

The Discoverer

The Monthly Newsletter of The Lodge of Discovery

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Season's Greetings Brethren,

A real bumper bundle this month with detailed accounts of the GI's visit to London and the UGLE visit to Fiji.

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TERCENTENARY REPORT BY THE GRAND INSPECTOR

Brethren, I was privileged to attend the Tercentenary Celebrations in London on Tuesday 31 October 2017 for the 300th Anniversary of the formation of the United Grand Lodge of England. In preparing this note, rather than re-invent the wheel, I have drawn heavily on the Grand Lodge Press Release following the events, and an article by W.Bro. Peter Snow published in the Journal of the Wellington Lodge 1521 NZ, as these combined give an excellent coverage of the days celebrations. Ross McDonald Grand Inspector.

300 Years of Freemasonry Celebrated at Royal Albert Hall

Over 4,000 Masons from 136 Grand Lodges around the world embrace Freemasonry's rich heritage and relevance today at the culmination of the United Grand Lodge of England's Tercentenary year

Performances by the renowned Sir Derek Jacobi, Samantha Bond and Sanjeev Bhaskar showcased Freemasonry's unique history

Monumental 55ft gold Square and Compasses frame a musical performance by the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra

The Official Tercentenary celebration was presided over by HRH The Duke of Kent, Grand Master.

2017 marks the founding of the world's first Grand Lodge in London 1717.

On October 31 2017 Freemasons from around the world gathered in the Royal Albert Hall to celebrate their Tercentenary. It marked 300 years from 1717, when four lodges had met at the Goose and Gridiron Tavern in St Paul's Churchyard to form the first Grand Lodge.

Presided over by the Grand Master, HRH The Duke of Kent, over 4,000 Masons from 136 Grand Lodges enjoyed a theatrical extravaganza produced and directed by leading impresarios Matthew Mitchell and Richard Clifford.

The cast was headed by acclaimed actors Sir Derek Jacobi, Samantha Bond and Sanjeev Bhaskar against the backdrop of a specially created colossal 55ft gold Square and Compasses - the universally recognised symbol of Freemasonry. The Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra, along with soprano Fleur de Bray provided the musical accompaniment.

With a combination of entertainment and education, the stunning production featured a dramatic light show incorporating the 'All Seeing Eye'..The celebration showcased the unique heritage of Freemasonry, highlighting its role and relevance across the ages and in society today.

The Royal Albert Hall was packed to capacity for a two and a half hours Extravaganza as a fitting tribute to Masonry past and present, part ceremony and part entertainment.

The pageant that unfolded told the story of Freemasonry over 300 years by taking an Initiate through some of the ceremony of his Initiation (without divulging secrets) in a dialogue by his conductor, culminating in the Initiate kneeling before the Grand Master to discover "Light".

