. Therefore, it is left to the reader to open his mind to the possibilities, and be able to address the concepts promoted as they apply to the specific reader's faith and beliefs.

WB Wilmhurst promotes several ideas that, while not totally foreign to our understanding of Masonry, will make the reader think about the rituals and Degrees in a different light. In the forward to the book, WB Wilmhurst promotes the concept that "Freemasonry is not the repetition of the ritual or the safeguarding of secrets, but the regeneration of the Brethren." He states in part that Masonry is essentially a "philosophical and religious system expressed in dramatic ceremonial. It is a system intended to supply answers to the three great questions that press so inexorably upon the attention of every thoughtful man and that are the subject around which all religions and philosophies move. What am I? Whence come I? Whither go I?"

He goes on to explain that the act of initiation, passing, and raising should be seen as parallel to one's stages of life. Life, in turn, is seen as a pursuit of the answer to those questions. The reason a candidate joins Masonry should be a desire for knowledge, a desire for that Light that may not be found elsewhere. Anything less is seen as a less than worthy reason for applying for membership. It is also seen as the reason we do not solicit men to join our Craft. The reasons should come from within the candidate in as an expressed desire to seek improve-

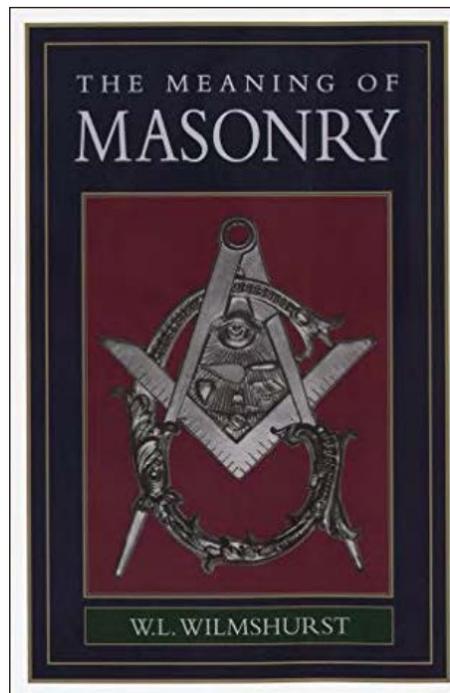


RW Bro. Alan Gordon, seen here just after being told to smile at the birdy.

ment in himself internally. And in that regard, the candidate first prepares himself to become a Mason in his heart.

Masonry is also seen as a pursuit to reach the perfection which was lost at the time of the exile from the Garden of Eden. Man in his natural state is inherently imperfect. As he becomes conscious of that state of imperfection, he develops a desire to seek a remedy. Over time, a great many schools of that secret knowledge, which have purported to guide the candidate to that remedy, have risen and fallen. They have in their time taught both the internal and the external doctrines that we as Masons seek. The doctrines they taught remain with us even as these schools no longer exist. Today, speculative Masonry is in part based on these teachings.

In Masonic lore, we address the building of a Temple in Jerusalem. It is the Temple within us that is being constructed with the living stones being in effect the souls of men. The conspirators of the Master Mason's Degree are analogous to the disobedience of Adam and Eve in eating the apple; seeking knowledge for which they were not prepared or had not earned. The tragedy is then seen as "a cosmic breakdown and universal loss; an allegory of the breakdown of a divine scheme" and "a moral disaster to universal humanity". What we have lost is not designs upon a trestle board nor even a secret word, but a path to that Supreme Wisdom that will enable us to complete that temple of human nature leading us closer to the perfection of man.



Book Cover

(continued on page 37)

# A Capitol Initiation

Posted: 9/21/2017

BY BRO. ED KELL & BRO. ISAIAH AKIN - Secretary and Member: Naval Lodge No. 4, respectively



The Lodge room in the U.S. Capitol. Photo: Naval Lodge No. 4

Masonic history was made on July 6, 2017, when four candidates were initiated in what is believed to be the first Entered Apprentice degree performed in the U.S. Capitol building.

Naval Lodge No. 4 was given special access to a room just steps from the Capitol Rotunda – the symbolic heart of American democracy – to perform the ceremony.



Brethren on the Capitol steps.  
Photo: Naval Lodge No. 4

Naval Lodge has a tradition of holding an annual meeting in the Capitol, both to honor the Masons who helped to found this country, and to help bring the Masonic values to the men and women who work in the building.

