

St. James Lodge No. 47 F. & A.M.

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Stated Communications: 1st & 3rd Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.

JULY 2004—AUGUST 2004



FROM THE EAST

Brethren, this time of year, when the temperature rises and the winds get calm, is sometimes called "The Dog Days of Summer."

However, it is by no means "dog days" for St. James Lodge, since we passed four (4) Fellow Craft Masons on July 15; will raise three (3) or four (4) Master Masons at a Special Communication on Saturday, July 31 with breakfast at 7:30 a.m.; and we plan to confer an Entered Apprentice Degree at the Stated Communication at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 5.

Then at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 2, we anticipate the biggest and best Guest Night the Lodge has ever had. Fellowship begins at 6:00 p.m. with a delicious dinner at 6:30 p.m. This will be an OPEN Meeting with a special invitation extended to include family members of guests. Invite your guests ahead of time and pick up some invitations and envelopes from the "sign-in desk" and mail them to your guests.

Frank E. Dedman

WORSHIPFUL MASTER

RECENT PAST EVENTS

July 1 - Stated Communication at 7:30 p.m. A special talk recognizing Independence Day July 4, 1776 was given by Brother Gerard Ruth. One Entered Apprentice degree was conferred

July 15 - Stated Communication at 7:30 p.m. Two Fellow Craft degrees were conferred. July 15 approved the donation to Slaughter Lodge No. 475 at Jackson, LA of \$200 for their Lodge construction project.

July 31 - 7:30 AM, special meeting to raise 3 or 4 master masons.

FUTURE EVENTS

Aug. 1 TBA
Aug. 15 TBA

(End Casual Summer Attire)

Sep. 2 **Guest Night (Open meeting: fellowship 6:00/meal 6:30)**

On Sunday, September 12 at 2:30 p.m. the 13th Masonic District Lodge will meet at Livonia Lodge No. 220 at 128 Poydras Street, New Roads, LA. Our officers and as many members as possible should attend and bring the attendance award back to St. James Lodge.

Sep. 16 TBA
Oct. 7 **Past Masters' Night (Open/meal 6:30) ***
Oct. 21 Masonic Education Program
Nov. 4 St. John the Evangelist Program
Nov. 18 **Thanksgiving Program (Open/meal 6:30) ***
Dec. 2 Election of Officers for 2005
Dec. 16 **Installation of 2005 Officers (Open/meal 6:30)**

SICKNESS AND RELIEF

Worshipful Brother Al Levingston, PM, our friend and a member of St. James Lodge No. 47, joined the Celestial Lodge Above at 6:30 a.m. Saturday, June 26, 2004.

We all miss our Worshipful Brother Albert R. Levingston

A Masonic Funeral Service was held at Rabenhorst East Funeral Home on June 29. A service was held at Broadmoor United Methodist Church on June 30 followed by burial at Resthaven Cemetery.

Our prayers and support go to his wife Mary and his family.

Our other Brothers that were on the sick list last month are all improving with the blessing of the Supreme Architect Of The Universe.

Masonic Education Corner

"Masonic Education" in my own back yard.

The American Heritage Dictionary defines "education" as, "An instructive or enlightening experience." That's not very complicated. "Masonic education", then, is not some high brow experience available only to Masons with stratospheric I.Q. scores and with access to extensive libraries of dusty and moldy old documents from Masonic antiquity.

Looking, for example, at my copy of The Louisiana Masonic Monitor, I find that within the pages of that unassuming little volume lies prose of profound wisdom, strength, and beauty.

To quote from an earlier issue of the St. James Newsletter, "From the East", May 2003 - June 2003:

'Perhaps we compromise wrongly, at times, and our "wrongful" compromise surely has consequences for The Craft, itself. Perhaps we shouldn't choose the short form of a lecture in our degree work, when a longer form with greater eloquence would make the experience more meaningful for the candidate.'

As I open the "Monitor" again and take the time to look beyond the "short form" of my favorite lecture, letting my mind absorb the "long form", I am surprised at what I've been overlooking. I find it deeply gratifying, for example, to carefully read the long form of the Fellow Craft Working Tools lecture (p. 76 ff.) or the two long forms of the Entered Apprentice Apron Lecture (p. 27 ff.)

(Continued on the next page)

Dues Notice

Our Secretary reminds those Brothers who have not yet paid their 2004 dues to please remit them now. Check your membership card and if the bottom line does not show "Card expires December 31, 2004," then you are six months late.

Perpetual Membership

Forms for Perpetual Membership are available from Secretary Pence. The Perpetual Membership fee is a minimum of twenty (20) times the current annual dues of \$54.50 in one installment of \$1,090, or five (5) annual installments of 4.52 times the annual dues, or five annual installments of \$246.34 each.

Brethren, PLEASE!!! invite prospective members and their wives to Guest Night. Tell them to arrive at 6:00 pm. We eat at 6:30, on Thursday, September 2, 2004. Invitations are being printed and will be available on the "sign-in desk" by our July 1 meeting.

(Continued from previous page)

I discover "Masonic Education", right there "in my own back yard," within the pages of this Louisiana Masonic Monitor. (Incidentally, additional Masonic Education is to be found in the Grand Lodge's Book of Masonic Lectures.)

I do love the novels of Charles Dickens, such as Barnaby Rudge, and Nicholas Nickleby. And, I tell you truly that the prose of The Louisiana Masonic Monitor does not, in my opinion, take a back seat to Dickens. Dickens taught moral principles through the medium of his novels, and he did so in a very powerful and effective fashion. Our "Monitor" teaches moral principles in word and phrase that is in every way comparable, in my opinion, to that of Mr. Dickens.

