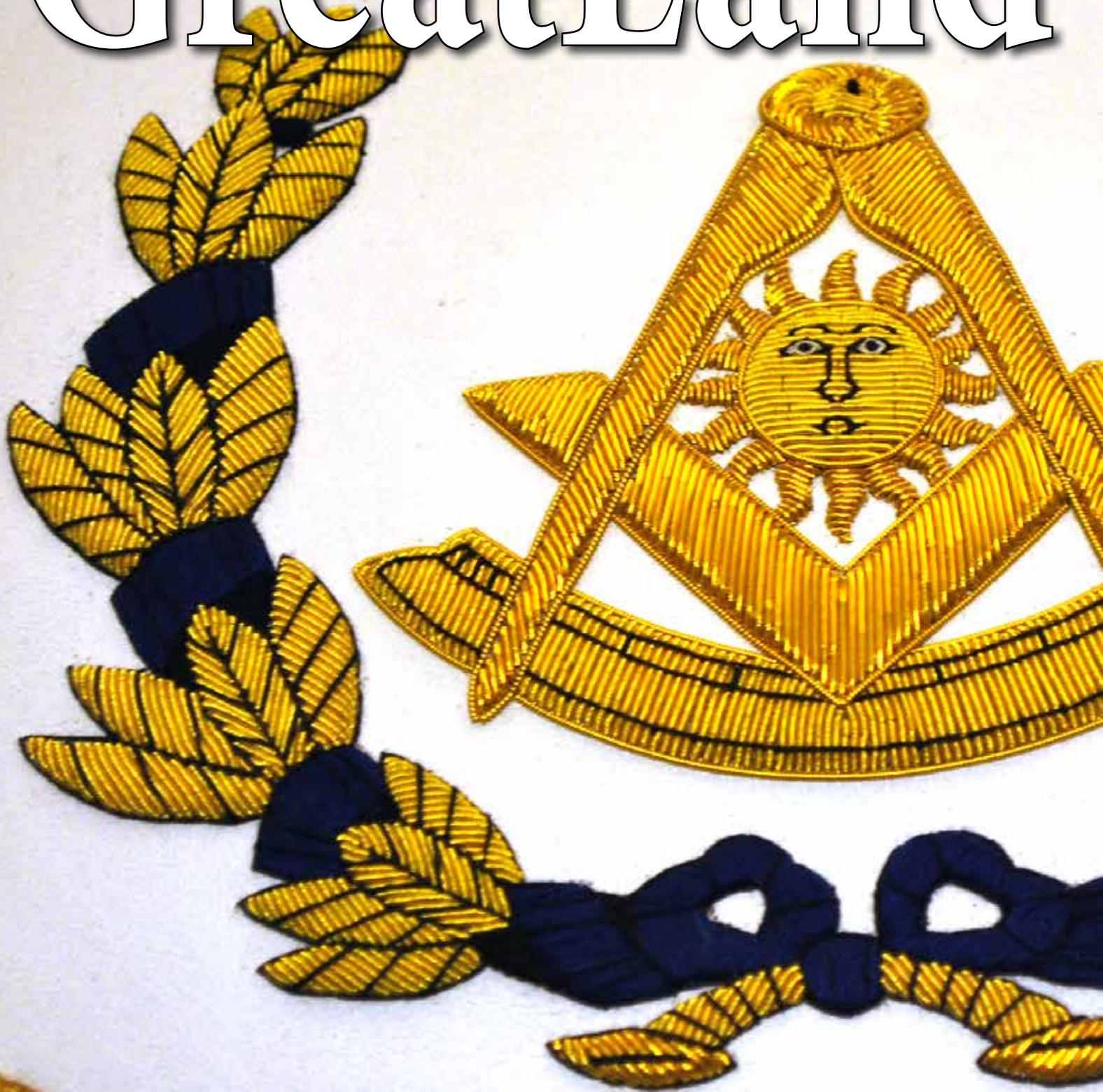


Light from the
GreatLand



Grand Lodge Edition

Spring 2019

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Light from the Great Land



**The Most Worshipful Grand
Lodge of F. & A.M. of Alaska**

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Submission Guidelines

The following schedule will be followed this year to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to submit their items for the benefit of Masonry in Alaska:

Submittal Deadline • Publishing Date

June 1, 2019 • July 1, 2019
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December 1, 2019 • January 1, 2020
March 1, 2020 • April 1, 2020

Submit your articles in 12-point Times New Roman. Use the same typeface, or font, throughout the entire manuscript. Your manuscript should be single-spaced throughout. No columns. All text should be flush left, and do not justify the text. Do not use the space bar to achieve tabs or indents to align text. Do not use the automatic hyphenation feature. The default, or "normal" style should be the only style used in your manuscript.

For capitalization, hyphenation, use of numbers, punctuation, and other matters of style, follow Chicago style guidelines, current edition.

Notes should be placed at the end of the article and double-spaced. The proposed title of the article and the name of the author should appear at the top left of page one. For more information on Chicago style citation guidelines, visit:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/>

Contributions will be considered on the timeliness of their receipt, the amount of editing required, and space available.

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DON'T BELIEVE THE HYPE

Masonry Isn't Dying

Imagine your family bought a house, a fixer-upper with a lot of potential. One night, your family gets together with your neighbors for a dinner party. The evening is going well, everyone is enjoying themselves, and discussion ensues to form a homeowners' association. You leave with feelings of elation of being a part of a wonderful neighborhood. The next day, you and your family begin plans to restore the home. A couple of weeks later you begin work on your new home. Not long into the work, an agent from the homeowners' association comes over and tells you to stop work because it was not approved by the association. You submit your plans for your family's dream home to the association, and they are promptly rejected. You make several attempts to get approval to restore the home without success. Finally, the homeowners' association dictates to you an acceptable plan for restoring the home, but it falls extremely short of your's and your family's expectations for the home.

by M.W. John D. May

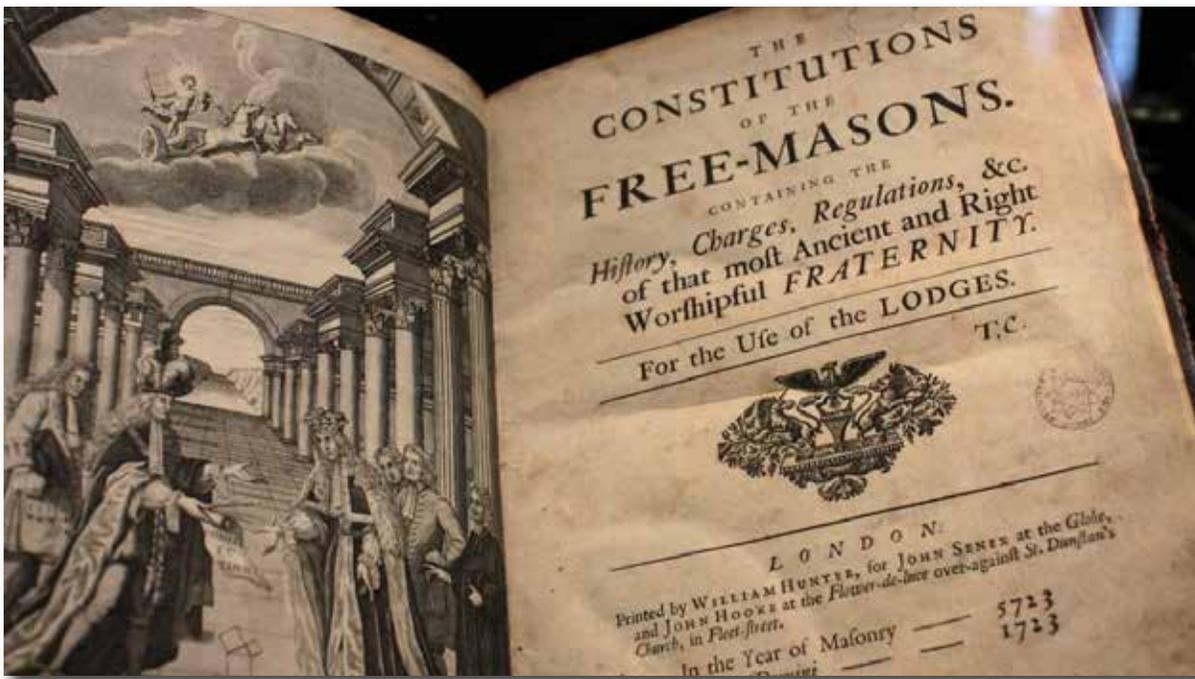


Brethren, this story is an allegory for Masonic grand lodges, and to a lesser extent our blue lodges and appendant bodies. As an organization, our priorities have strayed from the original design of Masonry. We have elevated the demands of the organization over the Masonic journeys of our brethren, and, in the case of many, the weight of the organization has snuffed out Masonic Light. Our Masonic organizations are struggling for three reasons: 1) we have created and embraced a hysteria and self-fulfilling prophecy over the decline in membership; 2) we have reacted with ineffective policies aimed at serving the organization while losing sight of the core mission of Masonry; and, 3) we have not adapted our business models to ensure that our brethren and their families are able to enjoy quality Masonic experiences.

Masonry is a personal journey, grounded on faith, supported by our brethren and families, which provides men with opportunities to learn more about themselves, to think critically, and

make positive differences in the world. It is a pure ideology that kindles the fire of the benevolent human spirit, through a course of instruction and self-reflection for its practitioners to learn and to develop into men of great character. Masonry is a way of life that harmoniously unites men and families from all backgrounds. Unfortunately, organizational matters have caused us to lost sight of this.

As Grand Master, I am bound to the obligations of the office, but I am going to do my utmost to champion reforms in our jurisdiction. These efforts include: 1) establishing new policies that puts Masons, their families, and the original design of Masonry first; 2) redrafting the Alaska Masonic Code to better support our lodges and remove ambiguity; and, 3) presenting new ways to conduct lodge meetings, deliver quality events, and effectively manage the organization to support our Masons, our families, and the noble art of Masonry.



and a champion of the human condition. The time has come for Masonry to lead again. Brethren, this is our new narrative.

Second, I need your support. The reforms we need to accomplish can only be achieved when we work

In order to achieve these ends, I ask two things from each of you.

First, don't believe the hype that Masonry is dying. This fallacy is killing us from the inside. Fraternal organizations are focused on numbers and need more members to sustain antiquated business models. This narrative doesn't support Masonry, and it drains the vitality from our Brotherhood. It's time to reclaim our narrative to focus on Masonry and restore quality to our Masonic experiences.

Masonry is the world's oldest and premier fraternal organization. Unlike other fraternal organizations that have come and gone, Masonry remains a strong and viable force in the lives of the men that have joined our ranks and embraced the Masonic experience. It is a journey of personal growth that builds character and nurtures the hearts and minds of men to the pursuit of nobler deeds, higher thoughts, and greater achievements. Our grand Masonic journeys are supported by an indivisible brotherhood of like-minded men. Masonry provides good men with the tools to make them better men, better husbands, better fathers, better citizens, and exceptional human beings. Masonry was at the forefront of the enlightenment, the causes of liberty and representative government,

together. We may not always agree with one another, but we can put our minds together, develop a collaborative plan to move forward, and restore quality in our Masonic journeys.

We have the ability to start a Masonic Renaissance, but we must realize this vision, make the commitment, and have the fortitude to reclaim our narrative. It is time for the Masonic Family to commit to working smarter and re-engage ourselves to the original mission of Masonry. We are only accountable to ourselves, but we must commit to one path or the other. We either get busy living life to the fullest and enjoying our time in Masonry, or we get busy dying under the weight of the fallacies and the old narrative. I offer to each you this opportunity to take the lead to restore Masonry.

It is an esteemed honor to accept this solemn responsibility which has been entrusted to my care. I appreciate your brotherhood, your friendship, and your support. May the Great Architect of the Universe watch over us and bless us in our undertakings.



M.W. John D. May
Grand Master





Before he was a Mason He was a Man

I want to thank the Brothers for placing their trust in me and electing me Junior Grand Warden. I will endeavor to re-earn, or in some cases earn, that trust every day.

One of the reasons I put my name forward was to help Alaska Masons - me included - answer the question: What should we offer the man who knocks on our doors?

A ritualized initiatic experience. Friendship. Social opportunities. Tools to improve himself as a husband, father and a man, if he chooses to use them.

An ideal lodge offers all of these things in balance. What the exact mixture is depends on the Lodge. There is no exact recipe for the ideal Lodge, certainly not one that can be ordained from on high.

However, there are some things we should not offer. Meetings loaded with mundane business items and little else. A forum for professional networking. Cliques. Tolerance for ungentlemanly conduct.

When we wonder why our brothers aren't coming to lodge, the first question we should ask is which lodge experience are we offering? Are we offering a unique experience that can't be replicated — not at the bar, not on TV, not on the Internet? Do men leave Lodge feeling better about themselves and the Fraternity than before they came? Are

by R. W. Charles Ward



we, to paraphrase W. Bro. Jason Mitchell from Utah, programming meetings by design or by default? Answering these questions honestly and fully is the first step on the path towards bringing Brothers back to Lodge.

Concerns about overall numbers are valid, to be sure. But many, if not most of our Lodges, have plenty of men on the rolls to fill the officer chairs and have other Brothers ready for leadership. There are enough brothers to practice and perform quality ritual for candidates and members alike. The numbers are high enough to prepare engaging Masonic education pieces and host enjoyable social functions.

The problem is those men aren't coming to Lodge. Instead, they are finding better experiences away from it.