Of course, there has been a strong Masonic influence on the Capitol from its creation. It is well known that George Washington (with the help of early Masters of Federal, Potomac, and

Alexandria-Washington Lodges) helped lay the cornerstone for the building in 1793, in a large Masonic ceremony. A silver plate was placed on the cornerstone, engraved to read that the dedication occurred “in the thirteenth year of American independence... and in the year of Masonry, 5793.”

The Capitol building has since been expanded many times, and each time there has been a Masonic cornerstone ceremony to mark each such occasion – a symbolic parallel to the growth and evolution of our great country. These ceremonies have been powerful symbols of the enduring influence Masonry has had in the United States.

In fact, the “Temple of Liberty,” as the Capitol has been called, attempts to teach our American values through its very architecture. The two houses of Congress meet at opposite ends of the building, but all on the same level – symbolizing the importance of individuality and equality. Throughout the building there are

decorative “fasces” – the ancient Roman symbol of the power of the magistrate, consisting of bundles of rods bound together, symbolizing the strength of a people united in purpose and the need to work together toward common good. And in the center of the building is the Rotunda, where the Senate and the House come together, symbolizing that we all must come together to find points of agreement in order to improve our community. Lastly, on top stands the dome – reaching for the heavens, symbolizing the need to strive for a better world.

In the early years of the republic, there were occasional meetings of Masons in the Capitol, including at least one unsuccessful effort to form a national Grand Lodge. In more recent years, there have been a number of lodges that have held meetings in the various congressional office buildings near the Capitol, and ceremonies and processions in the Capitol itself.

Naval Lodge even uses a part of the Capitol in its Lodge room. Their marble altar was made from scraps leftover from the expansion of the Capitol in 1858 by members of Lebanon Lodge, who then gifted it to Naval in 1870. Thus, this piece of the Capitol serves as the literal foundation for the Great Lights of Masonry in the lodge room, just as, in many ways, the Great Lights helped form the foundation for the Capitol building.

And now four new Brethren have been given a new foundation on which to improve themselves after being initiated in and amongst some of the most important and uniquely American symbolism in this country. ▲



The Lodge and its new EAs pose in front of George Washington resigning to Congress. Photo: Naval Lodge No. 4

## Step Back, Claudy, We're Going...

(CONTINUED)

at the hospital. Orville suffered a broken leg and four broken ribs. According to Claudy, Selfridge's last words to him were "Step back, Claudy, we're going..."

And with these photos, a future Grand Master of D.C. captured a glimpse of human history. Claudy's photos dazzled generations of Americans interested in flight, science, and the new marvels of the 20th century. While in D.C., he jumped at the chance to cover other historic events including a little-known kite experiment

conducted by Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone and founder of a little company called American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T).

So while Most Worshipful Brother Claudy may be best remembered for his engaging writing for new candidates and members, the larger world remembers the great historic events he covered in his life, and that will live on in his photographs. ▲



Alexander Graham Bell in the field during kite experiment. (Photo captures him at the exact moment that he remembered that he forgot to put himself on the no-call list.) Photo: Smithsonian Air & Space Museum.

## Book Review: The Meaning of Masonry, Part 1

(CONTINUED)

Despite these losses, there remains a Light in the East. We therefore travel from West to East in search of that Light which provides a mere glimmer of the true secrets we hope to find through our studies in Masonry. Those secrets would otherwise allow us to seek a state of perfection or regeneration as the author refers to in the forward to his book.

The above is but a brief interpretation of the first two lectures contained in WB Wilmhurst's book. Those two lectures were entitled

"The Deeper Symbolism of Masonry" and "Masonry as a Philosophy". I personally found the content to be at times enlightening and at other times intriguing. Sharing this work may promote wider discussion and exploration into our Craft. While I don't know that everyone will agree with WB Wilmhurst, the discussion and exploration that is encouraged should enable us all to attain some higher level of understanding which, in closing, is the true focus of Masonry. ▲

# Secretary's Conference Agenda LEAKED!

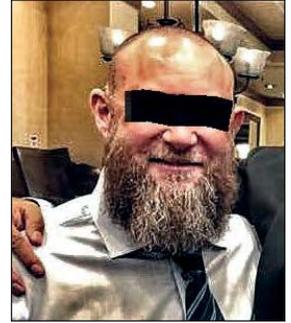
Posted: 9/28/2017

BY W BRO. ANONYMOUS - Secretary and Past Master: REDACTED Lodge No. REDACTED, respectively

**Editor's note:** The following document was leaked to this office anonymously, though we STRONGLY suspect the author is W Bro. Adam Goldman of Harmony Lodge No. 17, primarily because the original text was heavily sepia-toned in the same manner of all his social media pictures. We removed the sepia and names to protect the somewhat innocent, but have otherwise posted the document in full.

