

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

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

AUGUST 2004—SEPTEMBER 2004



FROM THE EAST

The Master Mason Degree was conferred on three (3) Brothers on Saturday morning July 31. It was very well attended and we all had a great time. Congratulations to Brothers Brandon Billeaudeau, Robert "Bo" Culpepper and Carl Goode.

I want to extend a special invitation to all Past Masters to attend on Thursday, October 7 at 6:30 P.M. That is a special occasion and we hope all of our Past Masters can attend to be honored and recognized. It is an open meeting, so everyone can bring guests and their wives. I plan to cook one of my specialties - seafood gumbo, so come with your appetite.

Our Secretary, Worshipful Brother Pence, says he has an abundant supply of Petitions and looks forward to running out and needing to print more after Guest Night on September 2.

School will soon be back in session, football is just around the corner, and the weather will be getting cooler. That is a reminder that St. James Lodge returns to winter dress code of coats and ties in September.

In closing, I wish all of you a safe and happy Labor Day week end.

Frank E. Dedman

WORSHIPFUL MASTER

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 available on the "sign-in desk".

RECENT EVENTS

Saturday, July 31 at 7:30 a.m. Special Communication - Three Master Mason Degrees were conferred after a good breakfast. We welcome as Master Masons Brothers Brandon Jude Billeaudeau, Robert "Bo" Eugene Culpepper, and Carl Samuel Goode.

Thursday, August 5 at 7:30 p.m. Stated Communication - One Entered Apprentice Degree was conferred. Brother Edwin Doyle Lane was welcomed as a visitor from the Littleton, Colorado Lodge. A letter was read from Brother Neal Snow Cholette Jr. thanking the St. James Lodge for participating in the Masonic Funeral Service for his father, who was a Mason in another Lodge, and in appreciation enclosed a very generous donation to be used for "good work, charity, etc." Edict # 2004-1 from Grand Master Neil R. Crain was read - waiving the Grand Lodge per-capita dues assessment for all Master Masons aged 18 to 21; and recommending that Lodges waive Lodge dues for Master Masons aged 18 through 20.

Thursday, August 19 at 7:30 p.m. Stated Communication - The Treasurer's Report was read.

Saturday, August 21 in Alexandria was the annual Wardens' Retreat. St. James was represented by its Worshipful Master, Senior and Junior Wardens.

FUTURE EVENTS

(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. **Awards and recognition are given to the Lodge with the most officers and members attending.**

Other Masonic Events - Downtown York Rite Bodies meet regularly on the first Saturday of each month at 8:00 a.m. with breakfast at 7:30 a.m. Scottish Rite Baton Rouge Valley meets on the second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Acacia Shrine Temple meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. with dinner at 6:00 p.m.

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

Bro. Robert Zinn recently traveled to Wyoming for the funeral of his Mother, Sarah Francis Wright Zinn. She went to join her husband, Joseph Zinn, who had preceded her, 3 years earlier.

Mrs. Zinn's had a high regard for masonry because her father, Robert Rowen Wright was a 32nd degree Mason, and a Lodge Master in Independence Mo., and a good friend of Harry S. Truman. The Masonic tradition goes back many generations in the family.

Other sickness and bereavement among Lodge Brothers appears stable or quiet at this time.

Charity Defined -- One Man's Opinion

Masonic Education By Anonymous

"Charity is a distinguishing characteristic of every Mason" (Louisiana Masonic Monitor, p. 49)." "Charity is the brightest jewel in the Masonic Crown...the radiant spark of love emanating from God, the source of all love" (ibid., p. 149).

But how are we to know that we truly understand Charity? We know, for example, that Masonic Charity is not, "...circumscribed by the narrow limits of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked or binding up the wounds of the afflicted..." (ibid., p. 149). But does that fully define Masonic Charity?

As a fledgling student of The Enlightenment, I am convinced that Masonic Charity is inseparably bound up in the principles of that cataclysmic intellectual revolution -- that virtual *upheaval* in humanity's conception of knowledge, of authority, and of humankind, itself.

Dr. Allan Charles Kors, a leading historian of The Enlightenment, says that prior to The Enlightenment (i.e., prior to the 30-year period from 1785 to 1815), the overwhelmingly dominant prevailing attitude throughout all of Western civilization held that spiritual matters, alone, were important -- that physical human

(continued on next page)

suffering (and conversely, physical well-being) were quite literally of no consequence, whatsoever. There were bigger fish to fry -- spiritual ones. What if people suffered? Surely, physical suffering could best be understood as a process of spiritual purification and therefore not only acceptable but even desirable. Under this pre-Enlightenment rationale, universally prevalent throughout Western Europe, "torture as spiritual purification" made perfectly good sense. (Of course, the difference between pre- and post-Enlightenment thinking is so radical that it is now nearly impossible for us to imagine such a thing.)

Just as we say, "Geometry, or Freemasonry -- originally synonymous terms..." (ibid., p. 118), we might just as well say, "The Enlightenment, or Freemasonry -- originally synonymous terms..." because The Enlightenment and Freemasonry are so thoroughly intertwined in the history of the late 17th and early 18th centuries that it is not in any way erroneous to think of "The Enlightenment" and "Freemasonry" as interchangeable terms -- indeed, it seems that the more closely we examine the history of that era, the more difficult it becomes to separate them.