Sometimes, those experiences should be more important than Lodge. A new job. A marriage. A newborn child. But if you compare your Lodge's roster to your Tyler's Register, you're likely to find most of the names not appearing on the latter are forgoing Lodge to stay home to watch TV or surf the internet, or because some other social activity is more fulfilling.

It's time to find out why our Brothers are staying away, and to find out if and how the Lodge can offer better experiences to reignite the initial passion that caused those men to knock on our doors.



R.W. Charles Ward
Junior Grand Warden





THE TYLER'S SWORD

by V.W. Nicholas Adair



What is Masonry? This is a question that I hope and pray we all ask ourselves throughout our entire Masonic journey. I hope the question is asked when one becomes an Entered Apprentice, when passed to the degree of a Fellowcraft, and especially when raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason. Unfortunately, we tend to ignore this question, due to the standard work that needs to be done to make these degrees.

We tend to ignore this question even more when we start our journey through the line at our Lodge. We spend most of our time memorizing our parts for opening, closing, degree work, and anything else that is required within our Lodges.

Then we move through the chairs like ascending a staircase: from Junior Steward to Senior Steward and from Junior Deacon to Senior Deacon. Eventually, we make it to the Wardens' seats, again starting with Junior Warden and moving to Senior Warden.

I know this "progressive line" is not technically part of Masonry, but most Lodges utilize the structure. It allows the individual Mason to experience different aspects of the Lodge. They glean the insight into what each office requires

and how to perform those duties.

I should inform you that I am writing this article after going through the chairs myself. I started as the Junior Deacon, even though I had a Steward's responsibilities that year. I continued to Senior Deacon, Junior Warden, Senior Warden, and then Worshipful Master for two years, and eventually to the post of Tyler. This was my seven-year experience through the chairs of my Lodge.

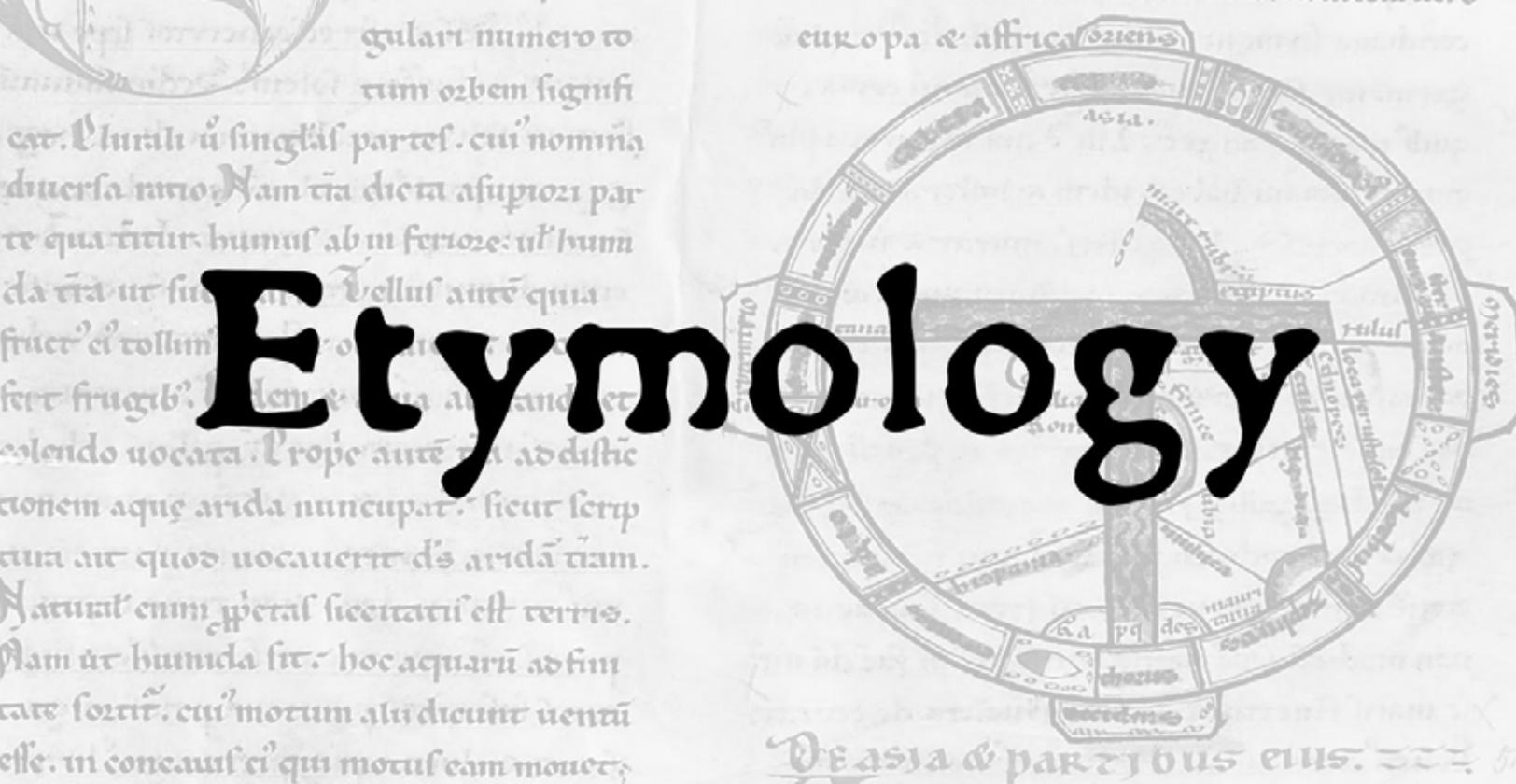
But the question lingers in our minds. What is Masonry? What is it all about?

I know this is a difficult question to answer. And I unfortunately, I cannot do it in a quick sound byte or one sentence to satiate the hasty. The question requires quite a bit of understanding, as well as some grammar, logic, and rhetoric.

The sound byte answer is quite simple. We use it all over the place. Just do a Google search on the internet, you'll see.

We put it on shirts, sweaters, crests, pins, and different forms of marketing tools and memorabilia that can be found in tourist shops, and the gift section of your local supermarket. Different phraseology comes up from time to time, but ultimately, the same idea is there.





Etymology

Making good men better. This is the slogan, the creed, and the motto of Freemasons. However, this phrase raises other questions. How do we do that? What is the process for making good men better? What does better mean? Is there a goal? What is the whole objective of the degrees?

Well, gentlemen, it's all about one thing: Integrity—how to learn it, how to build it, and how to maintain it. These correspond directly with the lessons and goals of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason. This is especially poignant in the Third Degree, and within its drama.

Before I move into the subject of integrity, I want to explain the study of etymology.

Etymology is the study of the origin of words and the way in which their meanings have changed throughout history. For example: The word “husband” comes from the combination of the old Norse word “buandi,” meaning to dwell, and “hus,” meaning house. “Buandi” evolved into “bondi,” and combined with “hus” became “husbondi.”

“Hus-bondi” is the old Norse word meaning “house dweller,” and changed slightly when adopted into Old English as “hus-bonda,” meaning male head of household, or master of the house.

It is there from the Old English, that we have the evolution of the word we use today, “Husband.” Of course, its meaning has changed slightly over the years. “Husband” is now associated with the married man, in association with his spouse.

With etymology, we can see the history of this word, and how it formed within our common usages in modern American English. And I am going to use the history of a few words to give a better understanding of our Masonic lessons.

“Integrity” comes from the 14th century, and means, “innocence, blamelessness; chastity, purity.” Also from Old French “integrité” or directly from Latin “integritatem” meaning “soundness, wholeness, completeness,” or figuratively “purity, correctness, blamelessness,” from integer “whole” (see integer). Its use to mean a sense of wholeness or perfect condition comes from the mid-15th century.

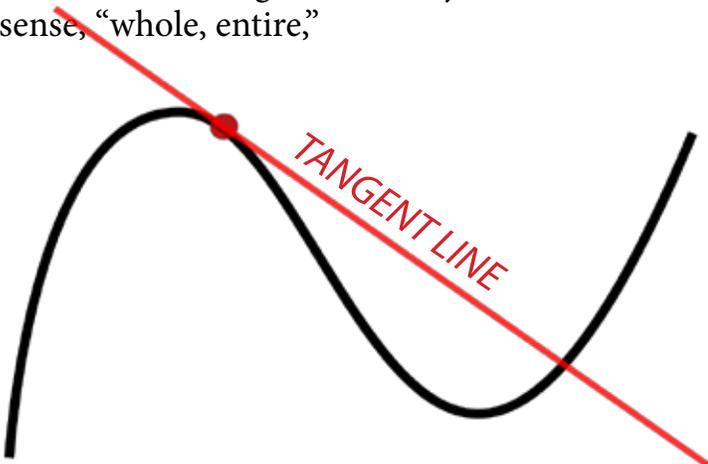
“Integrity” is a derivative of “integrate.”

“Integrate” comes from the 1630s, and has the meaning of “to render (something) whole, bring together the parts of.” Also from Latin “integratus,” the past participle of “integrare” which means “make whole,” from “integer” which means “whole, complete.” Figuratively, it means “untainted, upright,” and it literally means “untouched,” from the root “tangere,” which means “to touch.”



“Integrate” developed the meaning “put together parts or elements and combine them into a whole” in 1802. The “racially desegregate” sense probably is a back-formation from “integration.” It is related to “integer,” “integrated,” and “integrating.”

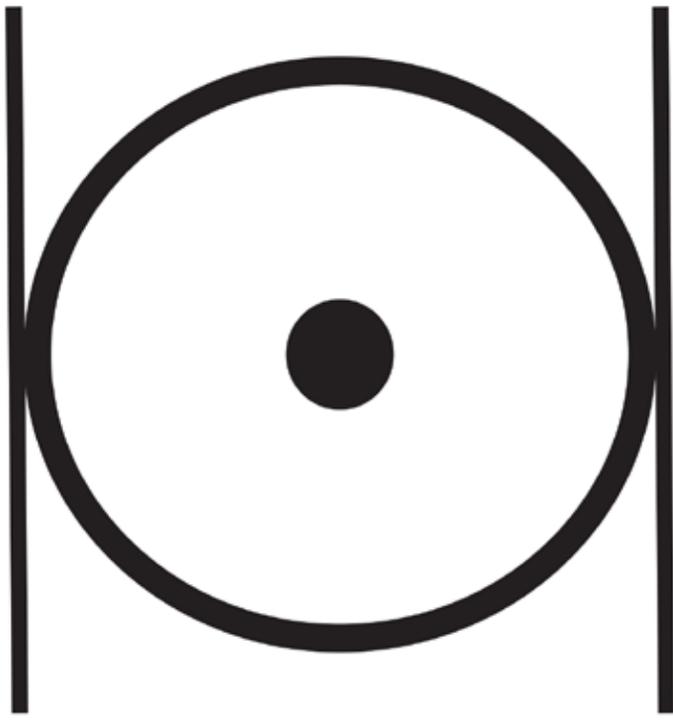
An integer is “a whole number” (as opposed to a fraction), and comes from the 15th century Latin “integer,” meaning “intact, whole, complete.” It figuratively means “untainted, upright,” and literally means “untouched” from the root word “tangere,” which means “to touch.” The word was used earlier in English as an adjective in the Latin sense, “whole, entire,”



“Tangere” is the root of “tangent,” from the 1590s which means “meeting at a point without intersecting.” From the Latin “tangem,” meaning “to touch.” First used by Danish mathematician Thomas Fincke in “Geometria Rotundi” (1583). Its use to mean “slightly connected with a subject” is first recorded 1825.

This brings us to the concept of “tangential thinking,” which comes from the root of “tangent” and the concept of the thought process being only slightly connected with a subject. Circumstantiality (also circumstantial thinking, or circumstantial speech) means “an inability to answer a question without giving excessive, unnecessary detail.” This differs from “tangential thinking,” in that the person does eventually return to the original point.

“Circumstantial” is a 16th century word meaning “attending, incidental” and is derived from “circumstances,” from the Latin “circumstantia.” It is related to “circumstantially.” Circumstantial evidence is “evidence from more or less relevant circumstances bearing upon a case.”



With “returning to the original point” and “circumstantial” being our current words, this brings us to “circumference.” This is a “line that bounds a circle” and comes from the late 14th century. From the Latin “circumferentia,” meaning “to lead around, take around, carry around.”

And the line that bounds a circle is a depiction of how to “circumscribe.” Circumscribe comes from the late 14th century, meaning “to encompass; confine, restrain, mark out bounds or limits for,” from Latin “circumscribere” meaning “to make a circle around, encircle, draw a line around; limit, restrain, confine, set the boundaries of.”

And we all know what happens when we integrate tangents and circumferences? We come up with an image that looks a lot like this... although, it does seem to be missing one thing. Ah, yes, another geometrical concept. A point.

A point is “minute amount, single item in a whole; sharp end of a sword, etc.,” a merger of two words, both ultimately from the Latin “pungere” which means “to prick, pierce.” The Latin neuter past participle punctum was used as a noun, meaning “small hole made by pricking,”

subsequently extended to anything that looked like one, hence, “dot, particle,” etc. This yielded the Old French point “dot; smallest amount,” which was borrowed in Middle English in the 13th century.

Meanwhile the Latin feminine past participle of “pungere” was “puncta,” which was used in Medieval Latin to mean “sharp tip,” and became Old French “pointe” which means “point of a weapon, vanguard of an army,” which also passed into English in the early 14th century.

The sharp end of a sword? Is there anyone within the lodge that uses a sword? Of course there is; it’s the Tyler. The Tyler’s main job is to guard the outer door of the Lodge from the non-initiated.