The lodge Secretary—that over-worked and often maligned Brother that's been the punchline of so many Past Bastard columns. Well, no longer. This year, your Grand Lodge provided specialized instruction to that Masonic social pariah, for the first time, during the Leadership Conference at the William F. Bolger Center in Potomac, MD. While Deacons and Wardens convened in the main conference room to soak in divine light from such Masonic notables as R/WBs REDACTED, REDACTED and REDACTED—the lodge Secretaries were hurried off to the 5th floor where the Office of the Grand Secretary had prepared their “lodge of instruction.”

The Secretary's break-out session kicked off with the Grand Secretary, REDACTED, providing an overview of the myriad of challenges facing each lodge—both operational and organizational—and the Secretaries weren't shy with their questions for the Grand Secretary (especially AP33's WB REDACTED who out-questioned every other lodge Secretary by a 30 to 1 ratio; seriously!). Next, as one of the District's most



seasoned professionals, RWB REDACTED imparted his lessons-learned regarding the collection of dues in the District's most polysyllabic lodge, REDACTED Lodge No. REDACTED.

Somewhere around this point in our instruction, your lodge Secretaries embarked upon a maddening, hours-long discourse debating the finer points of PayPal's utility (imagine Ukrainian parliament for an apt visual). But just prior to descending into absolute anarchy, the lodge of instruction was called to refreshment on account of hunger and partially-sprained egos.

After labor resumed, the Office of the Grand Secretary unleashed its most casualty-producing weapon—WB REDACTED. Like a hybrid of Rain Man and a Cyber-Man, REDACTED robotically and authoritatively outlined each [and every] new feature that had been recently added to the GrandView database. GrandView, for those not privy to the inner-workings of Grand Lodge, is an NSA-grade software package which allows your Secretaries to monitor the entire Craft in real time. Have you seen Eagle Eye? Yeah, it's kinda like that for Masons.

As one of the lodge Secretaries/hostages in attendance that day, I'm nearly certain we received, as promised, good and wholesome instruction from our fearless Grand Lodge overlords—and, possibly, a wee bit of Stockholm Syndrome in the process. So, when we ask you to please update your information in the GrandView database, just know that it's not us asking—its WB REDACTED and the Office of the Grand Secretary!

Respectfully submitted,

REDACTED, PM  
Secretary  
REDACTED Lodge No. REDACTED ▲

Internal DC F&AM GL Document – Not for Distribution

GL Leadership Conference: Secretary's Break-Out Session

September 9, 2017

Word Count: 415-ish

The lodge Secretary—that over-worked and often maligned Brother that's been the punchline of so many Past Bastard columns. Well, no longer. This year, your Grand Lodge provided specialized instruction to that Masonic social pariah, for the first time, during the Leadership Conference at the William F. Bolger Center in Potomac, MD. While Deacons and Wardens convened in the main conference room to soak in divine light from such Masonic notables as R/WBs REDACTED, REDACTED and REDACTED—the lodge Secretaries were hurried off to the 5th floor where the Office of the Grand Secretary had prepared their “lodge of instruction.”

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Page 1 of 2

# From the Archives: Celebrating 225 Years of the White House Cornerstone Ceremony

Posted: 10/13/2017

BY BRO. CHRIS RULI - Member: Potomac Lodge No. 5

*From the Archives* highlights interesting stories of past D.C. Freemasons and other hidden historical gems found in archives of the Grand Lodge of D.C. - ed.

By 1792, the fledgling District of Columbia was still more forest than capitol. Tracts of land now housing federal buildings, museums, and rowhouses were filled with trees, creeks, and rolling hills. Though, Georgetown had developed into a busy commercial port and the first group of residents were moving into the District to begin the process of building the capitol.

