

The Voice of Freemasonry

Volume 28, Number 2, 2011

IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL



SIMON BOLIVAR
THE LIBERATOR

BORN JULY 24 1783
CARACAS VENEZUELA

DIED DECEMBER 17 1830
SANTA MARTA COLOMBIA



An Official Publication of the Grand Lodge
of Free And Accepted Masons of Washington DC

**The Voice of
Freemasonry**

Volume 28, Number 2, 2011

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Jesse Villarreal, *Grand Master*

MANAGING EDITOR

Mansour Hatefi, PGM,
Grand Secretary

The Voice of Freemasonry is an official publication of the Grand Lodge of Free And Accepted Masons (F.A.A.M.) of the District of Columbia. Unless otherwise noted, articles appearing in this publication express only the private opinion or assertions of the writer, and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Grand Lodge. The jurisdiction speaks only through the Grand Master, and when attested to as official, in writing, by the Grand Secretary.

The editorial staff invites contributions in the form of informative articles, reports, news and other timely information (of about 500 to 1000 words in length) that broadly relate to Masonic law, lore, customs, history, symbolism, philosophy, responsibility of membership, etiquette, current events, and/or general public interest. When possible, photographs that illustrate these informative articles should accompany the submission. Pieces submitted should be typed, double-spaced and preferably accompanied by a computer disk in a neutral PC format or via e-mail to:

grandlodge@dcgrandlodge.org

Articles are subject to editing and, when published, become the property of the Grand Lodge, F.A.A.M., of the District of Columbia. No compensation is allowed for any articles, photographs, or other materials submitted for publication.

Permission to reprint articles will be granted upon written request to the Editor from recognized Masonic publications and others. When reprinted, articles should note: "Reprinted with permission of *The Voice of Freemasonry* in the Nation's Capital, (volume), (number), (year)."

Please direct all correspondence to:

MANAGING EDITOR:

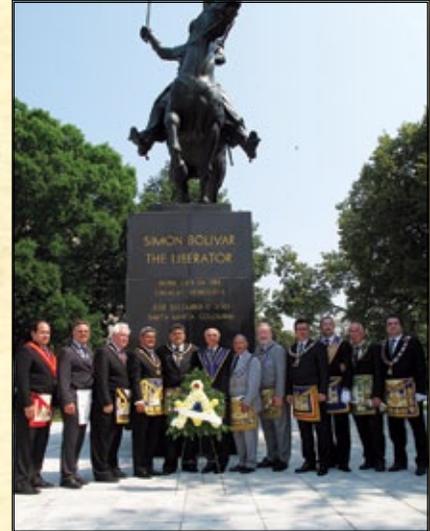
THE VOICE OF FREEMASONRY
5428 MacArthur Blvd., N.W.
Washington, DC 20016-2524

Graphic design:

JP DESIGN :: print | web
jpdesign1@verizon.net

On the Cover

The cover of this issue of *The Voice of Freemasonry* features a photo of our Grand Master, MWB Jesse Villarreal, accompanied by visiting Masonic dignitaries, laying a wreath at the foot of a memorial equestrian statue of Simón Bolívar, the great South American Liberator and Freemason. Bolivar was a Venezuelan military and political leader who, together with another great Liberator and Freemason, José de San Martín, played a key role in Latin America's successful struggle for independence from the Spanish Empire, and is today considered one of the most influential politicians in South American history. Pictured, left to right are Grand Masters or their representatives from Bolivia, Germany, Maine, Inter-American Masonic Conference, Washington DC, Columbia, France, New Hampshire, Romania, Azerbaijan, Italy, and Russia. The wreath laying took part in conjunction with the 2011 Universal Brotherhood Celebration. For the story of this year's celebration, please turn to page 12.



Visit us on the web at: **dcgrandlodge.org**



In This Issue

Message from the Grand Master	3
From the Grand Secretary: Freemasonry Universal	5
The Combined Federal Campaign	6
"Beyond Leadership" — Lodge Officer Training Retreat	7
Spreading the Light Through Interactive Dynamic Freemasonry	10
Universal Brotherhood Celebration — Custodians of the Past, Architects of the Future	12
The Founding of Mehr Lodge	16
Grand Master of Masons in Virginia Congratulates Grand Lodge of DC on Bicentennial	18
Congratulations from Across the Pond	19
Q&A with Dick Fletcher, Acting Executive Secretary of MSA	20
Thanksgiving and Remembrance	23
DearFreemason	24
DC Freemasons Dedicate American University Commemorative Stone	28
The Grand Lodge Congratulates Almas Shriners on Its 125th Anniversary	29
Bicentennial Commemoratives — Order Now. Only Limited Quantities Remain!	31
Upcoming Grand Lodge Events	32

Art and Photo Credits: The Grand Lodge's official bicentennial emblem is the work of JP Design. The Grand Master's Eye of Horus pin is the work of RWB Roman Volsky. Photographs or images appearing in this issue, unless otherwise indicated, are the work of the several official Grand Lodge Photographers, WB Jose Boggio, WB Burt Levy, and WB Leonard Merryman; contributing photographers Bro. Sviatoslav Voloshin and Bro. Stephen de Leon; Masterpiece Studios in Olney, Maryland; the contributor or subject of the respective article; or obtained from open sources.



Grand Master's Message



VISION: "To unite men of different beliefs and cultures into one common society of friends and brothers under the guidance of the Grand Architect"

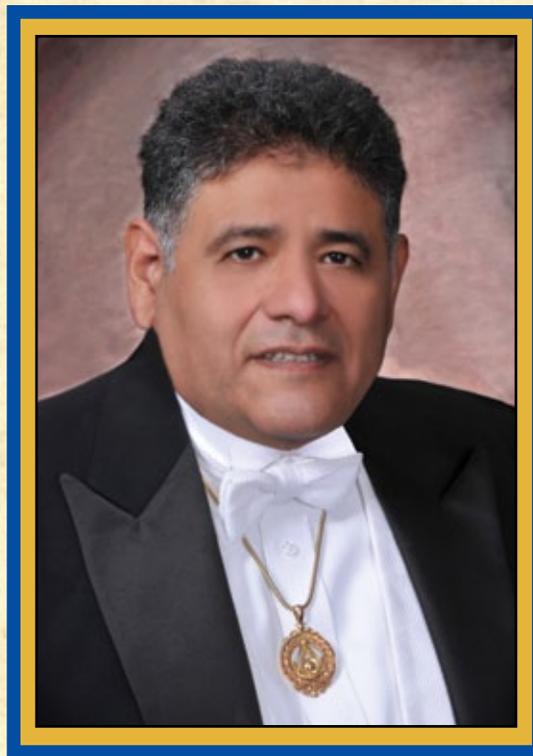
MISSION: "To unite men of different beliefs into a harmonious and productive community through the application of Masonic moral values and the practice of benevolence, intellectual development, and mutual respect"

Last year your Grand Line Officers took on the task of properly defining what our Grand Lodge, in particular, and Freemasonry, in general, actually does in our jurisdiction and where it is going. For many years men have asked: "What does Freemasonry do; what does it stand for?" Our standard response has been: "Freemasonry takes a good man and makes him better." Wow, I can see the questioners' eyes glaze over on hearing this response. What is a good man and how can you make him better? In Masonry there is really only one definition of a good man. A "good man" is someone who has a faith in God and has moral values — nothing more and nothing less. We have only two basic requirements to become a Mason. First, one must ask to be made a Mason (rather than be asked) and second, one must profess a belief in deity. So why don't we just say that we take men who have a faith in deity and strengthen their own religious beliefs?

Another response that we have often provided is: "Masonry is a system of morality, veiled in allegory, illustrated by symbols." This phrase really sends a prospective member into the nether lands. Again we could have just as easily said, "Masonry is a moral way of life and to emphasize the moral values, we use

allegories and symbols to teach, instruct, and remind us how to live.

Questions that we never ask or have answered are what is it we want to achieve or where do we want to go? If we arrive at our destination, how are we to know?



Most Worshipful Brother Jesse Villarreal

began originally as a collection of five lodges now stands at forty one — certainly something that the founders could not have contemplated.

So the task was undertaken to define and establish both a mission statement and a vision statement for our Grand Lodge. A mission statement would map out what we do, how we do it, and who we serve. A

In today's society, members of most groups or organizations know what they do, who they serve, and how they serve by the use of a mission statement. They also know what they are trying to accomplish or reach by the use of a vision statement. Our Mission Statement answers the question: What does Masonry do? The Vision Statement informs us about where we would like to get to. Our Grand Lodge was created two hundred years ago this year. Our founders, I'm sure, saw no need for either statement. Neither did they write down their hopes, dreams, or vision for our Grand Lodge. Have we achieved or exceeded their dreams?

I hope we have, for what

continued on next page



vision statement would give focus to what we want to achieve. Surveys were taken, focus groups were assembled. Everyone's input was solicited. A good percentage of our membership took the time to answer and submit a completed survey.

To avoid any possibility of undue influence by a member or members of the fraternity, we hired an outside consultant to facilitate the development of our statements.

At the start of the process, we identified those things we value, as individuals and as an organization. Of all the steps in this process, the identification of our values was the most important. For values are the core structures of any group or organization.

In discussing our values, we came to realize that our individual core values were similar to Masonry's core values. These were the values that drew and kept us together. Some of these values were already openly discussed in our ritual, while others were not as readily apparent. Of course we know the cardinal values of our order. We call them the three principle tenets: Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. But in reality, we have so many others. Just look at the obligations: "In the presence of almighty God" (we all have a faith in God), "I promise and swear" (we like to and want to be associated with those that keep promises), "I will stand to and abide by" (we believe in the rule of law). Each phrase in our obligations has a value, which we are drawn to. Those values combine as the granular bits of cement that binds us together in a brotherhood of moral men.

After many months, the above statements were finalized. The mission statement tells us what we do and who we serve, i.e., "unite men of different beliefs into a harmonious and productive community", and how we do it; i.e., "through the application of Masonic moral values and the practice of benevolence, intellectual development and mutual respect."

I heard someone say that "Masonry is the mirror of a man's soul" — a very profound statement. If it is a mirror, what do we see in the reflection? Do we like what we see? When I first heard the phrase, I thought of my use of a mirror. Usually, it's when I am preparing myself to go out among other people, whether it's at work or socially. I look to see if I'm presentable and if I should straighten anything out. In the same way, when we look into our Masonic mirror, we look to see if we are carrying the "values" that make us a good person, ...a good citizen, a

good employee or employer, a good spouse, a good son, a good sibling, a good parent, a good friend, and so on. Is there anything amiss in need of correction?

