

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

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

JANUARY 2005 – FEBRUARY 2005



FROM THE EAST

My Brothers, it has been a fantastic year, so far, and it looks as if it will continue to be, if you all continue to pitch in.

We have a lot of business to take care of, several degree candidates, and **GUEST NIGHT**. **You have invited someone, haven't you?**

Time to invite someone else and remind your first invitees about all the fun it will be. If you know someone that has a hard time 'getting out', offer to pick them up and bring them to the meeting. If there is someone that you invited years ago and they just couldn't make it, it is time to ask them again.

To paraphrase JFK, 'Ask not what your lodge can do for you, ask what you can do for your lodge.'

Is there some 'it would be great if we...' idea that you have been afraid to bring up at the lodge? Well, NOW is the time to bring it up. If you are too shy to 'stand and deliver', write it down and pass it to me or one of the other officers of the lodge. We will make sure it gets careful consideration.

Most of all, if coming to Lodge isn't as much fun as it used to be for you, ask yourself what you can do to make it more fun for others.

And for those of you that haven't been to lodge in a long time, WE are missing you. It is not as much fun without you, PLEASE come to lodge!

Ken Streater, W.M.

PERPETUAL MEMBERSHIP

Forms for Perpetual membership are available from Secretary Pence. In 2005 annual dues for St. James Lodge increased from \$54.50 last year to \$59.50 this year, due to a \$5.00 increase in Grand Lodge per capita charges. The Perpetual Membership fee in a Lodge is 20 times the annual dues, now \$1,190 in one payment for St. James Lodge. Optionally, one may pay five (5) annual installments of 4.52 times annual dues or \$268.94. Proposed resolutions to Grand Lodge, should they pass, would increase dues another \$13, so this is the year to enroll as a Perpetual Member before dues go up again.

RECENT EVENTS

Jan. 6 A Fellow Craft degree was conferred.
Jan. 20 A Fellow Craft degree was conferred.

Most Worshipful Bill Brown, PGM, presented, for information and discussion, the 11 Proposed Resolutions that will be introduced for vote at Grand Lodge in February.

M.W. Bill Brown's brother, Bobby Brown from Cabot Lodge 319, Cabot, Arkansas told some of us an interesting story showing how 'little brother' Bill is anchored in Masonry.

Also, honoring us with his presence was W. Bro. Steve Pence, son of our Secretary, from Joppa Lodge #362. Steve did an excellent job of helping his father 'clear the secretary's desk'.

FUTURE EVENTS

Feb. 3 Review of our Programs for Charity
A Special Communication is called for 5:30 p.m. to confer an Entered Apprentice degree.
The regular Stated Communication will begin at 7:30

Feb. 17 Grand Lodge Report
Mar. 3 **Guest Night (Open/meal 6:30)**

HOW MANY HAVE YOU INVITED to this GUEST NIGHT?

Mar. 17 Rededication & Re-obligation; 25 & 50 yr. Awards PM.

Feb. 17 Grand Lodge Report
Mar. 3 **Guest Night (Open/meal 6:30)**
Mar. 17 Rededication & Re-obligation; 25 & 50 yr. Awards

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.

"Rays of Masonry" by Dewey Wollstein -1953

MASONIC FRIENDSHIPS

It is generally agreed that one of the finest fruits of Masonry is friendship. If we review our days and years in the field of Masonry we instantly mark our experiences by various friendships formed over the years.

Acquaintances are easily made, and many, aside from our Masonic associations, grow into abiding friendships. However, there is a definite reason for the solid foundation upon which Masonic bonds are made and increased. Men who have in common the gifts of Masonic teachings, who are alike in such a glorious adventure, who take sacred obligations at the same Altar, lay the groundwork for enduring friendships and of such fiber that they have a spiritual strength beyond the power of description.

Masonry is ever the advocate of the principle of freedom of thought and speech, and the fact that men may differ in their private opinions tends to give dignity to man, and strength to Masonic friendships.