On October 13th of that year, Freemasons from around the area met at Suter's Tavern, the meeting place of Lodge No. 9 of Maryland (now Potomac Lodge No.5), for the purpose of laying the White House cornerstone. They formed in a traditional Masonic procession and marched to the site of the executive mansion on Pennsylvania Avenue. Once there, the Master of Potomac, Peter Casanave, laid the cornerstone and, after rousing speech, the procession returned to Suter's where an elegant dinner was held.

There are two things that are particularly interesting about this event. First, it was a relatively quiet affair. Compared to the U.S. Capitol cornerstone ceremony a year later, which had bands playing, military parades, large crowds, and a President laying the cornerstone, the White House ceremony felt a bit more reserved. So much so, that we have no record of the event recorded in local newspapers. Second, up until the Truman administration, we didn't even know when or how it happened!!

Here's the only known record of the ceremony. It was discovered during the Truman White House renovations and serves as our only link to this important Masonic event. The record was published in the Charleston Gazette on November 15, 1792. It was printed from a letter to an unknown Charleston man from his friend in Philadelphia. The letter provides a very detailed summary of the 16 toasts given during the dinner. Several toasts were made to prominent leaders and intellectuals of the time including the Marquis de La Fayette and Thomas Paine, who

received the honor of toast no. 10, "The Rights of Man and the author of Common Sense."

Several clues help us confirm that this is, in fact, an authentic account of the White House ceremony. By 1792, the only Freemason lodge east of the Potomac River met in Georgetown and operated out of John Suter's Tavern, the Fountain Inn. Records also confirm that Peter Casanave was a Freemason and prominent civic leader. (He served as Georgetown's fourth Mayor) While there is no record of George Washington attending the ceremony, James Hoban and Collin Williamson most likely did. Both men were active Freemasons, regular visitors to the lodge, and were

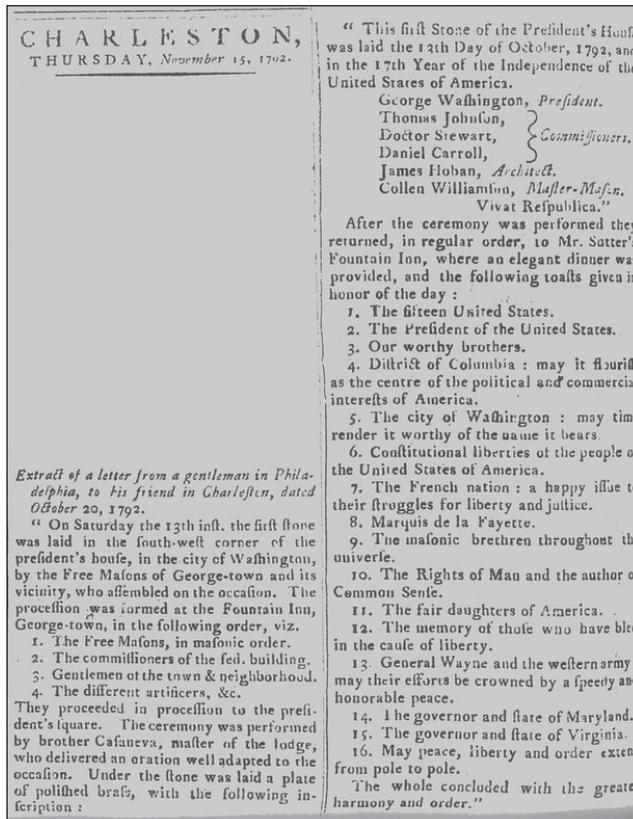


Bro. Ruli has many leather-bound books, and he smells of rich mahogany.  
Photo: Chris Ruli

granted a dispensation one year later to charter a new lodge in the City of Washington, which eventually would become Federal Lodge No.1 of D.C. (Georgetown was considered a separate entity at the time.)

The reasons surrounding the quiet nature of the event are also a bit of a mystery. But, when considering the year, it is most likely due to the fact that the White House had yet to achieve the prominence and historical relevance it has today. More attention was given to the U.S. Capitol, as it represented the aspirational height of the American experiment.