We say that we first prepared ourselves to be made a Mason in our hearts. How is that? We prepared ourselves by learning from our parents, schools, associations and friends the values of faith, fidelity, honesty, patriotism, and friendship, those things that make one a "good man".

We accept into our midst good men who ask for membership. Remembering that humility is a virtue, we generally aren't and shouldn't be elitist. There are many "good men" without our fraternity who thirst and hunger for the brotherly bonds that we enjoy. Many assume that they "walk alone" in what they see as

a society devoid of values. When they do find us, it's like finding cool water in the heat of the desert. Let us welcome them and relieve their thirst.

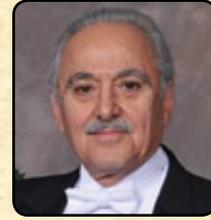
Our vision statement points to what our overall achievement should be. Our mission statement guides us on how we will get there. Please read them thoroughly. Memorize them. Think about how you can use them to devise action plans that will not only improve yourself but also improve the relationships and conditions of those around you. Together, let's strive every day to truly live up to the moral values which they espouse and for which we obligated ourselves to uphold. ■

In discussing our values, we came to realize that our individual core values were similar to Masonry's core values. These were the values that drew and kept us together.



From the Grand Secretary

Freemasonry Universal



Mansour Hatefi, PGM
Grand Secretary

Once again, our constituent lodges came together recently in a spirit of brotherhood and fellowship to celebrate the diversity and universality of our noble Craft.

What had been at one time a relatively minor week-end program with the participation of a limited group of brothers, has evolved into a major celebratory series of events, with Masons from both sides of the Atlantic wending their way to America's capital city for fraternal exchanges and Masonic fellowship. This annual gathering, now called Universal Brotherhood Celebration, provides an unforgettable assortment of inter-cultural experiences, fraternal and social, in which men of diverse ethnicities meet on the level and in the interest of universal benevolence and understanding.

The activities of the Universal Brotherhood Celebrations, without question, immensely strengthen the ties by which we are linked, Masonically, with like-minded men throughout the world. By their presence, high ranking delegations, representing sister Grand Lodges from near and far, add a new dimension to the richness and diversity of Freemasonry in our own jurisdiction.

One of the program highlights of the Celebration is the Universal Lodge meeting, now a permanent fixture of this highly praised annual Masonic festival, in Washington, DC. This event is truly unique in its

scope and content and a source of much pride for us all. Universal Lodge is comprised of representatives of our constituent lodges occupying a station or place, at one point or another during the meeting, and communicating in almost a dozen different tongues, providing yet another manifestation of the universality of Freemasonry.

In the final decade of the last century and overflowing into the new millennium, what initially began as an earnest effort to promote diversity within our fraternity, eventually turned into a quest to spread the axiom of Masonic universality.

The Universal Lodge frequently serves as the venue for conducting one or more highly impressive "Twinning Ceremonies", a precedent established since the inception of these annual celebrations. These ceremonies bring together lodges sharing a special affinity with their counterpart lodges in other parts of the world, further strengthening the global ties of our fraternity.

How and when did all this begin? I do not intend to recount the story of one of the most significant chapters in the history of our Grand Lodge, as it is a matter of record and is briefly covered elsewhere in this issue of *The Voice*. However, I deem it necessary to mention how this evolution came about in this jurisdiction.

The 1990 admission of Mehr Lodge No. 90, as a new constituent lodge in our Grand Jurisdiction, at the request of a good number of brethren with Iranian Masonic background, was the result of the recognition of the need for a culturally diverse lodge operating in tandem with traditional lodges located in Washington DC. Mehr

continued on next page



Lodge's creation marked the beginning of the construction of a multi-cultural bridge of tolerance and understanding not only in this jurisdiction but throughout the world. Its existence was confirmation that our Grand Lodge could and would accept as brethren Masons who practiced a different ritual and spoke a different language, regardless of their race, ethnicity, or religion.

Mehr's creation was followed by the emergence of a new generation of lodges in Washington, DC, to the tune of an average of one lodge per year, numbering now almost as many as the remaining lodges chartered since the creation of our Grand Lodge, 200 years ago. The establishment of these Lodges, in addition to recognizing the common bonds among the brethren in each of these Masonic entities, has also served to enlighten an increasing numbers of the brethren in this jurisdiction of the universality of Masonry and has allowed us to extend the hand of brotherhood and fraternal friendship to visiting Masons as never before.

In the final decade of the last century and overflowing into the new millennium, what initially began as an earnest effort to promote diversity within our fraternity, eventually turned into a quest to spread the axiom of Masonic universality.

The word "Mehr" means both Light and Love. Using the prototype of Mehr Lodge as a model, the growth and outreach of Universal Brotherhood has extended over the years from our nation's capital throughout the world, spreading the message of

Masonic Light and Brotherly Love. It's a message which teaches that we can live in peace and harmony with our fellow man when we adhere to a common idealism.

Now, the Universality of Freemasonry not only stands for the inclusion and coming together of all for the advancement of Masonic ideas and ideals, but also, and just as importantly, it emphasizes the effect that Masonry has or should have on a global scale. Imagine the good will that can be generated by Freemasons working together across oceans on building bridges of mutual understanding and establishing exchanges that contribute to better relations among the peoples of the world.

It is altogether fitting and appropriate that we find ourselves at the forefront of such an initiative, given that our Grand Lodge is located in what has been called the capital of the free world. After all, along with our unique location comes a unique obligation. Just as the world's democracies look to America for leadership against the international forces of darkness, so too is our Grand Lodge looked upon, in Masonic circles, for leadership in the support and expansion of Universal Brotherhood as an instrument to elevate the character of mankind.

As a consequence, our Grand Lodge in Washington, DC has become a microcosm of universal Masonry in the world. This phenomenon has been eminently successful and immensely beneficial to Freemasonry both here and abroad. ■

A Special Opportunity for Federal Employees:

Please consider including the Masonic Foundation of the District of Columbia as part of your charitable giving to the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). The CFC number for the Masonic Foundation is **48808** and is listed in the "local agencies" section of this year's campaign catalog.

If you are not a Federal Employee but know someone who is, please ask them to consider our Masonic Foundation.



“Beyond Leadership”

**Lodge Officer Training Retreat:
September 10 & 11, 2011**



Joseph S. Crociata
Deputy Grand Master

As we celebrate our bicentennial, we laud the accomplishments of the Craft in DC over the first two centuries of our Grand Lodge. But even in the midst of our celebrations, we look to the start of our third century and daunting challenges loom upon the horizon. They force us to look beyond those things we have done well over the past two hundred years, and to contemplate the things we wish we had done better. We face issues of bricks and mortar, as the current growth of Masonry in the Nation's Capital threatens to overtake the shrinking availability of suitable meeting places: issues that our brothers of 100 years ago thought they were to conquer by the splendid Grand Lodge building they contemplated in the open fields of New York Avenue. We continue to see our expansion among new members from the collar counties of Virginia and Maryland diminish our

presence in the communities and neighborhoods of the District whose name we bear, the product of social forces that began 50 years ago. The Nation's current economic woes strain the budgets of the Grand Lodge and constituent lodges alike, forcing us all to contemplate how to respond to the current Masonic Renaissance with diminished resources. These challenges and others demand that the Craft put forward its best and brightest leaders: workmen who have the vision, the ability and the drive to lay a suitable foundation for our Temple of the coming century.

Over the past few years, successive Deputy Grand Masters have looked to the future, and our Officer Training Retreat has changed in its appearance and emphasis. In order to make the benefits of the Retreat available to a greater number of our

continued on next page



The National Conference Center in Leesburg, Virginia will be the site of this year's Fall Leadership Conference.



Wardens and Deacons, we left the bucolic and Spartan climes of Front Royal for more urban facilities nearer our jurisdiction. In order to expand upon the collegial benefits of the Retreat, we have given greater emphasis to opportunities for lodge officers to come together socially and fraternally away from the formal sessions, helping to generate new ideas and concepts in lodge management and programs. Significantly, the most recent Retreats adopted themes of leadership, challenging our up-and-coming lodge officers to set high standards and goals for their own conduct, both as Masters and as Masons.

This year, we are moving forward into a new phase, entitled "Beyond Leadership." While we will address how to meet your lodge challenges by cultivating the qualities of a good leader, our presentations will address the application of those qualities to the task of being a good Master. You will be given hands-on training in methods of management that you can use both in your fraternal and professional lives to get things done by cooperation with others. You will receive nuts-and-bolts training on many of the things you will need to know as you ascend to the East, in order to govern your lodge with the confidence that will inspire your membership to work actively to achieve more than they (and you) ever thought they could. You will be challenged to look beyond your year as Master and craft a cooperative plan within your lodge that will see to its fraternal and financial future, so that when our third century comes to a close, our brothers of that era will say: "These men were real Masons."

Who May Participate?

ALL WARDENS AND DEACONS OF CONSTITUENT LODGES OF DC ARE INVITED TO ATTEND WITHOUT COST. We have reserved attendance for 140 brothers on two bases:

You will be given hands-on training in methods of management that you can use both in your fraternal and professional lives to get things done by cooperation with others.

"THE RESIDENCE PROGRAM" includes private hotel accommodations on Saturday evening, and includes attendance at the Saturday sessions and breakouts, dinner that evening, the cash bar cocktail hours on Saturday night (at which the facility has promised that the bar will remain open as late as your Deputy Grand Master deems necessary), the Sunday morning sessions and breakouts and all breaks and meals through from the Saturday morning break to the final lunch on Sunday. We highly recommend this option for all Wardens and Deacons who can make it, because of

the opportunities for social and fraternal conferencing at and after dinner on Saturday night.

"THE DAY RETREAT" includes everything that the Residence Program has, except for the hotel room and the cocktail reception on Saturday (as we will not give our brethren alcohol and send them out onto the roads of Virginia). Day Retreaters still have to register with the Conference Center upon arrival, and are eligible to attend both days of sessions and receive meals.

EXCLUSIVE WARDEN AND DEACON REGISTRATION will remain open until July 15, 2011. After that time, Wardens and Deacons may continue to register along with all other constituent Lodge Officers and sideliners for available space, on a "first come, first served" basis.

Those who are not Wardens and Deacons will be charged for their participation. Space will be limited, and registration will close on August 15, 2011.

A New Location: THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTER

This year, we are pleased to offer the facilities of The National Conference Center in Leesburg, Virginia for our Retreat. The Center is 45 minutes from Washington, DC, and due to their extensive facilities, our guest rooms, social areas, and (of course) the bar will all be in the same area. The



sessions will be held in one of the main conference rooms. For a description of the Center and its accommodations, directions and a photo gallery, you may visit www.conferencecenter.com.