Guard comes from the early 15th century, and means “one who keeps watch, a body of soldiers,” also “care, custody, guardianship,” and the name of a part of a piece of armor, from Middle French “garde” meaning “guardian, warden, keeper; watching, keeping, custody,” and from Old French “garder,” meaning “to keep, maintain, preserve, protect.” Its original use in the sense to mean swordplay or fisticuffs is from the 1590s; hence to be on guard or to the French “en-garde,” meaning to defend with a sword.





Guarding is seen within our Masonic lodges, by the crossing of symbols. The Secretary wears crossed quills, denoting a “keeper, warden, or custodian” of the lodge minutes. The Treasurer wears crossed keys, showing that he is in charge of “guarding” the money of the lodge. And the Marshall wears crossed batons, signifying his guardianship of “etiquette” within decorum of the lodge.

Defend is attested from “fight in defense of” someone or something. From the mid-14th century meaning “defend with words, speak in support of, vindicate, uphold, maintain.” In Middle English it also could mean “forbid, prohibit; restrain, prevent.”

In many lodges throughout the state of Alaska, it is a tradition to hand the Tyler’s sword over to the outgoing Past Master. And many of us like to make the humorous claim that it is to keep the

Past Master from interfering in current lodge events. In other words, it keeps the grumpy ol’ Past Master’s mouth shut.

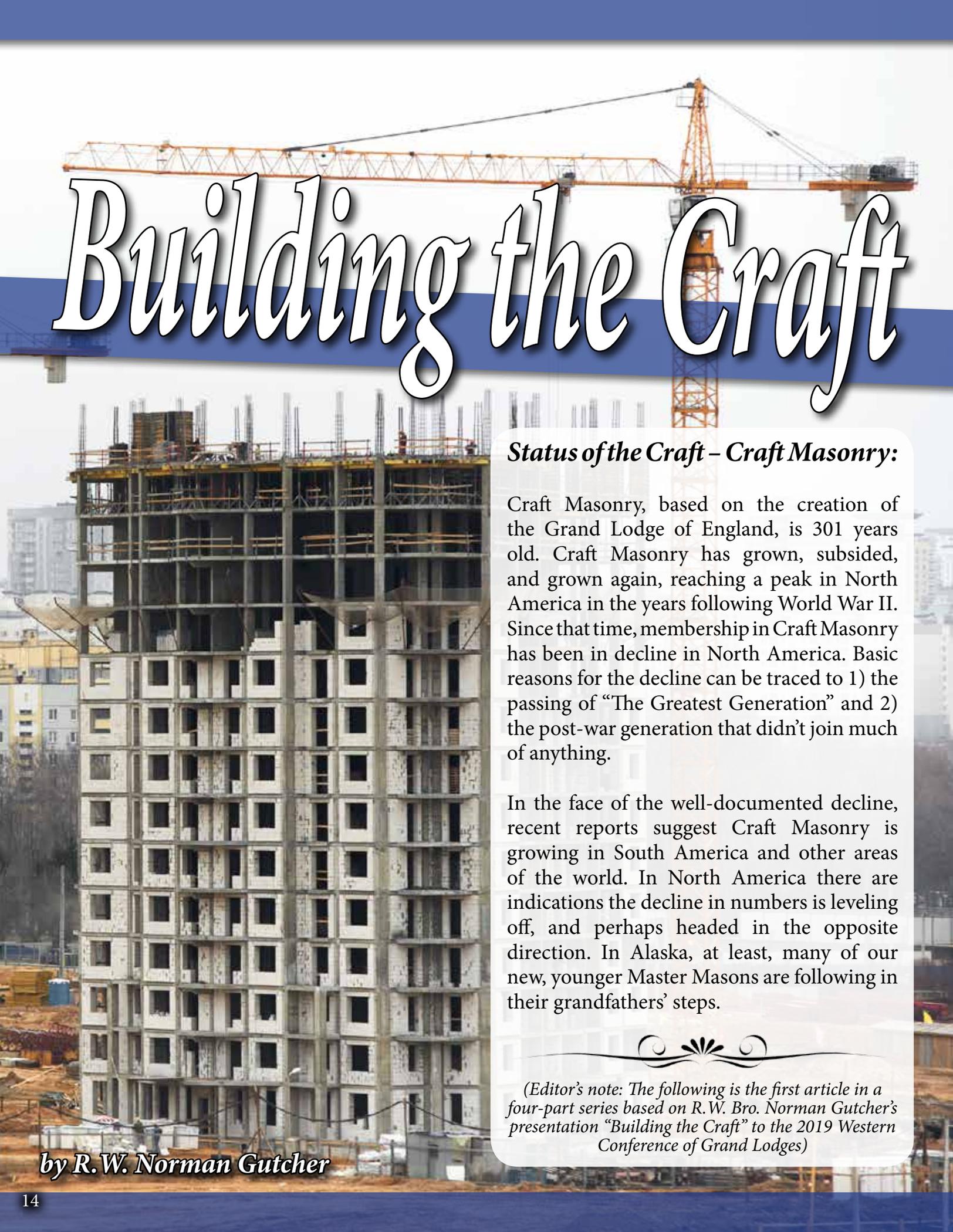
But I would like to think of it from a different perspective. First of all, in order to defend and guard the Lodge against the outside problems, the Mason at his Tyler’s post needs to be aware of what he is defending. And, as a Past Master, you have a unique perspective on your Lodge, the officers, and your brethren alike.

Only a Past Master truly knows what it feels like to defend and guard the secrets of Masonry that are lodged within the hearts and minds of every brother within their sacred retreat.



V.W. Nicholas Adair
Matanuska Lodge No. 7





Building the Craft

Status of the Craft – Craft Masonry:

Craft Masonry, based on the creation of the Grand Lodge of England, is 301 years old. Craft Masonry has grown, subsided, and grown again, reaching a peak in North America in the years following World War II. Since that time, membership in Craft Masonry has been in decline in North America. Basic reasons for the decline can be traced to 1) the passing of “The Greatest Generation” and 2) the post-war generation that didn’t join much of anything.

In the face of the well-documented decline, recent reports suggest Craft Masonry is growing in South America and other areas of the world. In North America there are indications the decline in numbers is leveling off, and perhaps headed in the opposite direction. In Alaska, at least, many of our new, younger Master Masons are following in their grandfathers’ steps.

(Editor’s note: The following is the first article in a four-part series based on R. W. Bro. Norman Gutcher’s presentation “Building the Craft” to the 2019 Western Conference of Grand Lodges)

by R. W. Norman Gutcher



The challenge is to keep them interested and to make the Masonic experience relevant to society and today's lifestyles. We are, after all, asking our brother Masons to take time, and some other resources, away from job and family to support the lodge and its activities. In the face of all that is "out there" as alternatives for leisure time activities, the lodge has tremendous and very effective competition. It's a safe bet that a sterile, dull and often boring stated meeting is not going to be effective competition in today's society.

I'd like to share an incident that occurred in my lodge early last fall. One of our more progressive thinking brothers, as a Masonic Education moment, asked if the brothers felt their lodge experience was meeting their expectations. One young brother, serving as Senior Deacon that evening, with all honesty offered the lodge experience was not meeting his expectations. He couldn't state succinctly what his expectations really were, but it was clear that the stated meeting was not filling the bill. In this case the brothers' father was sitting in the lodge and was taken aback by that answer.

Some lodges have good programs that provide

fellowship, the satisfaction of community service well done, well done ritual, Masonic education and a wide variety of activities. Many of the lodges with a variety of activities are strong and growing. Lodges without progressive programs often are experiencing low and dwindling active membership.

Look to your own lodges and jurisdictions and make honest evaluations as to your situation. Are they healthy and growing, stagnant but seemingly holding their own, or losing membership and having trouble filling the offices; recycling Masters and Wardens with not enough brothers attending to do much more than open and close. Remember, a small lodge that is slowly gaining membership and is active and doing things as a group may be a stronger, more healthy lodge than a larger lodge that has good attendance and fills the officer positions consistently but is declining in membership and doesn't do much other than the stated meetings.

Potential New Brothers:

Theoretically, every young man coming of age is a potential new brother. Add to that the fact the male members of each young man's family are also potential new brothers. Having said that, the real issue is to identify those who may have an interest and then to develop that interest.





As Masons we still operate under the age-old mandate that we cannot ask someone to join us. We've all heard the stories about business associates, friends and family members that have said things like "I never knew he was a mason" or "I always wanted to be a Mason, but no one ever asked me."

At the risk of offending some of my fellow senior brethren, perhaps it is time we reconsider and become more proactive in identifying and bringing Masonry to the attention of those that we think would make a good Mason.

We all know men who share many of our own values and who, if we thought of it, would be a good and true brother. I make no attempt to list those traits because some would be missed. Rather, I challenge each of you to create your own list of favorable traits. Then, as you go about your daily lives, consider which of your associates exhibit some or most of those traits. At that point, you have a potential candidate and it falls to you to encourage his interest. Then, of necessity, it is for each of you to use your own techniques to whet their interest. It may well be that when you have their interest you will find a way of making it clear to them they would be a welcome addition to you lodge. "To be one, ask one" only works if they know you are one. Perhaps the middle ground question might be "have you ever thought of becoming a Mason?" How many of you have ever found yourself talking to someone who, having observed that you are a Mason, said some friend or family member had been a Mason? The obvious next question is "Why aren't you a Mason?"

Once someone has expressed an interest in becoming a Mason, he still needs to be vetted. If possible, it is prudent to do a background check. Invite the person to non-tyled functions, dinner at the lodge, poker night, whatever, but make an effort to enable the brothers get to know the person and for the person to get to know the brothers.

These thoughts are offered, not as an alternative to the "Six Steps" program and its many variations currently in use, but as, if you will, a prelude to that very effective process for determining if a candidate truly is a fit. Remember, if a prospective candidate is not a fit with the brothers of the lodge he is introduced to, he quite likely will not complete the degrees or, if he does, he may not remain involved for long, resulting in a demit or NPD.

We want to find the potential members that will fit in, socially, with the active members of the lodge and that is joining the lodge because of a desire to do so and has indicate a willingness to participate. Processing a prospective member through the vetting and introduction process, then through the degrees, including completed proficiencies, both the lodge members and the candidate are making a significant investment of time and effort. Do your best to make a wise and well-informed investment, just like you would any other business decision.

Part 1 of 4



R.W. Norman Gutcher
Deputy Grand Master





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2019

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Do Rules Regulation

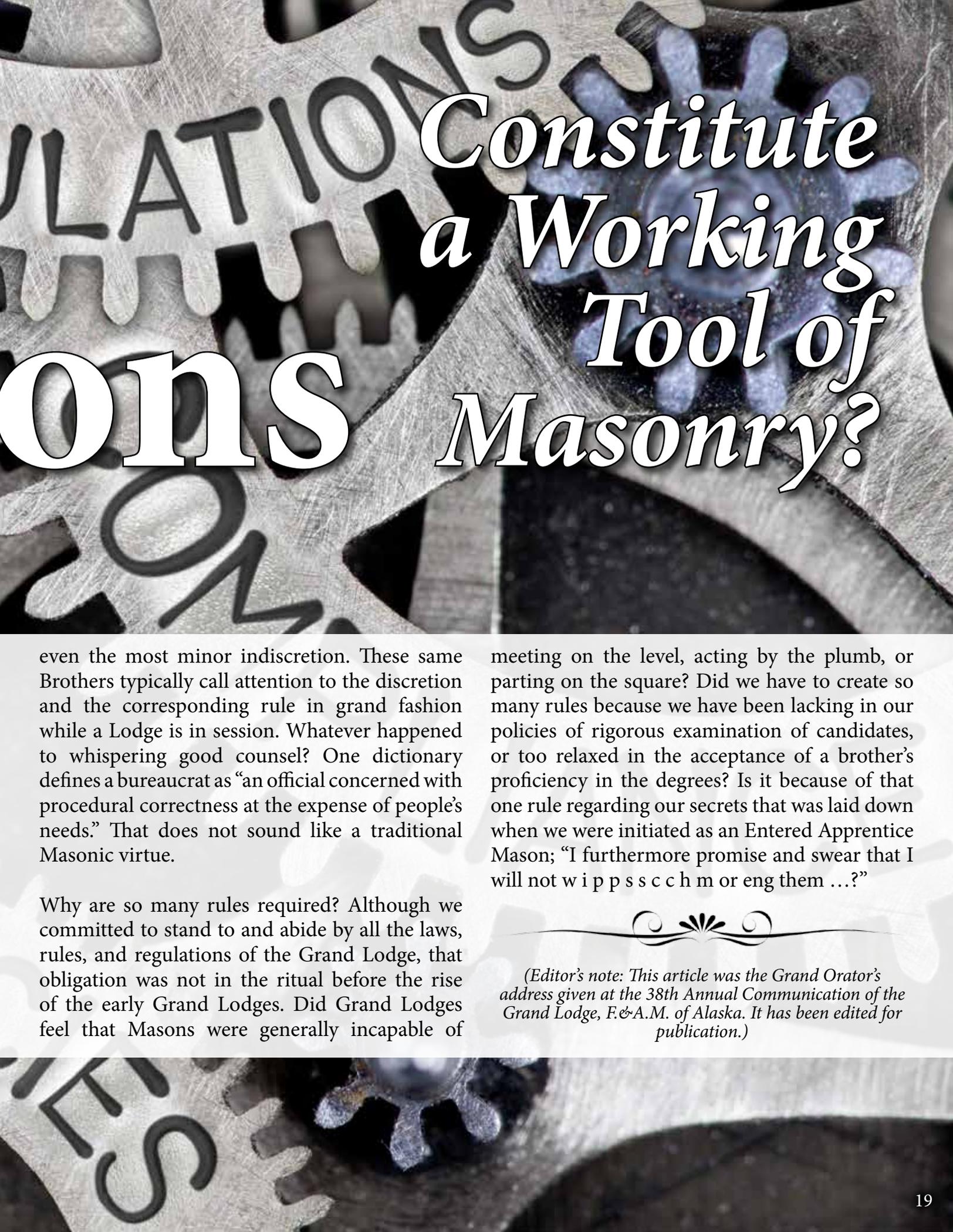
How many constitute a Lodge of Master Masons? If but three only, how many rules and regulations are required? We have hundreds of rules and regulations listed in the Alaska Masonic Code, all of which apply to our Lodges, even if only three Masons are present.