This gem of English prose -- this Louisiana Masonic Monitor -- has been in my hands since the day I was raised as a Master Mason, to use however I might have chosen to use it. Too often, I have "compromised" my participation in degree work -- and my own "Masonic Education", as well -- by failing to take the fullest advantage of the richness and eloquence of its prose.

"Old Tiler Talks" by Carl Claudy -1924

HAND-PICKED

"I have been thinking," announced the New Brother to the Old Tiler.

"Interesting, if true," murmured the Old Tiler, crossing his legs and leaning his sword against the wall. "Sometimes people think they are thinking when they only think they think."

"Huh?" said the New Brother.

"I said, in other words, give me a cigar," answered the Old Tiler. "If you are thinking, or even if you only think you think and are about to tell me about it, I should have some nicotine as support."

"I have been thinking," went on the New Brother, holding out his cigar case, "that the Masonic fraternity writes one of its unwritten laws upside down. I understand it is un-Masonic for me to ask the best man I know to become a Mason. But if a man against whom I know nothing, except that he is only a fair, average sort of chap, wants to come into my lodge, it is equally against Masonic principles to blackball him, just because he isn't the best educated man in the world!"

"All that you say is true," responded the Old Tiler. "But I think you have only been thinking you thought."

"Ah, but I am not through!" countered the New Brother. "All that being so we stultify ourselves by that unwritten law. If it was the law that no man might apply for Masonry, and that only those who are asked could join, and we were careful whom we asked, what a wonderful personnel we could have!"

"Who, for instance, would you ask?" responded the Old Tiler.

"I know a lot of fellows I would ask!" was the immediate answer. "Dr. Bell, the famous eye man, and Jordan, the English professor, and Dr. Goodspeed, the eminent divine, and Tomlinson, the philanthropist; and that explorer fellow who did such wonderful missionary work...can't think of his name...and...and...oh, a whole lot of wonderful men! Think of the benefit to us all by having men like that in the fraternity."

"It would be wonderful, wouldn't it?" answered the Old Tiler.

"Of course it would! Well, why don't we?"

"Oh, that's simple enough. It wouldn't be Masonic."

"But why?"

"My son," answered the Old Tiler, "can you educate a man that insists on calling himself educated? Can you make a brick into gold by calling it gold? Can you make a silk purse out of a sow's ear by naming it a silk purse?"

"Of course not," was the ready answer. "But we...we Masons make things Masonic or not Masonic by the way we look at them."

"Oh, no, we don't!" cried the Old Tiler. "I have just been leading you on to see what you would say. Now I'll tell you what you want to know. We can't make a thing Masonic by calling it so because the principles of Masonry are fixed and unalterable. We agreed they were unalterable when we became Masons. Therefore, we can't alter them. While it would do you and me good if these fine men conceived a regard for the fraternity and became members, it would do us no good to make them Masons on our initiative. They would then be above the fraternity, not humble members, glad of the blessings of the order. If we picked the men at our own pleasure we might get a higher type of personnel, but they wouldn't be Masons. They would be hand-picked men. We would deny Masonry's blessings to the men who need Masonry while we shower them upon men who need them least.

"There is no man who cannot be ennobled by Masonic influence. No matter how good a man is, his faith and his morality and his righteousness may be strengthened by Masonic influence. But good men need Masonry much less than others not so good. I do not mean that Masonry should take in bad men, but men like you and me, the average man, the banker, doctor, lawyer, merchant, clerk, laborer, the everyday fellow, needs Masonry in his heart and in his life much more than the eminent men who devote their lives to humanity. Masonry is for all who want her blessings and can show that they deserve them. To restrict it to just a few, and those few picked by men with selfish interests at heart, instead of the interests of their candidates, would be un-Masonic, unnatural, and the death knell of the fraternity.

"There are plenty of clubs, associations, organizations, which hand-pick their members. They are useful, good to know and belong to. But they do no such work as do Masons. As well say no man may join the church of God or hear His ministers preach His word, save those who are invited and say, 'Let us have no candidates except those we choose.'

"After men apply for the degrees, then, indeed we can choose. But our choice should be dictated by the man's character, not his wealth or education or services. If he is a good man, able to afford the fees and dues, unlikely to become a charge on the lodge, and seeking Masonry, we want him. To give the blessings of Masonry only to those who need them least, would be un-Masonic."

"I guess you were right," answered the New Brother.

"Were right? I *am* right!" answered the Old Tiler.

"I mean, I guess you were right when you said I only thought I thought!" smiled the New Brother.

NOTE: "The Old Tiler" stories use an archaic spelling of the word Tyler"

Its Power

There is no difference among men that Freemasonry may not overcome.

There is no conflict that Freemasonry may not dissipate.

There is no chasm among nations of good-will which Freemasonry may not bridge.....

The ceremonies and events of this solemn and historic occasion deepen our conviction that Freemasonry is necessary and serviceable to advance the frontiers of Freedom and secure for Humanity the blessings of peace and progress, prosperity and happiness.

*Grand Master Camilo Osiacs of the Philippine Islands,
speaking at the making of Japanese Premier,
Ichiro Hotoama, a Master Mason (March 26, 1955)*

My thanks to the contributors to this issue of the news letter! Send newsletter submissions to Bob Zinn, bz@chem.lsu.edu



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JULY 2004 — AUGUST 2004