Program Highlights

This year's program will feature many speakers on topics that will have a direct impact upon your year as Master. Officers and committeemen of our Grand Lodge will provide insights and information such as the following:

“The Gentle Art of Presiding”

or, “Is that a gavel or a glorified paperweight?”

“60 Minutes to Mastery of the Code”

or, “Everything you will (probably) need to look like a Masonic Legal Eagle”

“The Secrets of the Secretary”

or, “The things you need to know to make sure HE knows who's in the East.”

“REAL Money: How to Plan and Work toward Making Your Lodge a Masonic Force for the Next Century”

or, “Success is More than Just Survival”

These and more (including sessions and breakouts specially requested by your Senior Wardens) will make the Retreat a memorable and valuable experience. In addition, there will be presentations by non-Masonic professionals in areas that we all need to develop if the Craft is to prosper. There will be a guest speaker on the subject of fundraising, who will address tax issues and answer your questions regarding how to ethically seek and safely receive bequests for the future of your Lodge.

Bonus Seminar

“If you want something done right, do it yourself!” is a tempting way to approach the job of being the Worshipful Master. After all, who else knows precisely how you want your programs and your Lodge to shine in “your year?” And, anyone who has dealt with the frustration of trying to get something done by committee can feel compelled to roll up his sleeves and just DO it! It's tempting, it's simple, and it's dead wrong.

First of all, no Lodge should rely upon the efforts of a single member, even if he is its Worshipful Master – it's just too limiting. More importantly, the “do it

yourself” approach defeats your most important (and most Masonic) job of the year: to provide instruction to those who will follow on how to lead the Lodge after your return to the sidelines.

This year, we are going to examine the tools that one should use to separate the programs of your Lodge into discreet projects, and to assure that the brothers you choose for each will get their job done: on time, and on target. The job of a Worshipful Master is one of PROJECT MANAGEMENT, and this year your Lodge Officers' Retreat will include a professional, half-day seminar on the wonderful world of “deals, deadlines and deliverables” that you will not only be able to use in governing your Lodge, but that you can apply to your professional pursuits as well.

Featured Speaker: RICK A. MORRIS, PMP

A prize-winning speaker and lecturer on the problems and pitfalls of Project Management, Rick A. Morris is a certified ITIL Practitioner, and a noted consultant in the industry. For those who are familiar with project management profession, Rick holds the PMP, MPM, OPM3, Six Sigma Green Belt, MCITP, MCTS, MCSE, TQM, ATM-S, ITIL, and ISO certifications. Rick has worked with GE, Xerox, and CA and is currently the Owner/President of R2 Consulting. Rick has published books on the subject “The Everything Project Management Book”, 2nd Edition published by AdamsMedia and “Project Management That Works!” published by AMACOM. Most recently, he has authored “Stop Playing Games” which explores the ways that project managers can work against the success of their own projects.

Known for approaching the (usually dry) subject area with humor and energy, Rick will conduct a hands-on seminar in project management that includes the basics for those who are unfamiliar with the area, and sound tips even for those who work in the industry.

Registration

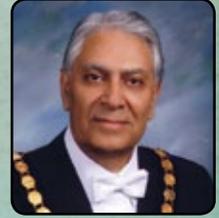
Registration is now open for Wardens and Deacons, and will remain open for them until August 15, 2011. Registration for everyone else opens on July 15, 2011 and remains open until August 15, 2011. Please contact the Office of the Grand Secretary at grandlodge@dcgrandlodge.org for further information. ■



Spreading the Light

through Interactive Dynamic Freemasonry

What follows is an abridgement of an address given by MWB Robert B. Heyat, PGM, at the XI World Conference of Masonic Grand Lodges which took place May 12- 15, 2011 and was hosted by the National Grand Lodge of Colombia at Cartagena de Indias.



Robert B. Heyat
Past Grand Master

My Dear Brother Masons, I take this opportunity to share with you my thoughts on the matter of where our Craft is at this point of time and whether or not the Craft is facing a crisis. Based on my own experience since my initiation 45 years ago, I venture to say that I am extremely disappointed that the Craft, including myself, has failed to turn our ideals into reality. The question is why and how this situation has come about?

In reviewing the early years of Freemasonry, we see that the leaders of the communities and societies were mostly the elite and high caliber men, not necessarily powerful and wealthy, but certainly intellectuals, scholars, scientists and high quality professionals, who could individually influence their societies and help shape the destiny of their people. The result was the great revolutions and democratic advances in the 18th and 19th century in Europe, South America and the United States of America.

Unfortunately, over time, the Masonic institutions became passive and stagnant and changed in character and mode of operation, which in turn affected their leadership and the attitude of their members, failing to understand the true meaning of Freemasonry and of being a Mason. They ceased to translate the Masonic ideas and ideals, taught in their rituals, into action. Masonic lodges, Grand Lodges, and the individual Masons within them,

gradually withdrew from getting involved in the affairs of their societies, and instead become more and more inward focused, turning lodges into either exclusive clubs or an oasis for lay men to gather for fellowship in their closed fraternal temples.

Under the paradigm of not engaging in politics, we have avoided engagement of any kind in social issues that affect our societies. Such an attitude has alienated our Craft from the society and has rendered us irrelevant in our communities.

The progress of democracy and the growth of political parties have actually had an adverse effect on the activities of our Fraternity. Under the paradigm of not engaging in politics, we have avoided engagement of any kind in social issues that affect our societies. Such an attitude has alienated our Craft from the society and has rendered us irrelevant in our communities. As a result, Freemasonry is looked upon as an archaic exclusive institution, with weird rituals and secretive operations. The fraternity has, for the most part, completely dissociated itself from civil society and all that affects daily life in our communities.

There was a time that many men of high quality, young and old, eagerly yearned to join Freemasonry in order to benefit from its teachings and enact its ideals not only in their lives, but also in others' by spreading light to all corners of the world. There was a time, not too long ago, when many of the justices of the U.S. Supreme Court, members of Congress and men of high standing, both in public and private sectors, in the United States were Freemasons, and proud of it. But now, very few Free-



masons in a position of authority or leadership care to identify themselves as such, viewing it as damaging to their reputation and a liability.

How do we change this situation? There may be many ways to approach this mission; however, the following course of action is, in my opinion, fundamentally necessary to bring about positive and productive change:

Membership: Declining numbers through death, attrition and our inability to attract new members should not be viewed as a significant factor. It is the quality of membership that matters. One worthy and capable individual can do great things as a leader in his community. Therefore, we should look for quality individuals with high potentials, to enlighten them, have them join our ranks and empower them to spread the light of Freemasonry in their world environment. It is only by recruiting such individuals that Freemasonry can revive and rejuvenate itself and regain its position of positive influence in society and in the lives of other people.

Engagement in social issues: We should change the agenda and content of our activities in our lodges and among our members. Fraternal relations or charity work should not serve as our primary goals. Fellowship is not necessarily limited to Masonic gatherings, and charity seldom changes the lives of people, and in many instances breeds dependability and even poverty.

Freemasonry should opt for a dynamic program of engaging in the real issues of concern to society and educate and empower its membership to take on these issues in their daily lives and pursue them actively by getting involved with non-Masons in their communities, in their countries, and indeed in the world at large. This goal can only be achieved by first concentrating on attracting future leaders to the Craft and providing them with the proper tools to tackle the challenges confronting society.

To discuss and engage in the important social issues confronting our societies should not be taken as engaging in politics or becoming part of a political force or entity. We can discuss these issues among our membership and act upon them for the common good of our people without becoming political or taking a specific political side. Most of the important issues such as poverty, education, immigration, fighting crime, drug addiction, helping children, and so on, can be considered without political overtones and be pursued individually or as an institution for the good of society.

Freemasonry should opt for a dynamic program of engaging in the real issues of concern to society and educate and empower its membership to take on these issues in their daily lives...

Interaction within Universal Freemasonry:

Successful interaction with other Grand Lodges and Masonic institutions in communicating these ideas and promoting joint actions on common issues is the necessary next step and will provide us leverage on a global scale. Our fraternity has always been universal in character and we boast of the universality of Freemasonry, but regrettably we never really and actively engage in it. The reality is that each Masonic jurisdiction acts as an isolated entity and is more concerned about its sovereignty and exclusivity than working with other Masonic entities for a higher

purpose. They normally have dedicated their resources primarily to internal and superficial programs and projects that accomplish little and leave no funds to engage in the worthwhile programs and meaningful activities mentioned above.

Support for the new, regularly-established Grand Lodges:

Much has changed in the world in the last twenty years. A good number of new countries have emerged and joined the ranks of independent nations. More recently, there have been revolutions and political changes in a number of older countries. In many of these countries new Grand Lodges have been created and in others there exists a favorable environment to establish Freemasonry. These newly organized brethren, in spite of legitimacy and regularity, face steep challenges and thirst for recognition. However, many of our long-established Grand Lodges, rather than

continued on page 27



Universal Brotherhood Celebration

Custodians of the Past, Architects of the Future



Akram R. Elias
Past Grand Master

Entering its third decade of Universal Freemasonry in modern times, the Grand Lodge of Washington, DC held on June 8-11 of this year a series of events to celebrate universal brotherhood in the nation's capital. Given that 2011 A.D. marks the 200th anniversary of the founding of our Grand Lodge, this year's Universal Brotherhood Celebration (UBC) was of special significance and consisted of activities highlighting the historic role of Freemasonry in improving aspects of the human condition through enlightenment.

Civility in Government

Civility in the political debate has become a rarity and is quickly vanishing in today's world of politics. As Freemasons, we are taught to practice and promote *civility in discourse* as one of the fundamental values of the Enlightenment. In a democratic republic where people of various beliefs and opinions are expected to argue and differ over social, economic and political issues, civility is the trowel that spreads the cement of harmony, thus strengthening the unity of the country with its diversity – E Pluribus Unum (Out of Many, One). To highlight this fundamental republican democratic value, the Freemasons of Washington DC organized a breakfast on Capitol Hill to honor two members of Congress, one Democrat and one Republican, for "Exemplifying Civility in Government". Representative Denny Rehberg (R-MT) sent his regrets for not being able to join us; as the U.S. House of Representatives was in recess, Rep. Rehberg had to be in his home dis-

trict during our Universal Brotherhood Celebration's activities. However, Senator Jon Tester (D-MT) was able to attend and addressed the gathered audience on the importance of civility in governance and the constructive role of Freemasonry in the United States.

Celebrating Italian Unity

Italia Lodge No. 2001, under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Washington DC, hosted a delegation of Freemasons from the *Grande Oriente d'Italia* (Grand Orient of Italy) on the occasion of the 150th

anniversary of the unification of Italy. A special educational program was organized to highlight the role that Freemasons played in the preservation of the unity of Italy and the defense of republican democratic principles and values. The visiting brethren were also delighted to have had the opportunity to visit the U.S. Capitol, where a Freemason and a national hero of Italy, Brother Giuseppe Garibaldi,

is honored and remembered with a marble bust just outside the old Supreme Court chamber.