The Regius Manuscript, written around 1390, indicates modern Masonry can trace its roots to before the 14th century. Nearly 300 years later, in 1717, the first Grand Lodge was established in England. We have a legendary connection to the builders of King Solomon's Temple. All of this leads to the question: how did earlier lodges operate without all these rules and regulations? Did our ancient Brethren carve rules and regulations as

hieroglyphs on stone tablets? Moses needed two tablets for a mere 10 commandments, but if the ancients had as many rules and regulations as modern Masons, it would take hundreds of stone tablets as well as many brothers and several days to carry them to a Lodge meeting. My guess is it would take an inexorably long time to prepare for Lodge in those days because the Jurisprudence Committee would likely each want their own set!

At his Installation, our Grand Master Keith Herve stated he believed many Brothers were "born Masons" but I contend some were also apparently "born bureaucrats." Some Brothers carry a copy of the Alaska Masonic Code to every Lodge meeting and do not hesitate to cite the code for

by W.B. John Barnett



REGULATIONS

Constitute a Working Tool of Masonry?

even the most minor indiscretion. These same Brothers typically call attention to the discretion and the corresponding rule in grand fashion while a Lodge is in session. Whatever happened to whispering good counsel? One dictionary defines a bureaucrat as “an official concerned with procedural correctness at the expense of people’s needs.” That does not sound like a traditional Masonic virtue.

Why are so many rules required? Although we committed to stand to and abide by all the laws, rules, and regulations of the Grand Lodge, that obligation was not in the ritual before the rise of the early Grand Lodges. Did Grand Lodges feel that Masons were generally incapable of

meeting on the level, acting by the plumb, or parting on the square? Did we have to create so many rules because we have been lacking in our policies of rigorous examination of candidates, or too relaxed in the acceptance of a brother’s proficiency in the degrees? Is it because of that one rule regarding our secrets that was laid down when we were initiated as an Entered Apprentice Mason; “I furthermore promise and swear that I will not w i p p s s c c h m or eng them ...?”

(Editor’s note: This article was the Grand Orator’s address given at the 38th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge, F.&A.M. of Alaska. It has been edited for publication.)



Maybe all these rules and regulations are necessary due to recurring lapses in memory and are put in place to jog them. In the 19th century, a ciphered Monitor was developed for the purpose of standardization, to promote Masonic history and teachings, and to aid in the governance of our Lodges. In the early 20th century, the ciphering was removed to reduce interpretation errors and build consistency between Lodges. One would think between the obligations and Monitor, only a minimal number of additional rules, if any, should be required.

Masonic virtues are symbolized in the various tools of our craft: the 24-inch gauge, common gavel, plumb, square, level, and trowel. Those Brothers who live and act as Masons in their daily lives do so not by the rules, regulations, and edicts of the Grand Lodge, but through the symbolism of our working tools and the obligations we took in the presence of God and our fellow Masons. Frankly, I cannot visualize rules and regulations as a working tool for that noble and glorious purpose of spreading the cement of brotherly love and affection.

Between the three degrees, we take more than 60 individual obligations along the path to being raised a Master Mason, but maybe 60 is not enough. Maybe that path to Light still has some shadows that need purging. For those that enter other Masonic bodies, such as the Shriners, York Rite, or Scottish Rite, even more obligations are required. Scottish Rite alone, between the fourth and 32nd degrees, requires a Mason to assume more than 200 additional obligations.

That's a lot of rules! All the obligations a Mason commits himself to are obligations of the heart, mind, body, and soul and as such should be adequate for any man to lead a good, productive, and spiritual life as a Mason.

The role of Masonry is to make good men better. Our teachings and obligations are the heart of that premise. Outside the tiled recesses of our lodges we are regulated to the extreme by our local, state, and federal governments, so do we need that same degree of regulation within our own fraternity? Do we lose Brothers because all the rules and regulations of the Fraternity remind us all too much of that inordinate outside governance that burdens our daily lives?

Granted, since we are human, we do need guidance and good counsel from time to time, but excessive internal regulation of our membership can distract from the relative sanctity of our lodges. When the Lodge is tiled and our labors begin, our focus should shift from the outside world, with all its trials, tribulations, and worries, to the calm and reflective work of true Masonry.

In closing, we must never forget we are a society of friends and Brothers among whom no contention should ever exist but that noble contention, or rather emulation, of who best can work and best agree. If we as Masons strive to conduct ourselves in that honorable manner, then maybe we don't need a hundred stone tablets after all.



W.B. John Barnett
Grand Orator, 2018



Builder's Creed

*I watched them tearing a building down,
A gang of men in a busy town.*

*With a ho heave ho, and a lusty yell,
They swuing a beam and a sidewall fell.*

*I asked the Foreman, "Are these men as skilled
As the men you'd hire if you had to build?"*

*He laughed as he said "No, indeed."
"They can easily wreck in a day or two,
What builders have taken a year to do."*

*And I thought to myself as I went my way,
Which of these roles have I tried to play.*

*Am I the builder who works with care,
Measuring life by the rule and square?*

*Am I shaping my deeds to a well-made plan,
Patiently doing the best I can?*

*Or am I the wrecker, who walks the town,
Content with the labor of tearing down?*

Author Unknown

Most of us are familiar with the effects, on our sense of well being that are caused by emotionally induced chemicals floating around in our brains. There are “good” ones that create varying levels of pleasure or even euphoria and “bad” ones that cause both physical and mental anguish.

But beyond the physical and mental, there is an equally, if not more, important aspect: the spiritual aspect.

In addition to caring for your physical and mental health, you need to pay close attention to and maintain your spiritual health. I suspect many of you are surprised by such a concept, but I also suspect that the concept resonates with a significant number.

In many ways, it is common sense. If man is comprised of body, mind, and spirit it seems reasonable that we need to feed and exercise each of the aspects to keep them healthy.

The biggest problem is feedback (understanding what each aspect needs) and that any “food” or “exercise” effects all three at some level. It is impossible to work on any one aspect in isolation.

The one experience I can clearly identify as possessing large quantities of all three was the first time I held my firstborn, a son. It was one of the most overwhelming moments of my life, but I am quite sure it was start of my spiritual journey as it was the first time I had

ever felt connected to life and humanity both specifically and in general. (I had just turned 20.)

We are inundated with self-help books, commercials, and programs that purport to aid us in bringing our mind and body into harmony. Some of the oriental arts add a spiritual element to their teaching. But virtually all of them promote a one-size-fits-all course of action well suited to sheep but not to those mentally and spiritually alive.

I have felt what I call spiritual endorphins when I get that “A ha!” flash of understanding either by long concentrated study or by sudden revelation. At 72, I don’t get to the endorphins from a physical workout much anymore, but I read, write, and study a great deal and still do experience the spiritual endorphins from time to time.

You should be at least as careful what you feed your mind and



Spirit

by W.B. Paul Evermon II

spirit as you are with the food you put in your body. There are a lot of empty calorie philosophies and ideas that can lead you to dead ends on your spiritual journey. It's OK to sample from every type of spiritual cuisine that exists but, if it tastes bad, spit it out! You need the discipline to listen when the alarm bells start going off. Some philosophical rabbit holes are much harder to get out of than they were to get in.

Many, if not most, Masons need to stay in the shallow end of the pool of spiritual knowledge for an extended period of time until they develop the skills and abilities to safely navigate in the spiritual realm. Some may never be able to leave the shallow end but others will try the deep end before they are ready, often with frustrating, confusing results shaking them to their core.

Analogous to physical exercise, you must exercise your intellectual and spiritual aspects before you try difficult intellectual and spiritual tasks. In truth, the large majority of the population and many Masons are

intellectually and/or spiritually lazy or simply lack the capacity in the same manner than some are physically ungifted.

The spiritually ungifted tend to be either zealots or atheists. They either swallow some philosophy whole or reject all philosophies as meaningless. The lazy tend to "stay in their lane." If they went to a particular church growing up, they still do. Their interests and hobbies are also the same. They seek zones of comfort in all of life's aspects and avoid conflicts and challenges.

Neither of the previous categories is likely to ever experience any form of spiritual chemistry. Desire alone is insufficient to maximize your intellectual and spiritual attainment. Like most things in real life, some are given more gifts to achieve in these areas, but none will get there easily as progress is once again disguised as hard work.

The analogy of a rough and rugged road is an apt description for the metaphorical journey from the East to the West. Illumination, insight, or revelation are usually the product of many hours of study, reflection, and contemplation. I spent eight years of study to earn my engineering

ual Chemistry



and physics degrees. Earning progress towards the East has been at least as challenging and I expect to continue trying to make further progress as long as I am physically, mentally and spiritually able.

Each of you will have to decide the amount of effort you will put into your journey, but my plan is to be as prepared as possible when I have to defend how I lived my life and the content of my faith before the judgement seat. It is not a test I want to fail.

Few things in this life are certain, but you can never approach the understanding represented by the goal of arriving at the East unless you take the first step away from the West. This can take many forms, but it will tend to be more successful if you pick something to study that truly interests

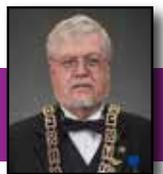
you. You may study on your own or with trusted mentors.

Not all the answers you find will be pleasing nor will be the process of integrating some of your new truths into your worldview and faith. My journey to date has had low points that confused me greatly but also many more high points of new understanding sometimes accompanied with spiritual endorphins. On balance, it has been a great trip.

There is no guidebook for your trip but it is one that shouldn't remain on your bucket list much longer. No one knows the number of his days.



W.B. Paul Evermon II
Grand Chaplain



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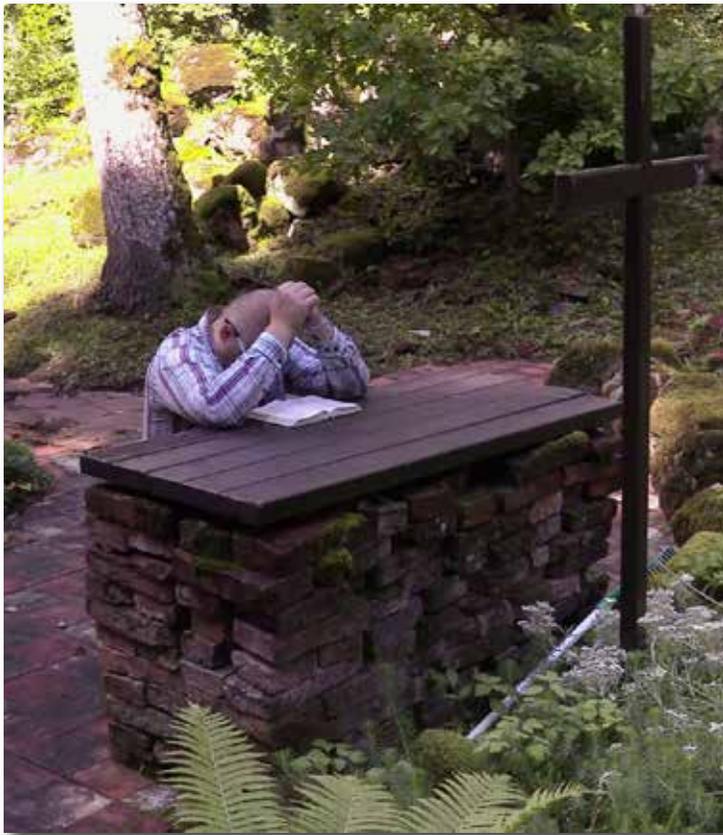
LEADER



The day a man enters a Masonic Lodge, and asks to be initiated, he begins a passionate journey of self-discovery, and ultimately could be called to a leadership role within the Order. Leadership within Freemasonry, however, is unlike the leadership roles traditionally come across in business or society generally.

LEADING BRETHREN *in Freemasonry*

by W.B. Dr. Lionel Boxer & W.B. Steve Lourey



The word initiation from the Latin *initium*; a beginning, a birth, a coming into being.

Leadership in a Lodge

The government of a Masonic Lodge is essentially tripartite. A Master governs the Lodge, but a good Master relies on his wardens. The Junior Warden sits in the South of the Lodge, and symbolically marks the Sun at its meridian; calls the Brethren from “labour to refreshment, and from refreshment to labour, that pleasure and profit may be the result”. The Senior Warden sits in the West, symbolically to “mark the setting Sun”, and assists the Worshipful Master in opening, working, and closing the Lodge. Likewise, “As the glorious Sun rises in the East to open and illumine the day, so stands the Worshipful Master in the East to open the Lodge, and employ and instruct the Brethren in Freemasonry”. In essence, the three principal officers of a Lodge lead the brethren in the pursuit of Freemasonry.

St. Francis of Assisi used to say that “What a man (woman) is before God, that he (she) is and

nothing more”. Francis is undoubtedly correct, but to look at the other side of the coin, “What a man (woman) is before God, that he (she) is and nothing less”. Freemasonry teaches a person to respect the inherent divine dignity of others. Distinctions of rank may be necessary in secular society, but within a Masonic Lodge, all are equal, “Meeting on the level, and departing on the square”.