Men who keep before them the ideals of a universal religion, men not bound by the chains of edicts and dogma, but governed only by the dictates of conscience, men who are true to their government and just to their duty to God, to neighbor, and to self, men who do not practice deception-such men are the rightful claimants to rich and wonderful friendships.?

"Old Tiler Talks" by Carl Claudy -1924

LAUGHTER

"If I had it my way," began the New Brother, sitting beside the Old Tiler, "I'd make it a Masonic offense to laugh in the lodge room. We are not as serious about our Masonry as we should be."

"Someone laughed at you, or you are talking to yourself very seriously!" answered the Old Tiler.

"I am not!" cried the New Brother. "I take Masonry seriously! What we do in the lodge room has the sacredness of a religious ceremony. I can see no difference between the sacredness of the Altar of Masonry and the altar of a church, and when I go and see the beautiful windows, and hear the music and watch the choir boys come up the aisle, and hear the minister give out the solemn text- well, you know how inspiring it is. I feel the same way in lodge sometimes, during the more solemn parts of the degrees. But we have a business meeting first and sometimes someone cracks a joke and everyone laughs, and some brethren misinterpret and giggle sometimes in the degrees, and there is some ritual which isn't awe-inspiring and- and I think it should be changed!"

"Well, go ahead and change it!" cried the Old Tiler. "I don't believe that absence of solemnity is a Masonic landmark which can't be changed."

"Of course it isn't, but how can I change it?"

"That's your problem!" smiled the Old Tiler. "You are the reformer, not I. But before I wasted much grey matter, I'd ask myself a few questions. You seem to like things serious, so this should come easy to you. Then I'd talk to the Chaplain. David is young, but he has common sense.

"It would do you good to go his church. You would find it as solemn and beautiful as any other during the service. But if you went to a vestry meeting you'd see David grin, and maybe someone would tell a ministerial joke. I can't imagine God being displeased about it. Seems to me if he hadn't wanted people to laugh he wouldn't have made so many brethren to laugh at!

"Brother David would tell you that there was a time to be reverent and a time to be happy, and that a church in which

people couldn't be happy wasn't much of a church. Ever go to a wedding? Ever see people grin and kiss the bride when it was over? Ever go to a church social? Ever go to the boys' club in a red-blooded church?

"It didn't hurt the church in their eyes, did it? Then why should it disconcert you to have a lodge room treated the same way? Get it out of your head that Masonry or religion is bound up in a room, or a building. It doesn't hurt so long as we don't laugh at the wrong time! It doesn't hurt the solemnity of the Masonic degree that our lodge room is first but a business meeting hall and afterwards maybe a dining room. It is the spirit in which we do our work that counts, not the letter; it is the temple in our hearts which must be kept sacred, not the mere physical confines of brick and stone in which we meet.

"That there should be no cause for laughter during the degrees. But to say we can't laugh in a lodge room is to get the dog by the wrong tail!

"Masonry, my son, is joyful, not mournful. It should be filled with laughter of little children, the happy smiles of contented women, the loveliness of faithful friendship, the joy of flowers and music and song. To make it too serious for smiles, too solemn for happiness, perverts it. If God made sunshine and children and flowers, don't you suppose He wanted the one to dance with the other in the third? If He made happiness and human hearts, don't you suppose He wanted the one to live in the other?

"Masonry is an attempt to live the brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God. The best of all human fathers can but touch the skirts of the Being who is the All Father. But did you ever see a human father worth his salt who didn't want his children laughing and happy?

"There is a time for work and a time for play. There is a time for degrees and a time for refreshment. There is a time for business meetings and a time for ritual. There is a time for laughter and for joy as well as a time of solemnity and reverence. The one is just as important as the other."

"I wish just once," said the New Brother, "I could start something with you which I could finish!"

"Try offering me a cigar!" suggested the Old Tiler.

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

Did You Know?

The world was shocked on March 1, 1932, when the infant son of Bro. and Col. Charles A. Lindbergh was kidnapped.

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

Please consider submitting something for the next news letter. YOUR article could be here!



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