Honoring the Liberators of the Americas

On the morning of Thursday, June 9, 2011, members of the Grand Lodge of Washington, DC, led by the MW Grand Master Jesse Villarreal, and accompanied by visiting Grand Masters and Representatives of sister jurisdictions, including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Colombia, France, Germany, Italy, Maine, New Hampshire, Romania, Russia and the Executive Secretary of the Conferencia Masonica Interamericana (CMI), gathered at the headquarters of the Organization of



WB Giancarlo Oderda, Master of Italia Lodge No. 2001, greets Senator Jon Tester (D-MT) at the Capitol Hill Breakfast





MWB Jorge Valencia-Jaramillo, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Colombia – Bogota joins with our Grand Master, MWB Jesse Villarreal, in laying a wreath at the monument to the great South American liberator and Freemason, Simon Bolivar, here in Washington.

American States (OAS) for a quick tour of the building highlighting the historic liberators of the Americas (North and South) who were Freemasons. Following the visit, the delegation formed in procession and walked over to the memorial equestrian statue of the great Simon Bolivar to lay a wreath in the shape of the universal emblem of Freemasonry (the square and compasses). This symbolic gesture was done in honor of all the Mason Liberators of North and South America, several of whom have monuments along Virginia Avenue, including Jose de San Martin and Benito Juarez. Alianza Fraternal Americana Lodge No. 92 and Compass Lodge No. 1811, both Spanish speaking lodges under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Washington DC, were the proud sponsors of that morning's activities.

Brotherhood, Turkish-Style

Our Turkish-speaking Nur Lodge No. 2000 hosted a delegation of Freemasons from Turkey who gave us a beautiful musical rendition of the Fellow Craft degree. The exemplification, which took place at the auditorium of the Scottish Rite Center of Washington, DC was followed by a splendid Turkish feast.

Making Richard Dreyfuss a Freemason

Academy Award-winning actor Richard Dreyfuss became a Freemason on Friday, June 10, 2011. At a special ceremony held at the Scottish Rite Center of

Washington DC, the Grand Master of Masons of Washington DC, MWB Jesse Villarreal, made Mr. Dreyfuss a Mason at Sight. In that special and solemn ceremony, which lasted about an hour and a half, the Grand Master was assisted by the sitting Worshipful Master and several Past Masters and members of Potomac Lodge No. 5, the intended mother lodge of Brother Dreyfuss. This event was of special significance to this Grand Lodge for two reasons:

First, back in 2001, Richard Dreyfuss was introduced to the world of Freemasonry when working with Brother Akram R. Elias on the production of a two-hour documentary entitled *Mr. Dreyfuss Goes to Washington*. Brother Elias wrote the original treatment and co-produced the documentary with Richard Dreyfuss. Although Dreyfuss had inquired about being initiated into the Craft on multiple occasions, it was his study of the Enlightenment in recent years that gave him a much greater appreciation of the unique role of Freemasonry in liberating the mind of mankind from all forms of tyranny. On January 25, 2011, at the National Press Club in Washington DC, Richard asked Akram for the fourth time stating, "I really want to become a Freemason; I thought it through and I am ready for it. You must make it happen for me." His initiation, passing and raising came after ten years of study and search for more light.

continued on next page





RWB Joseph Crociata, MWB Jesse Villarreal, Bro. Richard Dreyfuss, Master of Potomac Lodge No. 5, MWB Akram Elias, WB Annas Kamara with members of Potomac Lodge following the Mason at Sight ceremony for Bro. Dreyfuss

Second, the above-mentioned documentary, which tells the story of the “Great American Experiment” through the monuments, memorials and landmarks of Washington DC, introduces the audience to the role of Freemasonry in the creation the republic and its capital city. An educational 37-minute edition of the documentary was also produced with the sponsorship of our Grand Lodge under the Grand Mastership of MWB Grant Berning and broadcast by the History Channel to more than 80,000 schools across the nation. This year also marks the 10th anniversary of the release of that documentary, and shows the avant-garde thinking and long term vision of this Grand Lodge – long before the Dan Brown books became a phenomena and release of the *National Treasure* films and – in affecting in meaningful ways the perceptions of the Craft by the rest of society. Having Richard Dreyfuss become a Freemason this year is, in a way, a special recognition of the invaluable contribution this Grand Lodge has made over the years to the universality of Freemasonry. What a wonderful gift marking the Bicentennial of our Grand Lodge!

The cast for this significant ceremony consisted of the following brethren: MWB Jesse Villarreal, Grand Master; RWB Joseph Crociata, Deputy Grand Master; MWB Mansour Hatefi, PGM, Grand Secretary; Past

Grand Master RWB Chip Mahaney, Grand Lecturer; RWB Jeffrey Russell, Senior Grand Deacon and Past Master of Potomac Lodge; WB David Mazaheri, Master of Potomac Lodge; WB Dean Clatterbuck, Past Master of Potomac Lodge; WB Jeremy Barnes, Past Master of Potomac Lodge; RWB Gerhard Meinzer; Grand Tiler Emeritus; Reverend and WB Randall Schoch, Past Assistant Grand Chaplain; MWB Akram Elias, Past Grand Master; Ill. Bro. F. Reed Brown, Grand Organist of Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite’s Southern Jurisdiction.

At the conclusion of the Mason at Sight ceremony, the degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry were conferred on Brother Dreyfuss by the Valley of Washington, Orient of the District of Columbia. This was another extraordinary Masonic ceremony conducted with beauty and grace by Scottish Rite Masons in Washington DC, under the leadership of Ill. Bro. Ronald A. Seale, Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite’s Southern Jurisdiction, Mother Council of the World, and Ill. Brother Leonard Proden, Sovereign Grand Inspector General of the Scottish Rite in the District of Columbia. These degrees greatly affected Brother Dreyfuss as they made clearer to him the significance of the symbolic or “blue lodge” degrees and



the paramount importance that the Scottish Rite places on education and enlightenment.

Universal Brotherhood Celebration Banquet

This year's Universal Brotherhood Celebration Banquet was held on Friday, June 10th at The Washington Club, one of the city's most prestigious addresses. At a reception held prior to the dinner, members of our various lodges along with their spouses and special friends enjoyed fellowship in splendidly designed and decorated historic rooms. The Washington Club, located on Dupont Circle, was founded in 1891 for "literary purposes, mutual improvement and the promotion of social intercourse" and served temporarily as The White House during the McKinley Presidency.

Following the reception, the assembly broke bread with one another at the great table of universal brotherhood, which was further enriched by the performance of young members of The Washington Opera. The keynote speaker that evening was Brother Richard Dreyfuss, who explained The Dreyfuss Initiative and the founding of the George Washington Institute on the Enlightenment (GWITE). GWITE is being formed because the futures of republican



The Universal Brotherhood Banquet took place at the prestigious Washington Club and featured a keynote address by Academy Award-winning actor Bro. Richard Dreyfuss and entertainment by young members of The Washington Opera.

democracy, freedom, and popular sovereignty are at risk. Understanding how that pivotal era in world history and philosophical thought formed America's system of government and influenced all democracies is vital to preserving its foundational principles for future generations. Leaders, scholars, and young people need to see that the Enlightenment is just as relevant in the 21st Century as it was at the time of our founding fathers.

Another Jewel in the Crown of Freemasonry

During this year's extraordinary Universal Brotherhood Celebration, another lodge was added to the rolls of Freemasonry in our jurisdiction. Maynilad



Washington, DC's newest Masonic lodge, called Maynilad Lodge No. 1521, was consecrated in solemn ceremonies on June 11, 2011.

continued on page 26

The Founding of Mehr Lodge



Charles S. Iversen
Past Grand Master

The most worthy achievement during my year as Grand Master in 1990 was the creation of Mehr Lodge No. 90. In 1989, when I was Deputy Grand Master, I was invited to attend a luncheon on Connecticut Avenue. It was hosted by MWB Robert B. Heyat (Grand Master in 2007). Present, in addition to him and me, were MWB Robert A. Statler, the Grand Master in 1989, now deceased, and MWB Stewart W. Miner (Honorary Past Grand Master in 1975) and the then Grand Secretary. MWB Heyat explained that many Iranian Masons were living in the Washington, DC area, having been forced to flee their native land when the Shah was overthrown, and that they would like to form a Masonic lodge under our Grand Lodge, and be permitted to confer the degrees in the Persian language pursuant to the emulation ritual of England (as it is done in Iran). Following the luncheon, I heard nothing further, and assumed the matter was dormant.

During the Grand Lodge Annual Meeting in mid-December 1989, after I had been elected Grand Master for 1990, MWB Heyat invited me to lunch at the Twigs Restaurant located in the Hilton Hotel where he iterated most

of his presentation at the earlier luncheon. I was impressed by his sincerity and by the idea of a bi-lingual lodge for the Iranian brethren. The primary issue in my mind was two-fold: what were the mechanics needed to bring it about and would the Grand Lodge representatives agree to it? A bi-lingual lodge in German (Arminius No. 25) had been chartered in 1876, but it used the same ritual as did all other DC lodges, translated into German.

I talked to MWB Miner at which time we discussed the mechanics. The result was that he made a study of the steps needed to accomplish it. There had been no new lodge chartered by our Grand Lodge in 44 years, so

there was no one living now who had been a principal in the creation of the last one 44 years previously.

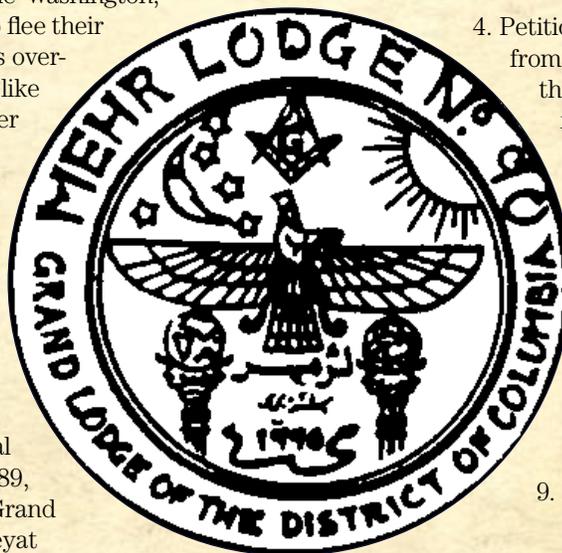
MWB Miner learned that there were several steps needed:

1. Petition by Masons asking for a dispensation from the Grand Master
2. Issuance of the dispensation
3. Appointment of a committee to supervise the new lodge
4. Petition by the lodge for a charter from the Grand Lodge (in 1990 there was no waiting period for a lodge UD to petition for a charter)
5. Report of the committee to Grand Lodge
6. Favorable vote of Grand Lodge
7. Election of officers of the new lodge
8. Issuance of a charter by Grand Lodge
9. Dedication ceremony by Grand Lodge
10. Installation of lodge officers

One further item had to take place, namely the removal from

Grand Lodge code of a provision that required all ritual to be in conformity with that authorized by the Committee on Work and Lectures of the Grand Lodge.