Nevertheless, as we celebrate the building's 225th anniversary today, Freemasons from across the Jurisdiction and world should take a moment to reflect on the history and providence of the White House, a home that had been truly planned, laid, and built by masonic hands. ▲



Article from the Charleston Gazette, Nov. 15, 1792.  
Photo: Chris Ruli

# Photo Essay: Approx. 400 Masons Gather Together to Celebrate Historic Charity at University of the District of Columbia

Posted: 10/23/2017

BY W BRO. JASON VAN DYKE, PM - Managing Editor of The Voice of Freemasonry; Past Master of The Colonial Lodge No. 1821; and member of Benjamin B. French Lodge No. 15

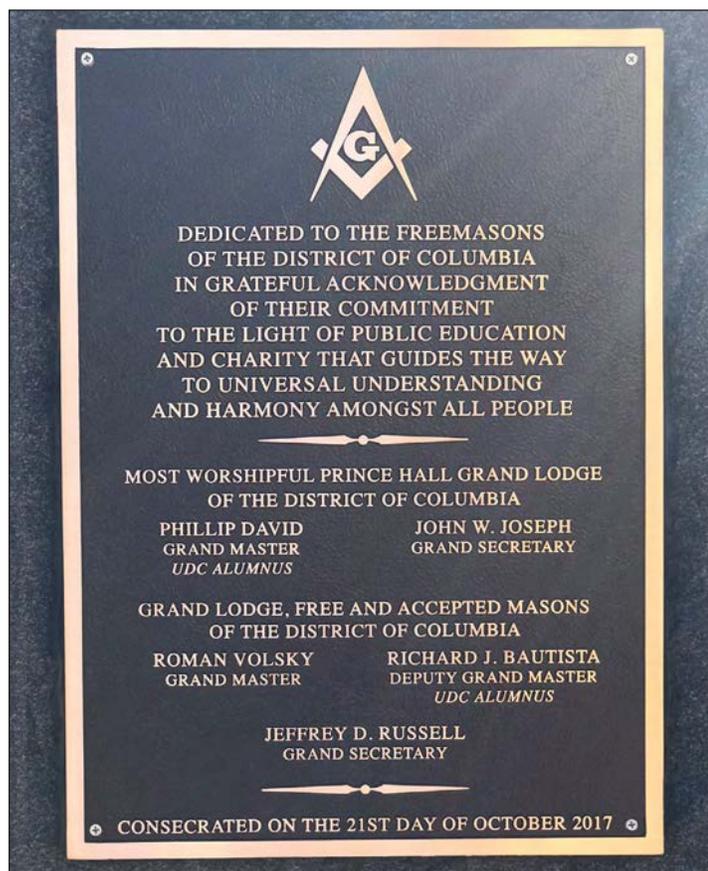
The photos above and below are of the near-perfect weather conditions on Saturday, October 21, when approximately 400 Freemasons from the Grand Lodge of D.C. and the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of D.C. came together on the campus of the University of the District of Columbia to celebrate a historic first – the first cooperative charity initiative by both Grand Lodges. And because it was a big occasion, the gift was appropriately big, too - \$400,000.

The funds are specifically targeted to support scholarships for students in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences and African American students from the District of Columbia. They will also provide emergency funds for students with critical and immediate financial needs.

As part of our Masonic Day of Thanksgiving event this year, the Grand Masters of each Grand Lodge, Most Worshipful Brothers Roman Volsky and Phillip David, consecrated a memorial plaque in the main plaza of the university to celebrate the joint gift. ▲



The program for the event sits behind the Tiffany bowl used to hold the corn, wine and oil of the consecration ceremony.



The memorial plaque in Dennard Plaza, lit by the bright noon sun.



The George Washington Gavel, used to lay the cornerstone of the U.S. Capitol in 1793. Courtesy of Potomac Lodge No. 5.

All photos by Jason Van Dyke

(continued on next page)



The assembled bow their heads in prayer.



MWB Volsky stands in prayer as the invocation is given.



RWB Chip Mahaney, Grand Lecturer recites the consecration ceremony.



RWB Richard Bautista, Deputy Grand Master (right), greets MWB David, Grand Master of DC - PHA.



(Left to Right) MWB Volsky, President Mason, and MWB David.



(Left to Right) MWB Roman Volsky, Grand Master of DC, MWB Phillip David, Grand Master of DC - Prince Hall Affiliation, and Ronald Mason, Jr., President of the University of the District of Columbia.