We have been privileged to attend Lodge both here in Australia and overseas, and have normally been made very welcome. We’ve sat with business executives, tradesmen, community leaders, doctors, salesmen, lawyers, and a whole host of others. No other organisation has such a diverse membership base as Freemasonry. Reflecting on the basic principles of Freemasonry leads us to the inescapable conclusion that there are many names and faces to God, and many paths to the one reality.

The requisite leadership attributes, therefore, are different from secular leaders. Masonic leaders ideally possess all the qualities that make a good leader, but they also need to: know themselves; be focused on God; be focused on their brethren.



Challenges Peculiar to Freemasonry

Freemasonry, in its initial degrees, is a moral allegory. It uses the imagery of the tools used in building and construction to teach a moral message. Thus, you hear terms like, “Square conduct, level steps, and upright intentions”. On the surface this is simplistic, until one starts to meditate upon God and one’s life. The simple moral message of Freemasonry is profound, and cuts across the teachings of all the great religions. It recognises that all men and women are created equal, and in the end death—the great leveller of human existence—will reduce us all to the same state. What will matter is not how much money and power we have accumulated through life, but the way we have lived our life.



Progressing through the stages of Masonic Leadership

As each Freemason progresses through the Chairs of Inner Guard, Junior Deacon, Senior Deacon, Junior Warden, Senior Warden, and Worshipful Master, he learns different things about himself and develops different skills. Roy McNulty’s book on Masonic Symbolism goes into this. We all have various voices that are at work in our minds, but only in a Masonic Lodge are these voices set out for us to perceive clearly. The various officers of the Lodge are either situated or placed for various reasons. What are those reasons? Each

Freemason is free to interpret those distinctions in his own way.

To give a couple of examples, the constant place of the Junior Warden in the Lodge is in the South. He is situated there to “mark the Sun at its meridian, to call the Brethren from labour to refreshment, and from refreshment to labour, that pleasure and profit may be the result”. Similarly, the Senior Warden is placed in the West, to “mark the setting Sun”.



From the moment a man enters a Lodge, he is called to leadership. When he becomes a Master Mason, he is reminded that he is henceforth authorised to correct the errors and irregularities of Brethren and Fellows, and to guard them against any breach of fidelity. Moreover, his constant care is to improve the morals and correct the manners of men in society.

Masonic Values

A Mason is taught to persist in his journey of self-discovery with fortitude and with prudence, to develop the highest within him with “fervency and zeal”. In the Entered Apprentice’s Degree the initiate is taught the necessity of a belief in God; of charity toward all mankind, “more especially



Culmination and Challenges of Past Mastership

At the end of the progression through the Chairs of a Masonic Lodge is a career of being a past master. In fact, the progression through these Chairs could in itself be considered an initiation.

On being installed in the Chair of his Lodge, a Mason consents to a comprehensive list of instructions as to his attitude and behaviour. The underlying principle is that by entering Freemasonry and his acceptance and practice of its tenets and precepts he becomes a credit to himself and an example to, and benefactor of, others.

Freemasonry is therefore an intellectual and philosophic exercise designed and intended to make an individual's contribution to society, and extension of himself, greater than they ought otherwise have been had he not had the opportunity of developing his capacities and capabilities through membership of the Order.

a brother Mason”; of secrecy; the meaning of brotherly love; the reasons for relief; the greatness of truth; the advantages of temperance; the value of fortitude; the part played in Masonic life by prudence, and the equality of strict justice.

He is charged to be reverent before God, to pray to Him for help, to venerate Him as the source of all that is good. He is exhorted to practice the Golden Rule and to avoid excesses of all kinds. He is admonished to be quiet and peaceable, not to countenance disloyalty and rebellion, to be true and just to government and country, to be cheerful under its laws. He is charged to come often to lodge but not to neglect his business, not to argue about Freemasonry with the ignorant but to learn Masonry from Masons, and once again to be secret.

Freemasonry depends on the development of wisdom in individuals. The wisdom of each Freemason contributes to the whole in a unique way. Why? Each Freemason is free to choose his own interpretation of Masonic symbolism; there is no dogma or enforced conclusion. Freemasonry is not in itself a religion, but relies on each Freemason bringing his own religion to the Craft. The pursuit of Freemasonry is the pursuit of harmony through a common, while unique belief in God. God is at the Centre of Masonic leadership.

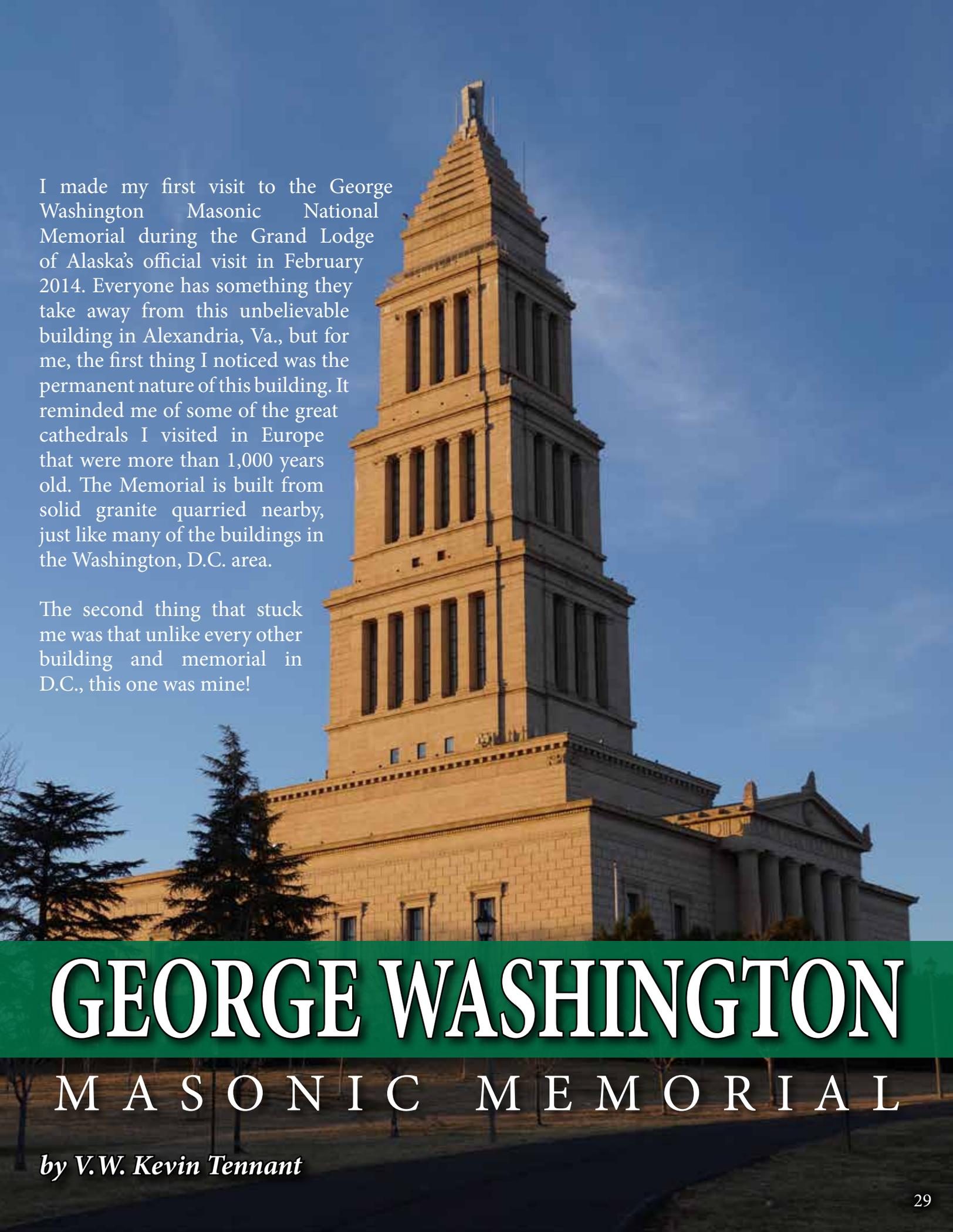


W.B. Steve Lourey
Lodge Epping No. 390; Lodge Indus No. 1055
UGL of NSW & ACT



W.B. Lionel Boxer
Ionic Lodge No. 25 • Toronto, Canada
The Army Lodge No. 478 • Melbourne, Australia



A photograph of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia. The building is a tall, multi-tiered structure made of light-colored stone or granite. It features a prominent central tower with a pyramidal top and several levels of arched windows. The building is set against a clear blue sky. In the foreground, there are some evergreen trees and a paved area.

I made my first visit to the George Washington Masonic National Memorial during the Grand Lodge of Alaska's official visit in February 2014. Everyone has something they take away from this unbelievable building in Alexandria, Va., but for me, the first thing I noticed was the permanent nature of this building. It reminded me of some of the great cathedrals I visited in Europe that were more than 1,000 years old. The Memorial is built from solid granite quarried nearby, just like many of the buildings in the Washington, D.C. area.

The second thing that stuck me was that unlike every other building and memorial in D.C., this one was mine!

GEORGE WASHINGTON

MASONIC MEMORIAL

by V.W. Kevin Tennant



The guides told us that on the tour, it was our lodge and it's the only memorial I visited that said "private property" because it's not a public building. I got to ride the elevator to the eighth floor which, by the way, is much higher than eight normal stories. It was more like 16 floors off the ground. The building is 333 feet tall and is perched on top of Shooter's Hill, the highest ground in the area. This location added to the dramatic effect. The view from this perspective is stunning and offers a view of Washington, D.C. and a good portion of Alexandria, where we stayed.

I could go on with details of the building itself. The massive granite slabs and columns are worthy of an entire article but there were almost 60 Alaskans that made this trip all the way to the other end of our country. Seeing so many familiar faces in such an unfamiliar environment was equally as comforting as the many new friends we made there. We were treated very well by the Shriners, Memorial staff and the members of Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22.

Being able to open our Grand Lodge in the Memorial as well as attend Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22 will forever be a highlight in my Masonic travels. Watching as the Master of the lodge entered, I was struck by the fact this man was the latest in an unbroken chain of Masters that went all the way back to

W. Bro. George Washington himself. I got to see the trowel and gavel held by Washington and used in events such as cornerstone laying ceremonies as depicted in many oil paintings throughout the building.

On the last day of the trip, then-Grand Master Dave Worel laid a wreath on Washington's tomb at Mount Vernon. Washington requested his longtime home to serve as his final resting place in his will. M.W. Bro. Worel spoke briefly of the honor it was to participate in such a historic and meaningful event such as this.



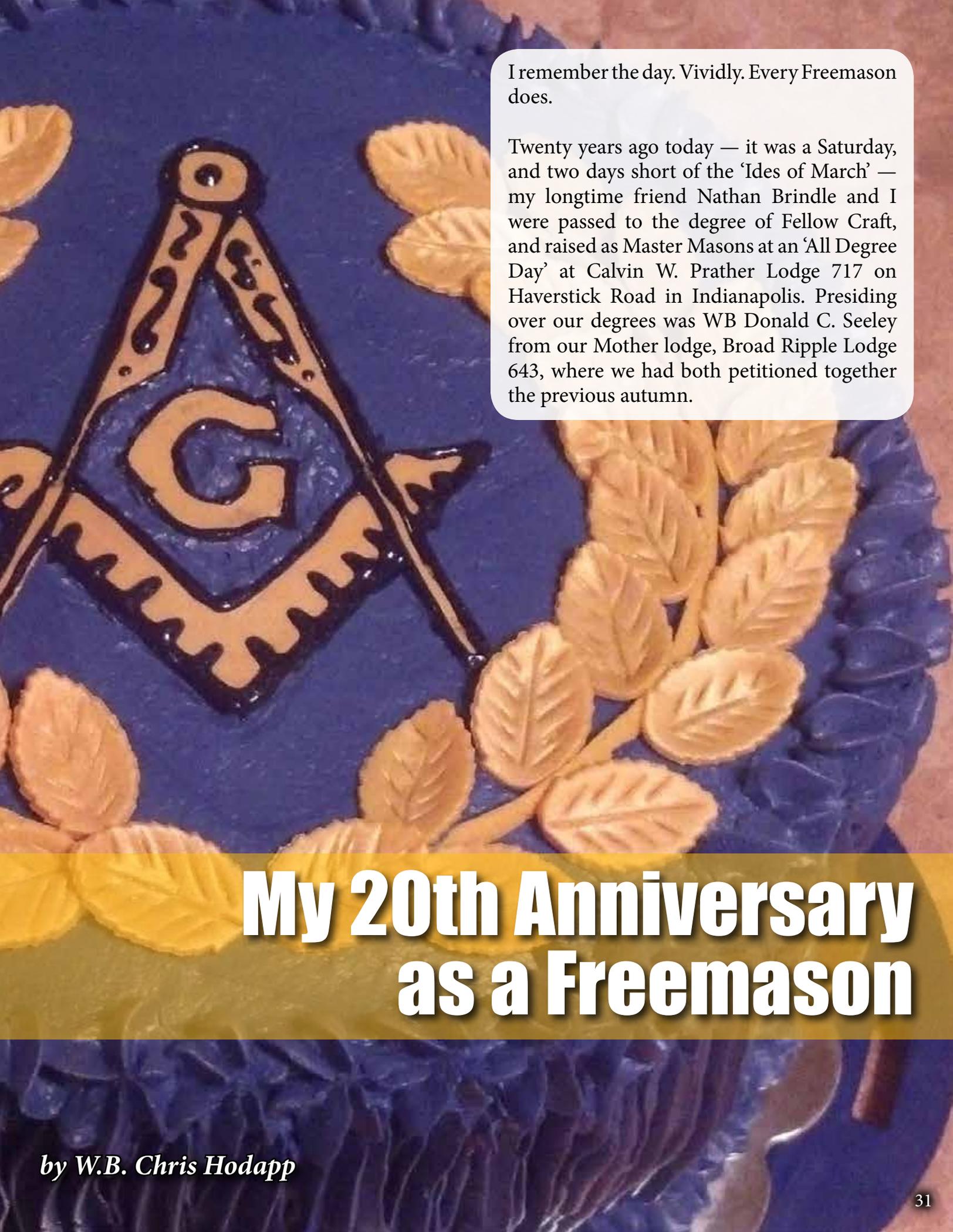
That evening, the Memorial was closed to the public so we could enjoy tasty hors d'oeuvres in the grand entryway, followed by music from the Washington Metropolitan Gamer Symphony Orchestra in the theater. Ulysses S. James led the orchestra. In several patriotic and other moving pieces. Afterwards, we enjoyed dinner in the Memorial's main ballroom. We ate surrounded by eight massive columns, weighing 65 tons each. More than 180 voices filled the room with friendly conversation. I absorbed as much as I could take in but the day was certainly overwhelming for this Alaskan.