At the Semi-annual meeting of the Grand Lodge in May 1990, I explained to the representatives of the Grand Lodge what was being contemplated by me and that I desired to issue a dispensation for Mehr Lodge UD, but first I wanted to see whether the Grand Lodge would favor the idea. So I took a straw vote and learned that the representatives at that meeting were highly in favor of the idea. Then I presented the amendment to the code that would, if passed, eliminate the aforementioned restriction. It would take a 2/3 favorable vote to



An early hand-drawn rendering of Mehr Lodge's seal at the time of its founding



pass. Discussion was called for, and a few representatives asked questions and/or spoke. The straw vote passed overwhelmingly, as did the motion to amend the Code.

After checking the requirements, I determined that we could proceed, and invited a small group for lunch at The University Club. The group consisted of the Grand Secretary (MWB Stewart Miner), MWB Heyat, our present Grand Secretary (MWB Mansour Hatefi), and three or four Iranian brethren who would become leaders of the lodge. We advised them that they would need to file a petition with the Grand Master asking for a dispensation for a lodge UD, and what it should contain. In August 1990, the petition was received and at month's end the dispensation was issued and a committee of three appointed to supervise the lodge, namely, MWB George R. Adams, then Junior Grand Warden (Grand Master in 1993), MWB Theodore M. Kahn (Grand Master in 1985), and RWB Harold Grainger (Honorary Senior Grand Warden).

Matters proceeded as expected. A petition was ultimately received in November 1990 for a charter to be issued by the Grand Lodge. This was set for a hearing at the Annual Meeting in mid-December. By then the lodge had conferred two or three degrees in accordance with the emulation ritual in Persian, and the committee was favorably impressed and prepared its report to be read at the Grand Lodge meeting. The matter was called, and a motion to grant a charter was made and duly seconded. The committee's report was delivered by its chairman, MWB George R. Adams, the Worshipful Master of Mehr Lodge UD (MWB Mansour Hatefi) was introduced and asked to introduce the officers of the lodge. They stepped down to the stage, were lined up, and presented. Discussion was invited from the representatives and about four of them spoke. The vote was overwhelmingly favorable with only four votes cast in the negative.

The Grand Secretary then set to work to arrange for the ceremony of dedication. MWB Robert F. Drechsler (Grand Master in 1997) made the symbolic miniature lodge to be used during the ceremony, and the date for the dedication was set for early January 1991

in Singleton Lodge Hall. The then Grand Master, MWB Darwin A. Brock, now deceased, designated me to preside over the dedication ceremony, following which MWB Robert B. Heyat installed the officers. Due to the outstanding work by MWB Mansour Hatefi as charter Master, the lodge was an immediate success and precipitated the formation in the ensuing years of bi-lingual lodges in Spanish, French, Italian, Armenian, and Turkish, as well as other unusual lodges to be conducted in English. Today there are almost as many lodges chartered during the last twenty years as there are remaining that were chartered in the 180 years prior to 1990.

Although I had the privilege of issuing the dispensation of Mehr Lodge UD and of leading the effort to obtain a charter for Mehr Lodge No. 90 and presiding over its dedication, I was merely the instrument through whom it took place.

The idea of the creation of a bi-lingual lodge in Washington and of allowing the degrees to be conferred in Persian pursuant to the emulation ritual of England was that of MWB Robert B.

Heyat who was a leading Iranian Mason at that time. He is now a citizen of the United States, and a Past Grand Master in the District of Columbia. He has been instrumental in the issuance of charters to other bi-lingual lodges here and has participated in most of them as an officer.

The lasting success of Mehr Lodge No. 90 is attributable to the dedication of MWB Mansour Hatefi who, as Master of the lodge when under dispensation and the charter Master after its dedication, proved that the bi-lingual lodges can work as part of our Grand Lodge. The members have been very faithful to their lodge and to the Grand Lodge, as well as to the appendant bodies throughout our jurisdiction. This is shown by the many offices held by them in these various bodies.

The last twenty years has seen a new energy and universality for the Craft in the nation's capital; and it all started with the founding of Mehr Lodge. ■



Mehr Lodge Medallion





Grand Master of Masons in Virginia Congratulates Grand Lodge of DC on Bicentennial

Address by MWB John Mason Chambliss, Jr., Grand Master of Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia to the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia on the occasion of its Bicentennial Celebration Banquet on February 12, 2011.

Bring fraternal greetings and congratulations to the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia from the 39,000 Masons of the Grand Lodge of Virginia as you celebrate your 200th Anniversary. This momentous occasion points out the spirit of cooperation enjoyed between our two Grand Lodges at that time which continues to thrive today.

During the early years of the Federal District, there were three Masonic Lodges operating in the area: Lodge No. 9 of Georgetown and Lodge No. 15 of the City of Washington which were chartered by the Grand Lodge of Maryland and Alexandria Lodge No. 22 chartered by the Grand Lodge of Virginia. The Freemasons of the area had publicly participated in cornerstone laying and other public ceremonies including the laying out of the boundary of the District which encompassed 100 square miles.

On November 26, 1796, the Grand Lodge of Virginia chartered Brooke Lodge No. 47 at Alexandria in honor of the Grand Master of that year. The Lodge built its own lodge hall but continued to enjoy friendly relations with Alexandria Lodge and often joined in processions, celebrations, and banquets. Brooke Lodge was to become one of the lodges participating in the formation of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia.

By the beginning of 1811, six lodges were working within the area of the District and the people were aware of the identity of the District being separate from the other states and deemed it

appropriate and desirable to consider plans for an independent Grand Lodge.

Alexandria, because of its history and standing with the Grand Lodge of Virginia, chose to remain with the Grand Lodge of Virginia; however, Brooke Lodge met with the four Maryland lodges on December 11, 1810, to discuss the advisability of proceeding with plans for establishing and organizing a Grand Lodge in and for said District.

The original officers elected for the new Grand Lodge would include one representative from each of the original lodges and the representative from Brooke Lodge No. 47 from Virginia was RW John Kinkaid who was elected as RW Deputy Grand Master. By the meeting of February 19, 1811, Brother Kinkaid had passed away and RW John Richards, also of Brooke Lodge, was elected to replace him. The Grand Secretary reported that copies of the proceedings of the previous meeting had been forwarded to the Grand Lodges of Maryland and Virginia, together with an explanatory letter in

which he had made the request that the five lodges be permitted to retain possession of the charters under which they were each then working.

The Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia was then opened for the first time in ample form.

The seniority of the original lodges was based on the dates of the charters under which each was then working and Brooke Lodge from Virginia became Brooke Lodge No. 2. (This Lodge closed in 1833.)

continued on page 30



MWB John Mason Chambliss, Jr., Grand Master of Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia





Congratulations from Across the Pond

What follows is abridged remarks by RWB David K Williamson, Assistant Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, to the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia on the occasion of its Bicentennial Celebration Banquet on February 12, 2011.

MW Grand Master, Ladies and Brethren, I am delighted to be with you to celebrate this great milestone in your history. MW Grand Master, I bring warm fraternal greetings and congratulations on your Bi-Centenary, from my Grand Master, His Royal Highness The Duke of Kent, and all the members of the United Grand Lodge of England. I thank you for the privilege of addressing you, and to join with the family of visiting delegations, in thanking you and your brethren for the warmth of your welcome and your splendid hospitality. We wish you continued success, happiness and enjoyment as you embark on your third century.

Although we in England are planning for the celebration of our Tercentenary in June 2017, the Bi-Centenary of a Grand Lodge is a rare event, and you have much to be proud of in your history. In doing my "homework" before coming here, I was struck by the international nature of your membership, and the growing number of your lodges drawing their membership from those who have connections with other parts of the world. As your jurisdiction is "the nation's capital", with a large floating international community, that should, perhaps, not surprise me, but it clearly demonstrates that you are very much a part of Masonry Universal!

This is my first Masonic visit to Washington, although I had the great pleasure of visiting several times in my previous existence as a British Airways pilot. In common with many of your guests, I suspect that my Masonic interest in

Washington was rather stimulated by Dan Brown's last book, *The Lost Symbol*. In England, media reaction to it was fickle. Everyone, of course, was expecting Freemasonry to be the villain of the story, and that Dan Brown would do to us what he had done to Opus Dei and the Roman Catholic Church in two previous novels. When it turned out that Freemasonry was not the villain, but that Dan Brown had some very positive things to say about it, the English media lost all interest and there was very little reporting on the subject.

One great positive from the publication of *The Lost Symbol*, is that because of all the pre-publication hype, it was an immediate best seller, and the millions of people who have read its positive comments, will have been given a truer picture of what Freemasonry is and what we stand for.

Although our two Grand Lodges are separated by the Atlantic Ocean, we are descended from the same Masonic roots and have a great deal in common. We face the same sort of challenges, one of which, I am sure, is falling membership. The younger generation are

surely the key to the future of our fraternal organisation, and indeed, our countries. However, young people today have busy professional lives and limited spare time. We are competing for their membership with many other organisations and must ensure that when they join us, they feel that the experience is worthwhile and a good use of their time. They communicate electronically, so we have rebuilt our Grand Lodge website to make it attractive

continued on page 30



RWB David K Williamson, Assistant Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England



Q & A with Dick Fletcher

Acting Executive Secretary of MSA



Walter R. Hoenes, PM
Administrative Assistant to the Grand Master

MWB Richard E. “Dick” Fletcher, a Past Grand Master of Vermont, was elected an Honorary Past Grand Master of DC in 1992. Dick began working at the Masonic Service Association of North America (MSA) in 1987 and since January 1, 1988 has served as its Executive Secretary. Announcing his retirement earlier this year, he continues to manage operations at the headquarters office pending the selection of a successor by MSA’s Executive Commission Board. Recently, **WB** Walter R. Hoenes sat down with **MWB** Dick Fletcher and his wife, Judy, to discuss MSA and their work on behalf its mission and programs for nearly a quarter century.

For our readers who are unfamiliar with Masonic Service Association of North America, please tell us briefly how and when did MSA come into being and what is its purpose?