RWB Alan Gordon, Senior Grand Deacon, reads a passage from the Torah.



Bro. Carey Cooper, member of The Colonial Lodge No. 1821.



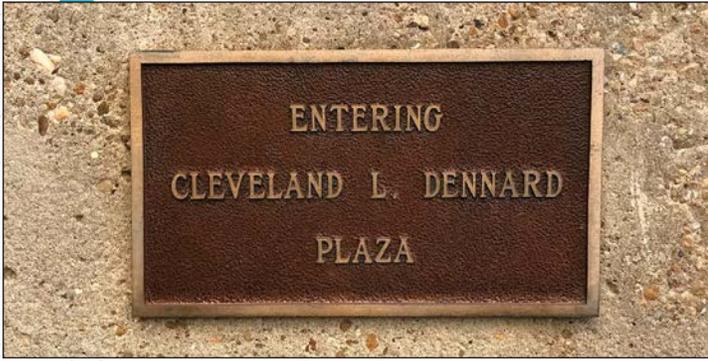
The Masonic Paparazzi gather to get photos of MWB Volsky and University President Ronald Mason, Jr.



WB George Nicol, Sr. PM and Treasurer of Sojourner Kilwinning Lodge No. 1798, dressed in his Knight Templar uniform.



MWB Nathaniel Adams, Jr., PGM, GL of DC - PHA.



Dennard Plaza is the main plaza in the center of the University campus.



The ceremonial corn, wine and oil, symbolizing nourishment, refreshment and joy, respectively.



WB Adam Tager, Master of William R. Singleton-Hope-Lebanon Lodge No. 7, and Grand Marshal.



WB Jeffrey Matheny, PM Benjamin B. French Lodge No. 15, and Grand Standard Bearer.



The George Washington Gavel sits in front of the ceremonial corn, wine and oil.



RWB Richard Bautista, Deputy Grand Master and UDC Alumnus.



WB James Morgan, PM of Corinthian Lodge No. 18, GL of DC - PHA



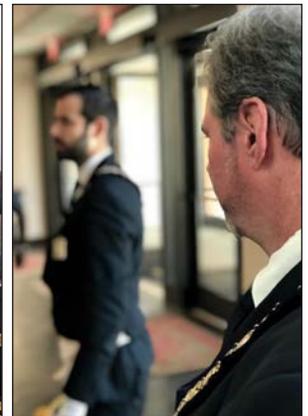
MWB Jeff Russell, PGM and Grand Secretary, walks in the procession into the plaza.



Masons begin to gather for the procession into the plaza.



Another shot of the large gathering before processing to the plaza.



RWB Chip Mahaney looks on as WB Adam Tager, Grand Marshal lines up the procession.



A shot of the approximately 400 Masons and guests.



Panorama of the ceremony.



The audience looks on as the Grand Masters consecrate the memorial plaque.