All in all, I can't find the words to describe how any Mason could consider his journey complete without a visit to one of the finest edifices in the Washington, D.C. area; The George Washington Masonic National Memorial.



V.W. Kevin Tennant
Tanana Lodge No. 3





I remember the day. Vividly. Every Freemason does.

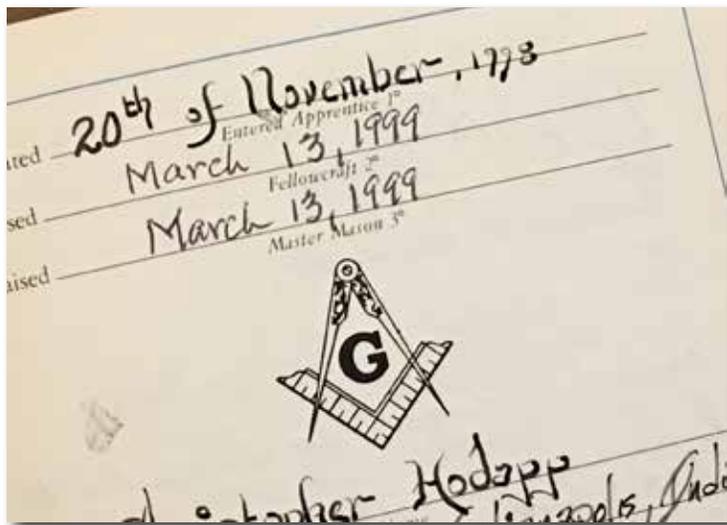
Twenty years ago today — it was a Saturday, and two days short of the ‘Ides of March’ — my longtime friend Nathan Brindle and I were passed to the degree of Fellow Craft, and raised as Master Masons at an ‘All Degree Day’ at Calvin W. Prather Lodge 717 on Haverstick Road in Indianapolis. Presiding over our degrees was WB Donald C. Seeley from our Mother lodge, Broad Ripple Lodge 643, where we had both petitioned together the previous autumn.

My 20th Anniversary as a Freemason

by W.B. Chris Hodapp



I had just turned 40 that prior November when Nathan and I joined. I later found out that's almost exactly the average age at which most Masons decide to join. I frequently joked that 40 must be some huge bellwether life boundary. For the first time in my life, I had just bought my first Chrysler (deemed Old Folks Cars in the 80s and 90s); it had two sets of golf clubs in the trunk that was big enough to hide bodies in; and then I joined the Masons.



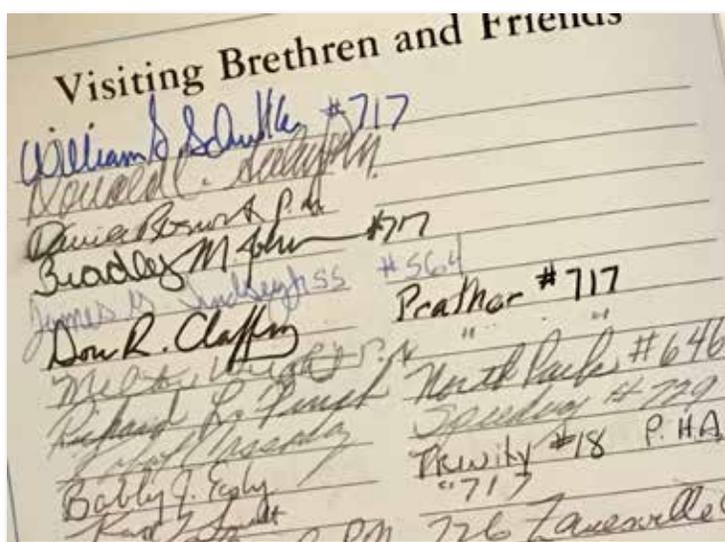
I despise the term, but if one day classes make "McMasons," then Nathan and I were special grill orders.

It was a very long day for all involved, as Don insisted that his two Broad Ripple candidates (the two of us) would have our Master Mason work done individually, not in a large group of candidates. That was his price, in return for conferring all of the degrees that day. Such was his

reputation as an outstanding ritualist. He would sit in the East and go through the entire Master Mason degree separately for us both, then all over again for a third time for the other candidates in a bunch. The Prather organizers reluctantly agreed, because they didn't have anyone at the time as proficient as Don to replace him. So Nathan and I are sort of one-day hybrids.



My family friend of many years, Richard Finch, who hadn't been inside of a Masonic lodge for a very long time, made it a point to be there for me that day. It was amazing how many of my parents' friends turned out to be Freemasons, something I wasn't aware of until after I joined. So, too, were countless men I had admired as a child and a teenager. I would discover so many of them to be brethren decades after first encountering them. Most Masons will tell you the very same thing.



Prather's old lodge building (actually their second one) is gone today. So is James Lindsey,

who acted as the Senior Deacon for the day. So is Dave Bosworth, who cooked breakfast and gave all of us candidates crash courses in Masonic education between the breaks.

So is the gregarious Grand Master Robert E. Hancock (photo), who was promoting his one-day class business at the time, along with a lot of other 'crazy ideas,' to the chagrin of many disgruntled Indiana Masons. Little things like permitting business meetings on the Entered Apprentice degree. Reasonable outreach to honorable men instead of hoping they would ask someday. Encouraging mutual cooperation with Prince Hall brethren. And once the lodge was closed, reopening the Bible at all times to the passage, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." He was right on so many things, and the rank and file despised him for it at the time. And then, ironically, so many of his policies came to fruition after he was gone.



So is David King, Prather's oldest living Past Master at the time. David gave the Middle Chamber lecture so movingly, so perfectly, and with such demonstrable understanding of the words of that complex ritual. I was astonished throughout the degree to hear it for the first time that day. I was even more shocked to discover afterwards that David was already blind at the time.

So is then-Secretary Jerry Cowley, the ever cheerful, always optimistic, always outgoing promoter, defender and champion of Broad Ripple Lodge, who greeted every petitioner like a long-lost relative and was a constant fountain of

suggestions to retain members. Nothing phased him, and he was always the first to volunteer. Jerry made sure that the rest of us understood that we are all connected to each other, and to never stop inviting and welcoming every Mason we met. When our lodge was teetering on closing, he always found a way to involve other lodges' members in our activities. And as we rebuilt, those visitors wound up enjoying our lodge more than their own. And that wouldn't have happened without Jerry.

So is then-Treasurer Irv Sacks, the wise old Jewish uncle I never had, and whose counsel I valued to the very end.

So is then-Senior Steward 'Big John' Gillis, whose friendly, folksy voice the whole city knew from his many years on radio stations WIBC and WNAP. How shocked I was when it was him who appeared with his big mustache and lamb chop sideburns to "propound three important questions" to me.

Past Master Don Seeley is gone, too. I really never thought that would happen, because he was King Solomon for all eternity in my mind's eyes and ears.

And old friend Richard Finch just passed away this January. He was maybe hardest of all, because Dick and his family have been part of my family for almost 50 years now.

I fully realize that this sounds like a long parade of the dead, and maybe even that Freemasonry is nothing more than a slow march to the graveyard. Or the tar pit. Or both.



Quite the contrary. It teaches us to live and celebrate each day as if it were our last one, to learn from and to cherish each other, young and old.



The lodge room that day was packed with Masons of all ages. And lots of them went on to remain active and to become leaders in the fraternity in the coming years. But it was a function of the demographics of a fraternity of mature men who overwhelmingly did as I did, and didn't join until their 40s and later. Yes, there were plenty of young men that day too, but the wise, older Past Masters who were running the show had more than 20 years of Masonic experience on me then. And it's two decades later now.

My friend Jeff Naylor once lamented, "When you're young, all you ever want to be is older. No one ever explains that the price you pay for that is in the numbers of people you lose who were important in your life."

And yet, with all of those friends and brothers who were there that day now gone, you would think this is some maudlin, weepy lament over

the past. It's not. Every single one of those men now gone taught me important lessons about Masonry, and people, and life itself. Each of us is the sum total of our experiences and those who shaped our character. Lessons I never would have learned in a hundred years on my own without men like these and countless others.

The central metaphor of Freemasonry is its very premise. Each one of us is a Temple to God, and we choose to make our Temple worthy or not. But that Temple isn't built by us alone. It's built, stone by stone, with the help of all those around us, everyone we encounter. Especially Brother Masons. Fellow craftsmen engaged in building, not tearing down.

Joining the fraternity of Freemasonry has been the greatest life-changing experience of my 60 years on Earth, and I say that without exaggeration. In two decades of membership, I have traveled all over the world and met and gotten to know quite literally thousands of Masons from every walk of life. Every sort of profession. Every economic level. Every race, color, nationality, education, personality, temperament, religion, and every other sort of classification people can dream up to categorize and file away strangers we normally don't know or would never otherwise associate with on a bet. Those tribal distinctions that we arbitrarily use to ignore the people around us are all meaningless when it comes to basic human coexistence. That's what being "on the level" is all about, which has been one of the primary purposes of Freemasonry from its very beginning.

Funny how that Undiscovered Country always seems just out of reach. Yes, as Hamlet said, it "puzzles the will." But such an amazing journey it has all been so far, with the greatest crowd of traveling companions it's ever been my privilege to know.



W.B. Christopher Hodapp
Broad Ripple Lodge No. 643



ALASKAN MASONIC

EVENTS & EXCURSIONS

Alaska Masonic Picnic in Big Lake

Sunday, June 23rd

W. Bro. Ron and Ellen Godden started the Alaska Masonic Picnic at Big Lake many years ago. This has become a favorite summer get together for Masons and their families!

Excellent food and fellowship are to be had! We hope you and your family can join us.

Contact Ron Godden to RSVP and for more information at:

(907) 242-0755 • rgodden@mtaonline.net

Grand Master's Summer Retreat at Tangle Lakes

Friday, July 5th - Sunday, July 7th

Come join the Grand Master and First Lady for some of Alaska's best fishing off the scenic Denali Highway.

Bring your rods, reels, tackle box, and flies. Bring your four-wheelers and canoes. This trip is the perfect retreat for Masons and their families seeking great fishing, fellowship, and some of the best scenery that Alaska has to offer!

Seven rooms have been reserved at the Tangle River Inn. Room availability is first come, first serve. Contact the Grand Master for reservations at:

(907) 255-1300 • jmay.freemasonry@gmail.com

Rooms starting at \$135/night (*double occupancy*)
More rooms may be available if there is greater interest.

Camping and RV sites are also available at the BLM campground.

These sites are first-come, first-serve.

Valdez Gold Rush Days

—
Wednesday, July 31st - Sunday, August 4th

Valdez Lodge No. 4 welcomes all Masons and their families to Valdez! During the week of Valdez Gold Rush Days, the City of Valdez has several activities planned throughout the town.

Come enjoy great fishing and scenery, and a host of other excellent outdoor activities!

Each year, Valdez Lodge No. 4 rolls out the red carpet for Masons and their families from around Alaska and the world. Come join us for a great weekend of fellowship!

Dinners are served on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings. Our Infamous Masonic Pancake Breakfasts are served on Saturday and Sunday. Some of Alaskan Masonry's Finest Hospitality begins that Thursday evening!

Valdez Lodge No. 4 will host the Grand Master's Official Visit on Saturday, August 3rd.

Several lodging options are available throughout Valdez.

Contact the Grand Master if you plan to attend at:
(907) 255-1300 • jmay.freemasonry@gmail.com

This event coincides with the Scottish Rite Biennial Session that begins the following Sunday in Washington D.C.

George Washington National Masonic Memorial Alexandria, Virginia

—
Saturday, August 17th

Lodging in Alexandria: Hotel rooms at the Morrison House: \$129/night + tax.

Room rate is blocked for two evenings, beginning Friday, August 17th.

The hotel will honor this rate from early arrivals and later departures.

Reservations available at: <https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1554756629855&key=GRP&app=resvlink>

Morrison House is conveniently located in old town Alexandria near numerous restaurants, shops, the Potomac River, and one mile away from the Memorial.

Executive transportation will be provided to the Memorial on Saturday. Please RSVP with the Grand Master in order to ensure we have sufficient transport for our group.