During World War I the Grand Lodges of the United States wished to show their support for our armed forces serving overseas. The Federal Government said we will not deal with 49 separate organizations, but if you can form one organization we will be happy to work with them. It didn’t happen during World War I but shortly after — MSA was formed in 1919. Our original purpose was to be a support organization for military personnel.

When and how did you come to be the Executive Secretary?

Near the end of my term as Grand Master in Vermont, Stu Pollard, who was my predecessor, mentioned in a conversation that he was leaving the position of Executive Secretary of MSA at the end of December 1987. Throwing my hat in the ring it was my good fortune to

be chosen as the new Executive Secretary, assuming those duties on January 1, 1988.

What has stayed the same over the years with MSA?

After our original formation in 1919 it became clear MSA was in a position to do things at a national level. So Education/Publications; the Hospital Visitation Program; and Disaster Relief all came into existence prior to 1923. These three programs have remained the same. We still publish the Short Talk Bulletin, we still visit veterans in VA Hospitals, and we still put out disaster relief appeals.

What changes have you brought about during your tenure leading MSA?

The major changes during my time as Executive Secretary have been expanding MSA from a national to an international association. We became the Masonic Service Association of North America in 1995 which meant that we could now have Canadian Grand Lodges as members as well as the York Grand Lodge of Mexico. The other major change was the creation of the Masonic Information Center.

What changes would you like to see in the future at MSA?

MSA, like all organizations, must change to meet current needs. Very likely the Short Talk Bulletin will be delivered in a different format. I foresee that printing of the Short Talk will give way to electronic distribution. In fact the whole future of printed material may very well change in format to electronic. The future of the Hospital Visitation Program will depend on how the Veterans Administration approaches medical service to our veterans. With the end of the huge numbers of veterans who served in World War II and Korea the Veterans Administration is going to be faced with fewer



MWB Dick Fletcher with his lady, Judy



veterans in VA Hospitals. This will affect our Visitation Program but until we know how the VA will respond to this change it is hard to predict what will happen.

What challenges have you encountered during your tenure?

The major challenge I have encountered during my time at MSA is the same as that facing every Masonic Organization — the lack of proper funding. We struggle financially as do all Masonic bodies.

Looking back is there anything you would have done differently?

What would I have done differently? One of the strengths of MSA is that we have guidelines as to what is expected of our association. By following those guidelines we have not experienced any great difficulties and I am satisfied with the way things have gone.

Tell us about some of the MSA successes for which you are most proud.

The MSA success story of which I am most proud is the creation of the Masonic Information Center and our ability to work with the media, in communicating factual, accurate information about Freemasonry. We have also published material that has been extremely helpful to the entire Masonic community. The letters and emails we have received have been very positive and clearly indicate that what we have done has been useful.

If the purpose of a lodge is to make Master Masons, what trends do you see in terms of Grand Lodges stabilizing or even increasing membership?

The major stabilizing of membership that Grand Lodges and lodges must address is the ever increasing number of dimits and NPD's. If we cannot present Masonry in such a way as to be attractive to our present members then what will we do after we have attracted new members and brought them into the fraternity?

How can Grand Lodges and lodges themselves generate interest in Freemasonry rather than relying on Dan Brown novels or Nicholas Cage movies?

We have been fortunate lately with books and movies that have portrayed Freemasonry in a very positive manner. This has generated great public interest and we must take advantage of that. In my opinion the program that has done well is the concept of the Open House where lodges within a Grand Jurisdiction will all, on the same day, open their doors to the general public, with members present to discuss Freemasonry.

Any Grand Lodge that has sponsored such a program has found it to be very successful. The public responds well and have a far more positive feeling about the fraternity after such an experience.

What programs or initiatives seem to generate the most interest by prospective members? How should the Craft present and position itself to attract today's men of quality?

Unfortunately for Freemasonry, as for other main-stream organizations, several generations lost interest in any organization that was deemed to be "mainstream" resulting in membership losses throughout all organizations including Freemasonry.

There has been an obvious societal change in the current generation. Today's

young men are different and seem to be very, very interested in value based organizations that show there is a deeper meaning to our lives than the concept of "what's in it for me". The best way to present Freemasonry to today's young men is simply to be ourselves, to reflect what Freemasonry is truly meant to be and to become knowledgeable enough about the fraternity to be able to talk intelligently with prospective members. The greatest challenge to today's Mason? To become more knowledgeable about the fraternity.

What is the future of MSA's famous Short Talk Bulletins?

The Short Talk Bulletin is one of the most popular publications put out by MSA. Today's generation of young

continued on next page

Today's young men are different and seem to be very, very interested in value based organizations that show there is a deeper meaning to our lives than the concept of "what's in it for me".



men are looking for Masonic Education and that is what the Short Talk provides. The change may be in the format of how it is delivered to the subscriber but the need for the Short Talk will remain very strong.

What is the nature and frequency of the media inquiries you receive? What type of media (print, broadcast, internet, etc.) do you find yourself interacting with most often and do their respective lines of inquiry follow expected patterns? More specifically, what type of information are they looking for most often?

We always have Media inquiries but the vast majority of them center around a news event such as the release of a new book or movie or a negative story about a Mason involved in wrongdoing. We interact with all forms of Media — print, audio, visual, internet. Those we hear from most often are print and video. Depending on the nature of the story the questions do follow a normal pattern such as a book or movie plot and the Masons reaction to it, and of course — the negative, the Masonic reaction to a Mason accused of wrongdoing. The Media seem obsessed with Masonic secrecy and in many cases their questions evolve around plots and conspiracies and secrecy. They invariably want to know what is it that Masons are really hiding.

In your opinion, what is the biggest misconception non-Masons have about the Masonic fraternity?

The biggest misconceptions about Freemasonry is the conspiracy theory nonsense, particularly that Jews and Freemasons are in a plot to rule the world. Anti-Masonry has two forms: religious extremism and conspiracy theories. Both of these views have taken firm hold in the minds of many people. Fortunately we have been able to confront these myths and outright lies and exposed them for what they really are.

In your opinion, what is the biggest misconception Masons have about the MSA?

The biggest misconception about MSA is thinking we are a jurisdictional authority or a broad based charity. We get many calls expecting us to settle quarrels or to have funds available for almost any use.

How is MSA's Masonic Information Center responding to technology changes in how information is conveyed or exchanged?

The Masonic Information Center has responded to technology changes by having some of our material on the internet available for download. At one time responses to the Media were almost exclusively by telephone and occasionally by letter, today it's almost all by email with some phone calls.

The Grand Lodge of District of Columbia has been a strong supporter of MSA's VA Hospital Visitation program and has generously contributed funds to special projects such as an organ and new pews

for the chapel or buses for transportation of the veterans. How have other Grand Lodges or other Masonic organizations supported this program in their own jurisdiction?

The Grand Lodge of DC has shown exceptional, and quite frankly, outstanding support for the veterans in the VA Hospital. I would rank the Grand Lodge of DC in the very top category for support. Many Grand Lodges do things for VA Hospitals in their area and occasionally fund a very significant project. But in sum total DC still ranks among the highest in support.

As VA Hospitals have joined other hospitals in transitioning to ever greater and greater outpatient care, how do you envision that MSA will respond to this new reality as it continues its support for our veterans in need?

It is very difficult to look ahead and see how the VA Healthcare System is going to transition to the time when there will be fewer veterans needing treatment. Very likely the VA Hospitals will open up to a broader patient base and partner with other area hospitals and some VA's do work closely with Medical Schools in their area. But, the Federal Government has a very real and a very firm commitment to providing medical care for our veterans and that will continue.

Since you announced your desire to retire as Executive Secretary, I understand that you have graciously agreed to remain acting in that office until the MSA board of directors selects a successor. What advice would you give to the next executive secretary?

My advice to the new Executive Secretary is to say simply "you now have an opportunity to work with some of the finest people you will ever meet. MSA has always been and must always be a support organization working with Freemasons and the Grand Lodges in North America."

We know that the MSA has benefited from the work and dedication of two Fletchers. Please tell us what role your lovely wife, Judy, has played at MSA.

Judy Fletcher has always played a very, very significant role at MSA. Her work ethic is outstanding and as one of our former Commissioners said to me: "Judy is the best public relations rep MSA has ever had." Judy works very closely with our MSA Hospital Reps all around the country and is a great promoter of MSA when we attend Grand Lodge Sessions.

What are your plans when you are relieved of your MSA duties?

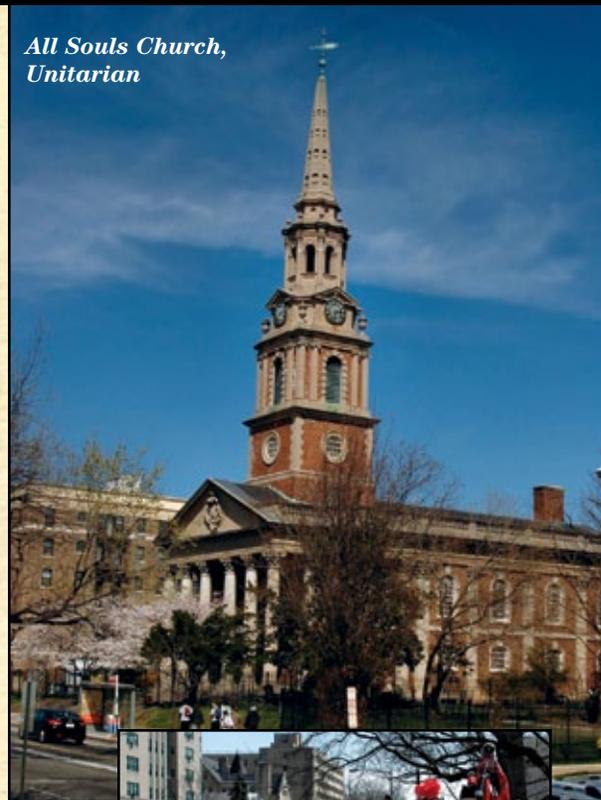
Our plans are to remain in the Washington, DC area. We have been here for 24 years and have come to be very fond of the area. We have been made to feel very welcome, both by the Masons and their families, so we feel very much at home here. ■



Thanksgiving and Remembrance

In commemoration of the Bicentennial of the Grand Lodge, a Masonic Day of Thanksgiving and Remembrance was held on Saturday, March 26, 2011 at All Souls Church, Unitarian, 1500 Harvard Street, NW in Washington. The event, which was attended by Masons, their family and friends, along with representation from all of the jurisdiction's appendant bodies, was organized by the Reverend Canon and Worshipful Brother Daniel D. Darko, Grand Chaplain, and featured beautiful choral music from the St. John's Episcopal/Anglican Church Choir of Mt. Rainier, Maryland and a keynote address, entitled "The Constancy of Masonry", by MWB Stewart W. Miner, PGM, Grand Secretary Emeritus.