And, it was this "Enlightenment, or Freemasonry" that -- in the 30-year period between 1685 and 1715 -- totally reversed the priorities of Western Civilization. After 1715 (and who can miss the proximity of that date to one so well known to all Masons), it was no longer acceptable to theorize about spirituality, while ignoring human suffering. For the first time in history, concern for the physical well-being -- even the comfort -- of humans took priority over spiritual abstractions. Freemasonry -- The Enlightenment -- is, then, the fountainhead of all Charity, the beginning of freedom and Brotherly Love.

Masonic Charity is a willingness to relate to the objective world of human existence -- to take our gaze away from the stars and to concern ourselves preeminently with the quality of our own lives and the quality of each other's lives. It is the recognition that we serve the GAOTU by administering to our own needs and to the needs of his other Earthly creatures. Masonic Charity is, truly, "...that broader, grander, nobler Charity that regards all men as brothers" (ibid., p. 149).

"Old Tiler Talks" by Carl Claudy -1924

SHOOTING THE MASONIC GUN

"Going so soon?" asked the Old Tiler, as the New Brother reached for his hat and coat.

"I have a most important Masonic mission to perform," answered the New Brother, importantly.

"That's interesting," answered the Old Tiler. "I like to see new brethren so interested they are trusted with important Masonic missions. Care to tell me about it?"

"It can wait a few minutes," answered the New Brother. "It's a family matter. The young son of one of the members of our sister lodge came to me today to explain that his father wasn't doing right. He doesn't give the mother any money and the children need shoes, and this mistaken brother is spending his money on horse racing when he ought to be spending it on his family. The boy knew me and knew his father belonged to the fraternity. So he asked me to use the influence of Masonry to make him behave. That's what I am going to do."

"You grow more interesting every minute." The Old Tiler hitched his chair against the wall and leaned back. "Tell me what you are going to do in the performance of this important Masonic mission."

"I am going to explain to Brother Smith that his conduct is unbecoming that of a Mason, and to get him to reform."

"And if he refuses?"

"I shall then threaten him with proceedings against him."

"Such as?" inquired the Old Tiler.

"Why, one prefers charges, doesn't one? The lodge tries him and inflicts what punishment is necessary. In this case the punishment would be to support his family!"

"And while you are thus engaging in conduct unbecoming a Mason, explaining to him how unbecoming his conduct is, who will come and explain your unbecoming conduct to you?"

"My unbecoming conduct! Why, I am going to do nothing unbecoming a Mason!"

"Oh, yes, you are!" answered the Old Tiler, emphatically. "In fact, you are trying to do several un-Masonic things all at once. Even with the best of intentions, for which I give you credit, you can't succeed in getting any results but being shown the door, and, maybe, having charges preferred against you!"

"Why, you amaze me!" countered the New Brother. "I thought that one of the things Masonry was for was to make men act as they should!"

"You thought wrong!" answered the Old Tiler, "Masonry exists to *teach* men to act as they should, *persuade* them to do right, *encourage* them to be honest and upright, and thoughtful and kindly. But Masonry *makes* no man do as he should. Masonry does not attempt to usurp the law's work. A man who will not support his family can be reached through the law. Masonry can reach him only through his heart. Charges can be preferred against him in his lodge, but with small prospects of results unless the law has first found him guilty. Masons try Masons for un-Masonic conduct. If the un-Masonic conduct is a legal matter, the law usually must first have taken its course. It is not for us to judge the legal aspects of his conduct, only the Masonic angles. And if he can say, 'I have done nothing; I am free before the law; my record is clear;' on what will you convict him?"

"Again, my friend, if this mission of yours is to be performed at all, it must be accomplished by the lodge, not the individual. If the brother were a member of this lodge, and son or wife complained to the Master about a brother's conduct, the Master could appoint a committee to investigate and report to the lodge. But for you, an individual, to go butting into the family affairs of a man not even a brother of your own lodge, would be to subject you to insult. Personally, I think he would be justified in adding to his insults a swift kick which would land you in the middle of the pavement. He would well say he kicked you in defense of his family!"

"The way to reach this brother, supposing he is doing the wrong thing, is through Masons he knows and respects. Let the son or wife go to the Master of his own lodge and say that the man is neglecting them. Let the Master of that lodge reason with him. Perhaps he needs help. The lodge will give it. Perhaps he is slipping for want of a friendly hand and sympathetic understanding. His own brethren will give it. It is not for you, any more than it is for them, to judge this man on one complaint until an investigation has shown what is the fact.

"You have no moral, legal, or fraternal right to whisper good counsel in his ear' until you know it is needed. By arrogating to yourself the powers of a Master and appointing yourself a committee of one to investigate, try, convict, admonish, and threaten with punishment a brother Master Mason, however good your intentions, you show yourself guilty of un-Masonic conduct and a decidedly un-Masonic ignorance. Where are you going now?"

"Back into the lodge!" The New Brother hung up his hat. "To see if I can learn something about this Masonic gun before I attempt to fire it!"

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

Did You Know?

England's First Postage Stamp, the famous "penny black" issued in 1840, was engraved by American born Jacob Perkins, a member of St. Peter's Lodge and Newburyport Commandry, K.T. Newburyport, Mass.

From **Did You Know Vignettes in Masonry from the "Royal Arch Mason" magazine**, edited by Wes Cook

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



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