(907) 255-1300 • jmay.freemasonry@gmail.com

The host hotel provides a complimentary shuttle to and from Reagan National Airport (DCA).

International Days Dawson City, Yukon Territory

Friday, August 30th - Sunday, September 2nd • 2019
Friday, September 4th - Sunday, September 6th • 2020

Why two dates? Because, you need to make reservations for lodging in Dawson City at least a year in advance!

If you are a Mason and you want to enjoy a great Masonic event for you and your wife, then Dawson City's International Days is a must for your bucket list!

This annual favorite has become a tradition for Masons and their wives from around North America. Food, fellowship, golf, scenery, and gold! The International Days weekend is a must-do Masonic event!

How good is it? The Grand Master had to work that week last year, and his wife went anyway!!! It's too late to get in on the action for 2019, but be sure to make your reservations now for 2020!

Recommended lodging:
Eldorado Hotel • Bombay Peggy's • Aurora Inn • Westmark Inn
Numerous RV sites are also available.

Grand Master's Autumn Retreat at the Tonsina River Lodge

Friday, October 25th - Sunday, October 27th

Sponsored by the Grand Lodge Masonic Research & Education Committee
and Valdez Lodge No. 4

Come join the Grand Master and First Lady for a Masonic weekend at the Tonsina River Lodge. The Autumn Retreat is your opportunity to see a different Masonic experience that harkens back to the days of blue lodges meeting in taverns.

A ladies program will also be available for your lady during the course of Masonic activities. The Tonsina River Lodge offers excellent accommodations, food, and libations.

Room availability is first come, first serve. RV sites are also available. This all-inclusive retreat includes lodging and food. Beverages are not included in this package.

Online reservations will be available soon!

Alaska Masonic Family Christmas Party

Sunday, December 21st

A festive Christmas celebration is planned for the Alaska Masonic Family!

The Grand Master is working with the Anchorage Concert Association on a group booking for a spectacular holiday show at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts.

Following the performance, a festive holiday banquet will be served by the Al Aska Shriners at the Al Aska Shrine Temple. A very Merry Christmas program and entertainment will take center stage throughout the night!

All Masons, their families, and friends are also encouraged to attend the Knights Templar Christmas Breakfast and Toast the following morning, Sunday, December 22nd.

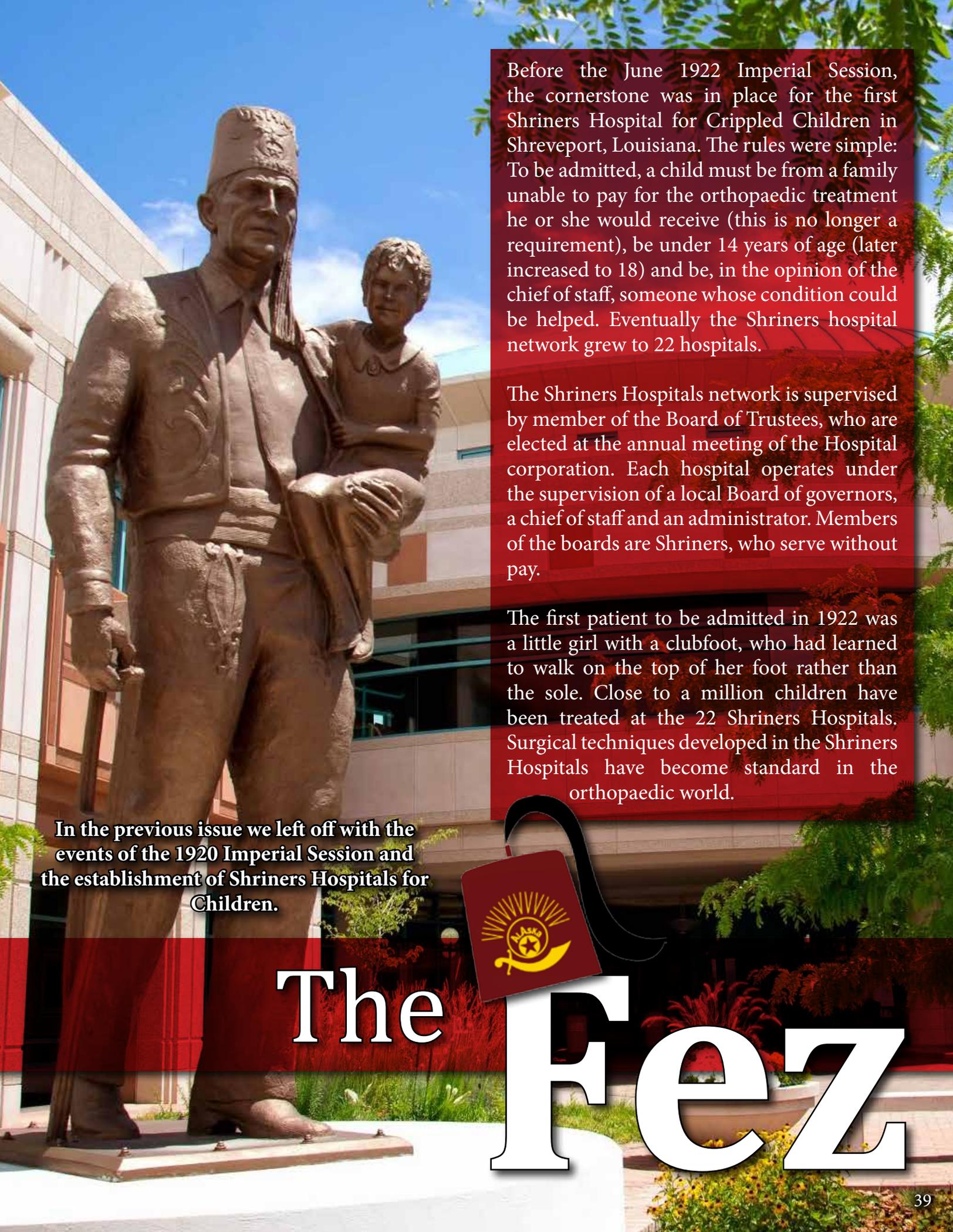
More details and online reservations coming soon!

**Are you, or your Lodge,
hosting a Masonic Event?**

Get your event posted in

Light from the GreatLand

**Send your information to:
lightfromthegreatland@gmail.com**



Before the June 1922 Imperial Session, the cornerstone was in place for the first Shriners Hospital for Crippled Children in Shreveport, Louisiana. The rules were simple: To be admitted, a child must be from a family unable to pay for the orthopaedic treatment he or she would receive (this is no longer a requirement), be under 14 years of age (later increased to 18) and be, in the opinion of the chief of staff, someone whose condition could be helped. Eventually the Shriners hospital network grew to 22 hospitals.

The Shriners Hospitals network is supervised by member of the Board of Trustees, who are elected at the annual meeting of the Hospital corporation. Each hospital operates under the supervision of a local Board of governors, a chief of staff and an administrator. Members of the boards are Shriners, who serve without pay.

The first patient to be admitted in 1922 was a little girl with a clubfoot, who had learned to walk on the top of her foot rather than the sole. Close to a million children have been treated at the 22 Shriners Hospitals. Surgical techniques developed in the Shriners Hospitals have become standard in the orthopaedic world.

In the previous issue we left off with the events of the 1920 Imperial Session and the establishment of Shriners Hospitals for Children.



The Fez



Orthopaedic Research

From 1950 to 1960, Shriners' funds for helping children increased rapidly. At the same time, waiting lists of new patients for admission to Shriners Hospitals began to decline, due to the polio vaccine and new antibiotics. Thus, Shriners found themselves able to provide additional services and leaders began to look for other ways they could help children.

One result was collating medical records of patients of Shriners Hospitals. By placing the records of each patient and treatment on computer and microfilm, valuable information was made available to all Shriners surgeons and the medical world as a whole. This process, begun in 1959, also made it easier to initiate clinical research in Shriners orthopaedic hospitals

Shriners Hospitals had always engaged in clinical research, and in the early 1960s, Shriners aggressively entered the structured research field and began earmarking funds for research projects. By 1967, Shriners were spending \$20,000 on orthopaedic research. Today, the annual research budget totals more than \$37 million annually. Researchers are working on a wide variety of projects, including studies of bone and joint

diseases, such as juvenile rheumatoid arthritis; increasing basic knowledge of the structure and function of connective tissue; and refining functional electrical stimulation, which is enabling some children with spinal cord injuries to have limited use of their arms and legs.

Entering the Burn Care Field

This expansion of orthopaedic work was not enough for Shriners. They had enough funds to further expand their philanthropy. The only question was: What unmet need could they fill?

A special committee established to explore areas of need found that burn treatment was a field of service that was being bypassed. In the early 1960s, the only burn treatment center in the United States was part of a military complex. The committee was ready with a resolution for the 1962 Imperial Session in Toronto. The resolution, dated July 4, 1962 was adopted by unanimous vote. On Nov. 1, 1963, Shriners opened a seven-bed wing in the John Sealy Hospital at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston as an interim center for the care of severely burned children. On Feb. 1, 1964, Shriners opened a seven-bed unit in the Cincinnati General Hospital on the campus of the University of Cincinnati. A third interim operation, a five-bed unit, was opened March 13, 1964, in the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston) under the direction of Harvard Medical School.

While children were being treated in these units, separate buildings were constructed near each interim location. These three, 30-bed pediatric burn hospitals were designed to meet the special needs of burned children. At each, the staffs remain affiliated with their neighboring universities in order to better carry out Shriners hospitals three-fold mission of treatment, research and teaching.

Since Shriners opened burn hospitals in the 1960s, a burned child's chance of survival has more than doubled. They have saved the lives of

children with burn injuries over 90 percent of their bodies. The techniques Shriners Hospitals have pioneered to prevent the disabling effects of severe burns have made a typical life possible for thousands of burn victims.

At Shriners Hospitals the work goes on, with medical staff continually searching for new ways to heal severe burns and reduce or, as much as possible, eliminate the disabling and scarring effect of those burns. Because of the special nature of the burn hospitals, they will surely always be on the frontier of burn care.

Additionally, Shriners Hospitals for Children opened a spinal cord injury rehabilitation unit at the Philadelphia hospital and was the first spinal cord injury unit in the United States designed specifically for children and teenagers who sustain these injuries. The joint Boards of Directors of Shriners Hospitals for Children added treatment of cleft lip and palate to the hospital network's treatment disciplines. About 5,000 children are born each year with deformities of the upper lip and mouth.

Rebuilding and Renovation Program

Another important undertaking that began during the 1980s was an aggressive rebuilding and renovation program, involving the construction of new facilities and extensive renovations. In 1981, representatives at the 107th Imperial Council Session approved a major expansion and reconstruction program, which included a new hospital along with upgrades and renovations to existing facilities. In 1998, the Joint Boards of Directors and Trustees decided to build a new facility for the Mexico City hospital, which had undergone extensive renovations in 1989. The new facility opened in May 2006. In 1990, Sacramento, Calif. was chosen as the site for the new hospital to replace the existing San Francisco hospital. The Sacramento hospital opened its doors in 1997.

Shriners Hospitals for Children

In 1996, representatives took another significant step when they voted to officially change the name of their philanthropy to Shriners Hospitals for Children, permanently eliminating the word "crippled" for the organization's corporate name. Representatives made the change in an effort to have the name better reflect the mission of Shriners Hospitals and the expansion of services over the years including the opening of the burn hospitals and the addition of programs of comprehensive care for children. The new name also does not label children in any way, but simply recognizes them for what they are: children.



Research

One way Shriners Hospitals for Children improves lives is through outcomes research. This type of research looks for opportunities to improve hospital practices, both clinical and operational, to help bring better care and quality of life to patients. The outcomes studies utilize more than one Shriners Hospital, and the projects, studies and performance improvement initiatives directly impact changes in operations and patient care practices at all 22 Shriners hospitals.

To be continued...



The Celestial Lodge



Jack Coghill

September 24, 1925 - February 13, 2019

Jack Coghill, former Alaska lieutenant governor and a signer of the Alaska Constitution, died Monday morning at age 93.

His son, Sen. John Coghill of North Pole, said in a news release that his father died of natural causes.

“Dad was a firm believer in utilizing Alaska’s natural resources to build a strong economy and provide good paying jobs for Alaska,” he said. “He had the same passion for Alaska, even at 93.”

Jack Coghill’s grandson, Clifton, said in an interview that his grandfather’s passing was peaceful, adding the former lieutenant governor was a “well-rounded individual. Definitely led a full life.”

John Bruce “Jack” Coghill, whose political career earned him the nickname “Mr. Republican,” spent 23 years as the mayor of Nenana, the town he grew up in. He entered politics in 1948 when he joined the Nenana School Board. He left the Republican Party in 1990, however, and joined the Alaskan Independence Party over a dispute issues with his running mate in that year’s gubernatorial election. He then teamed with Walter Hickel, and the pair won on the Alaskan Independence Party ticket. They served a single term together.

Hickel decided to not seek re-election in 1994. Coghill chose to run for governor that year, pairing with Margaret Ward on the Alaskan Independence Party ticket after the August primary. They lost to Democrats Tony Knowles and Fran Ulmer in the November election.