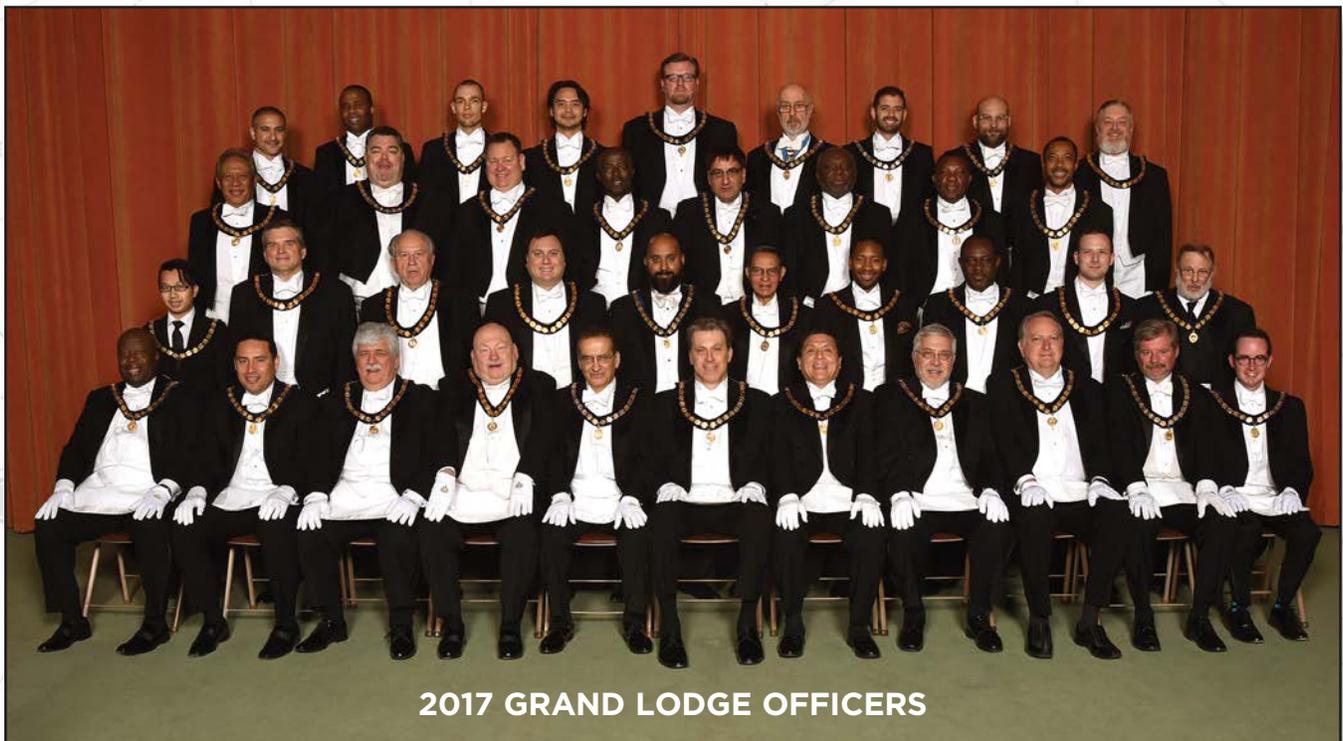


Spectators watch the ceremony.



## Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the District of Columbia

Roman Volsky, Grand Master    Jeffrey D. Russell, PGM, Grand Secretary



### Front Row (L to R)

Annas Kamara, Senior Grand Steward; Daniel Huertas, Junior Grand Deacon; Alan Gordon, Senior Grand Deacon; George Stoklas, Grand Treasurer; Charbel Fahed, Senior Grand Warden; Roman Volsky, Grand Master; Richard Bautista, Deputy Grand Master; Michael Nicholas, Sr., Junior Grand Warden; Jeffrey Russell, Grand Secretary; Christopher Mahaney, Grand Lecturer; Morgan Corr, Junior Grand Steward

### Second Row (L to R)

Duy Tran, Grand Photographer, Walter Hoenes, Grand Historian; Gerhard Meinser, Grand Tiler; Nathan St. Pierre, Assistant Grand Lecturer; Anand Trivedi, Assistant Grand Lecturer; Bilal Raschid, Assistant Grand Chaplain; Quardricos Driskell, Assistant Grand Chaplain; Sylvanus Newstead, Grand Almoner; David Filer, Aide to the Grand Master; Jeffrey Bodie, Assistant Grand Chaplain

### Third Row (L to R)

Carpenter Arpa, IV, Grand Pursuivant; Justin Russell, Grand Chancellor; Jeffrey Matheny, Grand Standard Bearer; Jean-Paul Dongmo, Assistant Grand Marshal; Victo Petrossian, Assistant Grand Tiler; Andre Vainqueur, Assistant Grand Director of Ceremonies; Eloi Kpamegan, Assistant Grand Tiler; Frankel Petit, Grand Lodge Physician

### Fourth Row (L to R)

Joseph Baroudi, Grand Director of Ceremonies; James Frederique, Grand Photographer; Matthew Matyjek, Aide to the Grand Master; Chetin Durak, Grand Orator, Dustin Rawlins, Grand Sword Bearer; Joseph Crociata, PGM, Grand Ambassador; Adam Tager, Grand Marshal; Jason Van Dyke, Assistant to the Grand Secretary; Jeffrey Holt, Assistant to the Grand Master

### Not Pictured

Kenneth Cohen, Grand Chaplain; Perry Blatstein, Grand Preceptor; Alex Crowther, Grand Provost; Asadur Tufekgjan, Grand Jeweler; Paul Dolinsky, Grand Organist



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smart phone.