All Souls Church, Unitarian



Bagpipers added color and music to the procession



Four bagpipers led the grand procession from the Scottish Rite Center across 16th Street to the church.



The keynote speaker, MWBro. Stewart W. Miner, PGM, Grand Secretary Emeritus



The church's nave was full for the service



After the service, refreshments were served at the Scottish Rite Center.



The Grand Chaplain departs the service followed by MWBro. Stewart Miner, the Assistant Grand Chaplains, and the Grand Master



MWBros. J. Raymond Murray, Warren R. Whitley and Nathaniel M. Adams, Jr., all Past Grand Masters of the MW Prince Hall Grand Lodge of DC with the Grand Master, MWBro. Villarreal



DearFreemason

Welcome to the second installment of DearFreemason. In this space, the author will provide useful information and/or guidance on a range of DC Masonic topics in the format of a Q&A forum. In this issue, DearFreemason discusses a proposal to reinstitute the tradition of the “traveling gavel”.



Marshall N. Wilner, PM
Grand Director of Ceremonies

Let me begin with a hearty thank you to those who read and commented on last issue’s column. As the inaugural column, I was both pleased and surprised about the number of comments I received regarding the answer to a Brother’s question. At this point, I will reiterate a few points from the prior article: First, I am in no way an expert on any particular Masonic subject. I am merely a rough ashlar on a journey to become a perfect ashlar. Second, as a brother who strongly believes in individual lodge culture, any particular response I may offer is merely my opinion and may not work for your lodge. Third, I am usually interested in another brother’s opinion. I therefore welcome any comments or questions to be emailed to me at dearfreemason@gmail.com. Fourth, it will be important for you to include your name and lodge number so that I can know any question or comment to be valid. With that disclaimer said, the following question is in keeping with the last column’s theme of visiting another lodge:

DearFreemason,

I can remember, not too long ago, that in Washington DC Freemasonry there were many more “group” visits to other lodges. Is it my imagination or has that almost come to a standstill?

With Fraternal Greetings,

Worshipful Brother Wanderer

Dear Worshipful Brother Wanderer,

When I travel from lodge to lodge in this jurisdiction, there seems to always be brethren from other lodges in attendance. Usually it is one or two from a number of different lodges. If you are referring to a group of Masons visiting en masse, although I have

seen this occasionally, it is not necessarily the norm at this time.

As builders, I suspect that most of our constituent lodges are in a process of growth and are refocusing on the individual brother’s strength within the lodge. A prime example within our jurisdiction is when we look back to the individual lodges five or even ten years ago. There were lodges struggling to confer each of the three degrees; either by exemplification or to actually initiate, pass, and raise brethren. Through the leadership of the Grand Lecturers, and with strong urging and support from Grand Masters,

this is now a thing of the past. Keep in mind that Standing Resolution 12, “Exemplification of Ritual,” of the Masonic Code of the District of Columbia states:

Resolved, That inasmuch as performance and preservation of ritual is an indispensable tool in the teaching of Masonic principles and philosophy, and officers should assume the responsibility of properly portraying Masonic ritual to the brethren, it is earnestly recommended to Masters of Lodges that in

scheduling their work they arrange for the conferring of each of the three Degrees of Blue Lodge Masonry at least once during their year as Master, either upon an actual candidate of their Lodge, or of a sister Lodge, or upon a substitute for an actual candidate. — Proc. 1968, pp. 12-13.

I mention this, not to pat the jurisdiction on the back, although do not think I am trivializing the incredible accomplishment that this represents, but merely to show that in the District of Columbia, we have turned inward to building our individual lodges and lodge culture. This is a vital part of who we are and what we do as Masons and I applaud this.



DearFreemason welcomes your questions.
Write to him at: dearfreemason@gmail.com



As far as traveling to other lodges; there is a rumor of a traveling gavel. It was passed from lodge to lodge within the jurisdiction. I have spoken to many brethren as to the whereabouts of the gavel and have heard this legend:

Not too long ago, the so-called traveling gavel was an active part of our grand jurisdiction's culture. It was frequently passed from lodge to lodge within the jurisdiction. One night, the gavel was presented to a Worshipful Master and was later found by someone else. It was then turned over to the Grand Lodge, where it has resided since...until now...

Although the mere oversight of leaving the gavel behind, or who, what, why, when, and how are not of major importance or significance, I suggest that the traveling gavel be put back in motion with the following rules:

Once a lodge has possession of the gavel, it will remain with that lodge until one of three events occur:

1. The gavel is taken from a lodge during a stated communication of the host lodge. In order to take the gavel, a lodge attending the stated communication, with at least five brethren, one of them being a pillar officer (WM, SW, or JW), must announce their intention to claim the gavel during the meeting. An appropriate time to do this would be during the introductions or the announcements portion of the meeting. If there are an equal or greater number of Brethren present from another lodge or other lodges who announce their intention to take the gavel, the gavel shall be given to the lodge with the most brethren present. If there is an equal number of brethren present, the gavel will be awarded to the lodge with the greatest percentage of their membership present. The membership number will be obtained from the most recently published "Masonic Directory" (a.k.a. the White Book).

2. The gavel is given to a lodge during a stated communication. In order to give the gavel, at least five

brethren, one of them being a pillar officer (WM, SW, or JW), must attend the stated communication and present the gavel during the meeting. An appropriate time to do this would be during the introductions or the announcements portion of the meeting. The receiving lodge is required to accept the gavel.

3. The gavel is presented to the Grand Master during his installation by whichever lodge is in possession of the gavel at that time. The newly installed Grand Master will immediately turn the gavel over to his mother lodge, and it can neither be taken nor given again until at the installation meeting of the Grand Lodge.

Other notes: The gavel may only change hands once during a stated communication. It cannot be both given and taken during the same meeting. When a lodge obtains possession of the gavel, it must report its new location (the lodge name and number) to the Grand Director of Ceremonies. A lodge cannot take the gavel during their own stated communication. The gavel shall travel with a book of its history. When the gavel changes hands, both the presenting and receiving Lodges shall fill out a page in the book documenting the exchange. Final decisions on all rules shall be made by the Grand Director of Ceremonies. Final decisions on all matters during a stated communi-

cation shall be made by the sitting Worshipful Master of the host lodge.

Yes, this is a lot of rules. This is not intended to make the process a "buzz kill". It is merely a way to create a minimal structure to a process that should be a lot of fun and create a better interaction amongst the constituent lodges of the District of Columbia.

In summary, travel light, travel often, and travel in numbers. Stay tuned for an announcement of where the traveling gavel resides.

Fraternally and Sincerely,

DearFreemason ■

Not too long ago,
the so-called
traveling gavel was
an active part of our
grand jurisdiction's
culture. It was
frequently passed
from lodge to
lodge within the
jurisdiction.



Universal Brotherhood Celebration

continued from page 15



The Universal Lodge meeting included the twinning of two lodges, our own Alianza Fraternal Americana Lodge No. 92 with Firme y Feliz por la Union Lodge No.101, of San Isidro, Peru. Here the Grand Secretary, MWB Mansour Hatefi, PGM, presents the official twinning documents for signing.

Lodge No. 1521 was consecrated on Saturday, June 11, 2011, by the Grand Master and officers of the Grand Lodge. The overwhelming majority of the founding members of this new lodge are Freemasons originating from the Philippines. This explains the lodge's name – *may nilad* – which means “the spot where the plant *nilad* grows” and refers to the land of the Philippines, and the lodge's number 1521 commemorates the discovery of the Philippines by the European explorer Ferdinand Magellan in the year 1521 A.D.

Universal Lodge Meeting

In his letter sent earlier in the year to the various lodges announcing the Universal Lodge Meeting to be held this year and its historic significance, WB Marshall Willner, Past Master of Hiram-Takoma Lodge No. 10 and the organizer of this year's Universal Lodge Meeting wrote:

“At the Bicentennial Banquet of our Grand Lodge on February 12, 2011, the Assistant Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England, RWB David K. Williamson, stated, “As your jurisdiction comprises the capital city of America, that great melting pot... it clearly demonstrates that you are very much a part of Masonry Universal!”

“Universal Freemasonry has been the motto and modes operandi with which our Grand Lodge has brought about a true Renaissance of Freemasonry in Washington, DC. Twenty-one years ago, in 1990, the Grand Lodge, in a historic move, chartered Mehr Lodge No. 90, the first bilingual Lodge in modern times. Arminius Lodge No. 25, our English/German speaking lodge, was chartered in 1876. Since 1990, the Grand Lodge has chartered 16 new lodges in our jurisdiction, three of which sojourned in later years to help form the Grand Lodges of Armenia and Azerbaijan. Today, our Grand Lodge is a living proof of Freemasonry Universal.”

“As we celebrate 200 years of our Grand Lodge's history, we reaffirm our commitment to the ideals of our noble fraternity and to the universality of the Craft. It is for this reason, that this year's Universal Brotherhood Celebration will include activities/events of special and historic significance to our Craft.”

“One of these activities is the Universal Lodge meeting – a unique gathering of Masons from our Grand Lodge will open and close the Lodge in the DC Ritual but using the diversity of languages represented by our various Lodges. As the sitting Master speaks in one language, the Senior Warden responds using



another, etc. This melody of sounds articulating the rituals of Freemasonry affirms the diversity of our membership within the unity of the Craft."

It was indeed a magnificent gathering celebrating the diversity of the Craft within its unity! The meeting also featured the following:

- A twinning between Alianza Fraternal Americana Lodge No. 92 and Firme y Feliz por la Union Lodge No.101, of San Isidro, Peru.
- A recognition of Mehr Lodge No. 90, the founding of which in 1990 marked the renaissance in the modern era of Freemasonry Universal in Washington, DC;
- Remarks by Brother Richard Dreyfuss about the importance of the values of the Enlightenment. As he put it in his words, *"I was a Freemason before becoming one officially."*

Medal of Freedom

The Grand Master, with the support of the Grand Lodge, selected Mr. Morrill Worcester to receive the prestigious Medal of Freedom instituted by the Grand Lodge of Washington DC. This special honor and recognition is extended to those individuals who have distinguished themselves in the service of Freedom



2011 Medal of Freedom recipient Mr. Morrill Worcester with his wife, Karen, and the Grand Master, MWB Jesse Villarreal

here or abroad. In 1992 Mr. Worcester founded the Arlington Wreath Project, now called Wreaths Across America, which coordinates the Christmastide tradition of laying holiday wreaths at the graves of our nation's veterans throughout the country. The Medal was awarded at the June 11th gala banquet of Almas Shrine on the occasion of the 125th Anniversary of the Shriners in the nation's capital. ■

Spreading the Light

continued from page 11

engaging with them, instead bide their time and take forever before moving to recognize and establish fraternal relations with them, under the guise of customs and tradition. Too often, they are not evenhanded in these actions, because they pick and choose according to their internal policies or politics. The American Grand Lodges are much more progressive in this respect, but some of the Europeans are unfortunately less forthcoming.