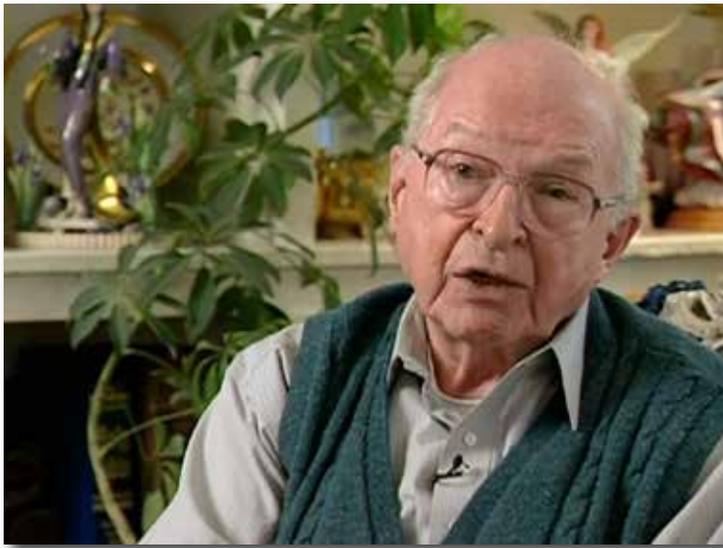
Coghill returned to the Republican Party following his retirement and his move back to Nenana. The move was partially spurred by the death of his wife, Frances, in 2000. The two had six children together.

“Jack has said the most important thing in his life is his marriage to Frances and raising their six kids,” his son said. “Next to that, he has said his greatest achievement was participating in the Alaska Constitutional Convention.”

Coghill was 30 years old when he became one of the 55 delegates who worked on and signed the Alaska Constitution at the University of Alaska Fairbanks in 1955. During his time at the Constitutional Convention, he expressed his feelings about public education.

“I believe that the way our government was set up 175 years ago, that the founders felt that public education was necessary to bring about a form of educating the whole child for civic benefit through a division of point of the

by Kyrie Long
Fairbanks Daily News-Miner



home taking a certain part of the child, the church taking a certain part of this education, and the government or state through public schools taking the other part,” Coghill said in a quote on the University of Alaska’s Creating Alaska webpage.

“I adhere to that principle... I think that sectarianism segregation in our educational system is bad for the children,” he said. “I do not deny the right of people to have their own schools. However, I think that we should always look to the interest of the founders of our nation when they brought about the separation of church and state.”

The Alaska Constitution was ratified the following year, paving the way for statehood in 1959.

“In terms of public service, it was probably one of the biggest achievements of his life,” said Dermot Cole, longtime newspaper columnist and reporter in Alaska.

Cole said Coghill was proud of his work on the Constitution and that he was the patriarch of an important Alaska family. The longevity of his involvement in politics, from the 1940s through the 2000s, made an impression on Cole, as did his devotion to local political issues. For example, upon returning to Nenana following his time as lieutenant governor, Coghill served on the city council. “Very few people have had such a diverse background as Coghill did,” he said.

One of his large-scale political projects was asserting public access to in and across federal lands through existing trails and rights of way.

“With Mike Dalton as his special assistant, they identified 1,340 trails, had 900 trails they established to assert, and

asserted 11 trails,” the statement from his son reads, adding that the work continues today.

Life in Nenana

Coghill also had a talent for telling stories, which his grandson described as “morality plays.” He wrote a book, “Growing Up in Alaska,” detailing his early life in the territory of Alaska, his political career, the signing of the Constitution and his time in the territorial and state Legislatures.

The autobiography also describes his life with Frances and his children, his military service and his involvement with the Freemasons. Coghill described the book, published in 2009, as a “fun exercise,” although he acknowledged some of his memories could be recalled differently by his peers. “All I have to say about that is that these are just my own memories as accurate as I can remember,” he wrote. “If anyone has a bone to pick, then that’s fine — they can write their own book!”

His enjoyment of telling anecdotes is noted by those who knew him.

“He was a good person to talk to,” Cole said, “a great storyteller and he knew people all through Alaska.”

Coghill’s roots in Nenana are visible today. Coghill’s General Store was started by Jack Coghill’s father, William, 103 years ago. The sons handled the business.

The store remains a family enterprise; Coghill’s niece, Marilyn Duggar, became a store owner/manager in 1992 following the death of her father, Bob Coghill.



“When my dad died, we became very close,” Duggar said, adding that she already had a good relationship with her uncle. She said she and her cousins grew up on stories about Coghill’s General Store.

“Uncle Jack grew up here in the store working for his parents as a little boy,” she said.

Coghill details some of these stories in his book.

“I have vivid memories of growing up in Nenana, memories mainly of life around the store,” he wrote. “At that time kids didn’t have much of an outreach in the community — we weren’t out making many tracks in the snow, you might say. But we sure did have a lot of chores!” Storing eggs, weighing out product, gathering fur from trappers and even a stint as the town undertaker were all a part of early life for Coghill. Duggar heard about those exploits firsthand while growing up.

“There were always stories,” she said. “Uncle Jack was quite the storyteller from the time we were little.”

She said her uncle could be a bit of a prankster.

One anecdote in his book describes an incident with “butter grease” and the Alaska Railroad. Coghill and some other schoolchildren greased the railroad tracks, which prevented a freight train from leaving Nenana, got a U.S. Marshal called to their school and ultimately ended with the tracks needing a steam cleaning. In the end, some of the culprits were discovered because of the grease remnants on their gloves.

“Probably the lesson we learned was what big, and in this case dangerous, consequences there can be to what we thought of as a harmless prank,” he wrote, although not without some humor. “Another thing we learned is that whatever you do, when you pull a prank like that, why you better make sure you have your own tracks covered!” Duggar said that Coghill, in his later years, would recall these pranks. But if any of his children — or his nieces and nephews — got too rowdy or disrespected their grandmother, they could count on him to quiet them down.

She said she believes he would be proud of his children and would want to be remembered for caring about Alaska. She said she thinks he gave his best to Nenana and the state.

“I think he was really proud to be such a founding father of the state of Alaska,” she said.

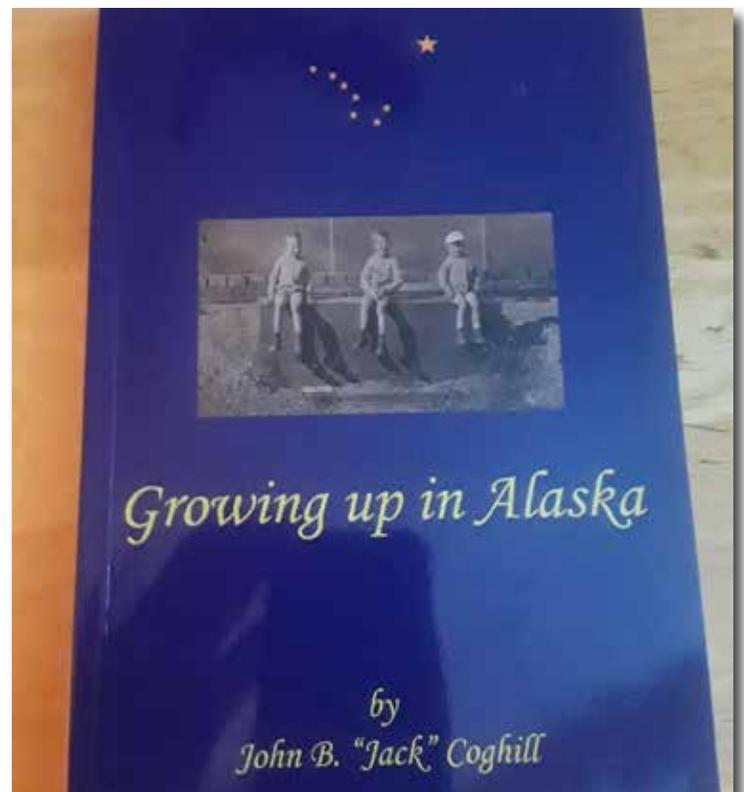
He also dreamed big in his hometown of Nenana and along the way, inspired many people including lifelong Nenana resident Joshua Verhagen, now the mayor.

“Like Jack, I am a ‘Nenana boy’ who grew up in this town believing it could be a place where people can dream big and achieve big things. And boy, did Jack Coghill do big things,” Verhagen said. “If you look around Nenana, Jack Coghill’s mark is left everywhere. The sidewalks on A Street, the big metal light poles, the water and sewer plant, the additions to the school, the playgrounds, the highway bridge, the steel docks, the airport, the city codes, the HUD housing, the south Nenana subdivisions, the road to Fairbanks, the Rex Bridge, the Tortella building and so much of the infrastructure we see all around us.”

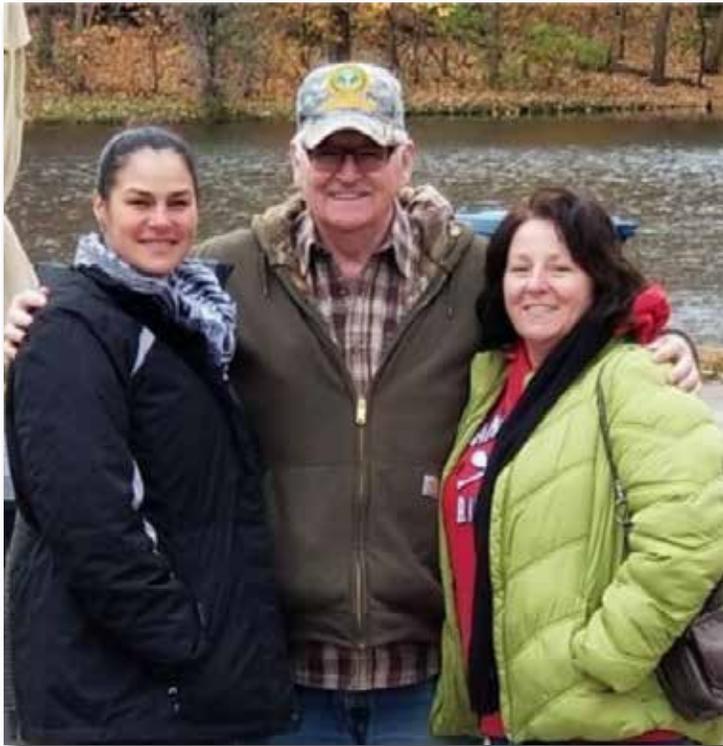
He didn’t just dream big, Verhagen said. “He was always on the move, talking the talk and walking the walk.”

“I’ll never forget his voice projecting across town through the megaphone as he announced for the Fourth of July celebrations here as I was growing up,” he said. “There wasn’t much Jack did without a lot of confidence and vigor.”

This story has been updated to include correct information about the 1994 election.



The Celestial Lodge



Darrell Lee “Butch” Neff

December 8, 1946 - March 8, 2019

Darrell “Butch” Lee Neff, 72, of Cisne, Ill., passed away on March 8, 2019, in Newburgh, Ind.

Butch was born on Dec. 8, 1946, to Harold “Hobb” and Sylvia “Syb” (Tubbs) Neff in Mt. Vernon, Ill. He married Sharon Lehrbas, who preceded him in death on Nov. 27, 2016.

He served in the U.S. Army for 22 years before retiring as a Master Sergeant, and continued his government work with a career in Anchorage for the U.S. Postal Service.

Butch was a member of the Anthony Doherty Masonic Lodge No. 1111 in Cisne, Ill., Al Aska Shrine Temple, Flora (Ill.) V.F.W. Post No. 3999 and was a Knight Templar. Butch is survived by his children Tammy Ann Neff Meyer (Scott) of Mt. Vernon, Natalie Victoria Neff Sundquist of Fort Walton Beach, Fla., and Tammy Kay Fiori and Tracy Leon Lehrbas of Anchorage; one brother, Kennel Neff (Kimberly) of Cisne; and several nieces, nephews, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Sharon; and sister, Berneda J. Neff French.

Cremation will take place and services with military honors will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be directed to Shriners Hospitals for Children and may be dropped off at Hosselton-Meridith Funeral Home of Cisne.

Fond memories and condolences may be shared with the family at www.meridithfuneralhome.com.



The Celestial Lodge



Frederick Albert Hill

October 4, 1939 - February 2, 2019

Longtime Anchorage resident Frederick Albert Hill passed away on Feb. 2, 2019 after a brief illness.

He was the oldest of four children of Frederick Adolph Hill and LaVerne Charlotte (Rich) Hill.

Fred was born during a snowstorm on Oct. 4, 1939. He was the third child born in Anchorage's Providence Hospital, and was christened at All Saint's Episcopal Church. His godparents were Eleanor and Harry Lane.

Fred graduated from Centralia (Wash.) High School. He worked at Centralia's Lewis and Clark Hotel, which his parents owned. He was also a member of the band at Lincoln High School in Portland, Ore. where he played the alto saxophone and performed in the 1957 Rose Parade.

After graduating from high school, Fred attended the Culinary Institute of America in Los Angeles for two years before graduating from the Range Meat Academy in Chicago as a butcher.

Fred was a butcher at the Elmendorf Air Force Base commissary until his retirement. He was a member of the Alaska Air National Guard, Aurora Lodge No. 15 and Pioneers of Alaska Igloo No. 15. He also helped with the annual Al Aska Shrine Vidalia onion fundraiser.

He also enjoyed cooking Thanksgiving dinners and Fur Rondy pancake breakfasts, and was the self-appointed cook in the kitchen at the Pioneers of Alaska during these events.

Fred was preceded in death by his parents and brother Oliver Hill. He is survived by his wife Aida; sisters Marie Brown (Robert) and Elizabeth Robinson (Gene); sons Charles Hill (Kantana) and Paul Hill (Heather); seven grandchildren: Alexia, Landon, Brayden, Carter, Cason, Nathan and Natasha; several nephews, nieces and cousins. His funeral service was held March 2 at Anchorage's Heritage Chapel at Angelus. Interment will be in the Pioneers of Alaska section of the Anchorage Memorial Cemetery this summer.



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