Recognizing the new regular Grand Lodges early on and guiding them on the right path by using our influence and our experience with them will allow these institutions to build upon the aspirations and enthusiasm of their members and will discourage rivalry and dissention by individuals or clandestine groupings. Let us embrace the new comers early on, recognize them, establish fraternal relations, support them and engage them in a positive way, so that they may advance on the right track and become successful and stable on their own.

Conclusion: We are at a critical stage of our history. The world is changing fast and if we do not adapt to these changes we will be left behind. We cannot rely any more on our past history; we cannot keep on boasting about our great Masonic leaders of yesteryear. They lived in a different era and they took the opportunities presented to them and did what was right. They took on the challenges of their time and helped change their societies, and that is why they are so well remembered, loved and respected as great leaders. We should think about who we are now and what we are capable of doing. Let us not be afraid of venturing into society and laboring to improve the human condition. Let us not allow this great and ancient fraternity of ours to become totally irrelevant and sink into oblivion. Let us recognize the critical issues facing humanity and work together to tackle them as best we can so that 100 years from now we may also be remembered and respected as great Freemasons who cared and worked hard to bring about positive change. This is the best way to help Freemasonry and our beloved fraternity survive and flourish in the 21st century. ■



DC Freemasons Dedicate American University Commemorative Stone



Dustin R. Rawlins
Aide to the Grand Master

With Masonic jewels and white aprons glistening in the noontime sun, over one hundred District of Columbia Freemasons marched in procession on March 1, 2011 commemorating the historic dedication of the new School of International Service building at The American University.

In a rare public ceremony, Most Worshipful Brother Jesse Villarreal, Grand Master of Masons of the District of Columbia, dedicated the stone assisted by the Masters of five local Masonic Lodges, the president of American University, Dr. Cornelius M. Kerwin, and the dean of the School of International Service, Louis W. Goodman. Truly one of the oldest public traditions in Freemasonry, the earliest record of a formal Masonic cornerstone dedication ceremony is that of the Foundation Stone laying for the New Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh by the Earl of Cromarty, Grand Master of Scottish Masons, on August 2, 1738. Stone dedication ceremonies are one of the world's most ancient customs in consecrating buildings and monuments to their intended service to mankind.



The new commemorative stone on the grounds of American University's School of International Service depicts a "Perfect Ashlar" emerging from a "Rough Ashlar".

Further keeping with the tradition established during several famous local cornerstone laying events, including: the first boundary stone of Washington, DC (1791); the White House (1792) the U.S. Capitol Building (1793) by President and Brother George Washington; U.S. Capitol Building Expansion (1851), and

the American University campus's first building, Hurst Hall, (1896), the ceremony began an hour earlier, with the officers of the Grand Lodge of Washington, DC, performing a traditional ritual, known only to initiated Masons. This private ceremony serves to remind the members that they have committed themselves to espousing in their actions the same values that the School of International Service's stone dedication is intended to commemorate – constancy, education, civil international dialogue, mutual respect, and universal understanding.

A few moments before noon, the procession congregated in the new building's spacious, sun-lit, atrium. Reminiscent of the parade that took place during the May 1902 cornerstone laying ceremony at The American University's McKinley Building, over which President and Freemason Theodore Roosevelt



presided, the procession that followed was of historic proportion. Grand Lodge and University officials, along with over one hundred Freemasons, University students, faculty, staff, and alumni, fell into line and processed toward the granite monument donated by the five oldest operating Lodges in the District (Federal No. 1, Justice-Columbia No. 3, Naval No. 4, Potomac No. 5 and Wm. R. Singleton-Hope-Lebanon No. 7). As the Grand Lodge Officers approached, the procession split into two columns, flanking the pathway and revealing the ceremony's site. The ceremony that followed involved the use of tools from operative masonry: the trowel, square, level, and plumb. All of which hold a special purpose as speculative Masonic tools, with each being used to ceremoniously "test" the stone in its emblematic allusions to the intended functions a cornerstone represents, not only providing a sense of strength and proportion to a building's edifice, but also representing a building's design, and attesting the power of time and the ephemeral nature of all human undertakings.

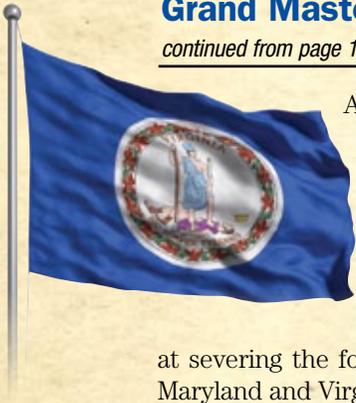
The additional components in this symbolic and dignified ceremony are the use of corn, wine, and oil to anoint the stone, thus consecrating a building for its intended use. Corn represents nourishment and plenty; wine is used as a symbol of joy and prosperity; and oil denotes harmony. Interestingly, the three vessels that held these elements are the same silver chalices used in the Washington Monument cornerstone laying. Adding to their significance was the presence of the Masonic gavel that George Washington used as he laid the United States Capitol building cornerstone.

As the elements were introduced to the stone, remarks were given by Grand Master Villarreal, Dean Goodman, and Dr. Kerwin. Each conveyed their blessing and hope for the reaffirmed friendship between the Grand Lodge and The American University and their pledge to be leaders in the community, combining their efforts to pursue the search for truth, the central value of service and of the importance of education for all people dedicated to improving the hearts and minds of its population in pursuit of enlightenment. ■



Grand Master of Masons in Virginia

continued from page 18



At their meeting on July 9, 1811, the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia adopted its first Constitution and also an Address to the Grand Lodges of Maryland and Virginia, restating the reasons which had impelled the formation of the Grand Lodge and its regret

at severing the former ties as subordinate lodges in Maryland and Virginia.

In 1846, Congress ceded back to Virginia its portion of the District of Columbia reducing the area of the District from 100 square miles to 69 square miles. Having no lodges now located south of the Potomac

River, no jurisdictional issues confronted the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia as a result of this congressional action.

As evidenced 200 years ago, the Grand Lodge of Virginia continues to recognize the District of Columbia as a separate jurisdiction and understands the desire, necessity, and appropriateness of the establishment of a separate Grand Lodge. We continue to wish them success in their endeavors. We have had and continue to enjoy cordial relations with this body and we are proud to participate in this celebration of your 200th anniversary. It is our prayer that the Grand Architect of the Universe will continue to prosper you and bless you as you promote the causes of Freemasonry. ■

Congratulations from Across the Pond

continued from page 19



and appealing to their generation. It has generated a lot of interest and brought forward many potential candidates who had an interest in Freemasonry but either did not believe that they knew any Freemasons, or believed that they had to wait to be asked to join. As we

are seeking to attract professional men, we looked to the universities. For the last six years I have been chairing a group which is reconnecting Freemasonry with the Universities by seeking to attract membership from undergraduates and other members of the Universities, and we too have a website which is already having a positive effect. We have a growing number of Lodges, currently 40, and try to ensure that our new undergraduate members remain connected with Freemasonry when they graduate and move away from their university and its lodge.

Recruitment is only part of the solution. Retention of new members is equally important. We have introduced mentoring schemes in which we ask our lodges to give each new candidate a mentor who will sit with him in lodge, deal with any questions he has and generally advise him as he gradually works his way up in lodge. Our lodges are much smaller than yours, and we encourage them to share out the ritual work so that the load does not fall on one or two, and more people can be involved. "Involvement" is a key word. Today's new Masons have high expectations and wish to be involved in all levels of the Craft. They are not content to be backbenchers but want

to be contributors and to feel that their voices are heard. They also want to understand what it is they have joined, how it works, and how they fit into the system. If we want to retain them as members we have to find ways of satisfying their needs or they will leave and do something else.

With all that has been going on, we believe that we are starting to see green shoots of a revival in membership. We have to foster those shoots, and without altering our basic principles and tenets, adapt to today, be open to change and receptive to new ideas. If we can do that, then our great fraternity will survive, and our Tercentenary in 2017 will see a revived and strengthened Freemasonry in England.

MW Grand Master, may I congratulate you on presiding over this Bicentennial year in such a committed fashion, and wish you success in all the future events you have planned to celebrate it. To mark the occasion I am delighted to present you with a personal gift from our Grand Master HRH The Duke of Kent. It is a gilt medallion, struck by the Royal Mint, engraved on one side with the arms of the United Grand Lodge of England and on the other with the signature of the Grand Master. It is his personal gift to your Grand Lodge.

MW Grand Master, we in the United Grand Lodge of England, join with all your guests in congratulating you on your 200th Birthday. We thank you for your fellowship and most generous hospitality, and wish you and your brethren success and happiness in the future. ■



Bicentennial Commemoratives

Order Now. Only limited quantities remain!

Support and celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia with these highly collectable Bicentennial Commemoratives.



Breast Jewel
(\$30 donation + S&H)



obverse reverse

Coin
(\$10 donation + S&H)



Breast Jewel
(\$30 donation + S&H)



obverse

Medallion
(\$50 donation + S&H)



reverse



Firing Glass
(\$30 donation + S&H)



Please contact the Grand Lodge office to calculate shipping and handling charges for your order.

GRAND LODGE OF DC
5428 MacArthur Blvd., NW Washington DC 20016
grandlodge@dcgrandlodge.org
(202) 686-1811

The Voice of Freemasonry

Grand Lodge, F.A.A.M. of DC
5428 MacArthur Blvd., N.W.
Washington, DC 20016-2524

NonProfit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Permit No. 207
Dulles, VA



Grand Lodge of Free And Accepted Masons of the District of Columbia
Jesse Villarreal, Grand Master Mansour Hatefi, Grand Secretary

Upcoming Grand Lodge Events:



Fall Leadership Conference

September 10-11, 2011
National Conference Center, Leesburg, VA



DC Masonic Family Picnic

September 17, 2011, 12-5 PM
Turkey Run Pavillions/Claude Moore Colonial Farm,
McLean, VA



GL Annual Communication

November 19, 2011
Scottish Rite Ctr, Washington DC



GL Third Communication and Installation

December 10, 2011
Scottish Rite Ctr, Washington DC



Mark Your Calendar!



Visit us on the web at:
dcgrandlodge.org