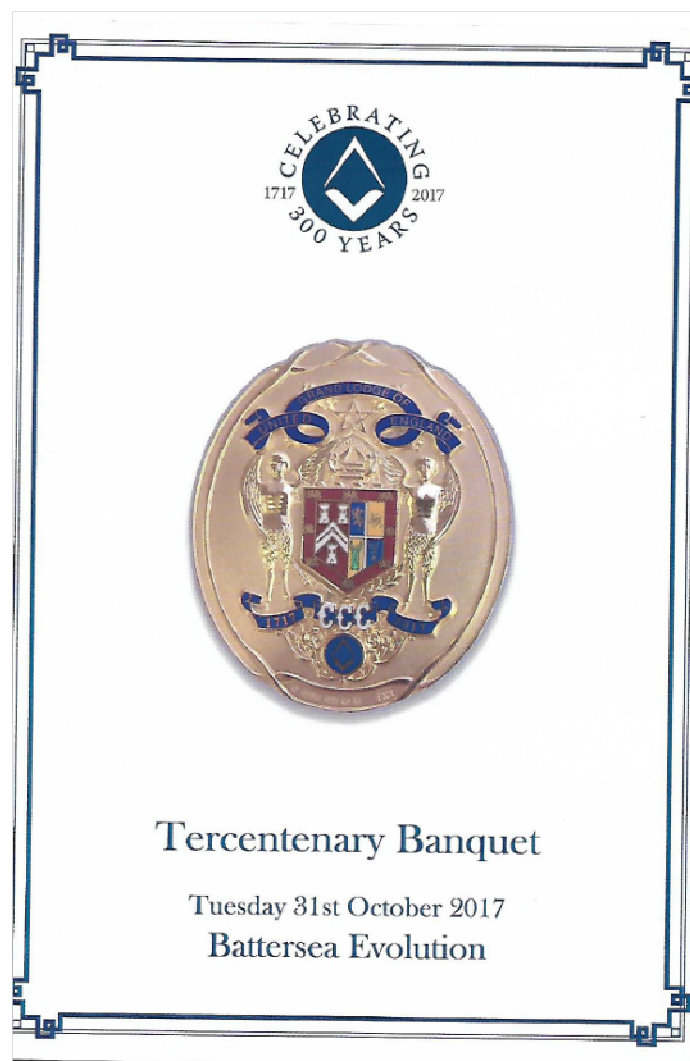
Towards the end of the ceremony, the Grand Master Moved from the Royal Box to the arena and on to the stage, which was set up as the east end of the Temple. The loyal address to Her Majesty the Queen was read, together with the response from Her Majesty. Following this the Deputy Masters of the Time Immemorial Lodges presented the Great Lights and the Wren Maul, after which a new replica of Soane's Ark was brought onto the stage. The three Great Lights were then placed in the Soane Ark which was then blessed and dedicated by the Grand Chaplain.

You may ask how Grand Lodge was opened and closed given the number of Masons present, and the fact that the Celebration involved non-masons. Grand Lodge was opened in a private room and called off before the Celebration commenced. Afterwards it was called-on again and closed privately.

Following the Royal Albert Hall event, about 2,000 masons were then moved by coach to the Battersea Evolution where a champagne Reception and Banquet ensued for the remainder of the evening. Suffice to say this was quite magnificent and I can do no better than copy the menu to give an indication of the magnificence of the evening.

The Tercentenary event was also streamed live to audiences around the world, including the United Grand Lodge of England's headquarters at Freemasons' Hall in Covent Garden, London. There are around six million Freemasons worldwide, with over 200,000 in the UK under UGLE.

I understand Grand Lodge will issue a DVD covering the Royal Albert Hall and Battersea Evolution events. Until this is available I would encourage all brethren to look at the live streaming which is available by logging on to www.RAH300.Org





Toasts

The Queen & the Craft

The Most Worshipful The Grand Master
His Royal Highness The Duke of Kent
KG, GCMG, GCVO, ADC

The Tyler's Toast



Wines

Heidsieck Bronze Top, Champagne

Mâcon Lugny, Louis Latour 2015

Château Plaisance
Montagne Saint Emilion 2010

Menu

Lobster Tortellini, spaghetti of vegetables
caviar and white wine cream, crisp leeks



Treacle Roast Fillet of Beef
watercress and horseradish emulsion,
glazed carrots, anna potatoes
bone marrow crumble and red wine sauce



Traditional Sherry Trifle
with toasted almonds and shortbread biscuits



Cheese platters
The Duke, blue veined cheese, Cambridge
Montgomery's cheddar, Somerset; Cornish Brie
All served with an ale pickle, seedless grapes
celery and artisan crackers

UGLE VISIT TO FIJI—WELCOME ADDRESS

Tercentenary Welcome Address – Delivered by the Grand Inspector VWBro Ross McDonald at the Celebratory Tercentenary meeting of the Lodge of Fiji at the Masonic Hall, Suva held on 22 November 2017

Right Worshipful Brother Sir David Wootton Assistant Grand Master it gives me great pleasure on behalf of all brethren in the South West Pacific Group of Lodges, and on behalf of the Worshipful Master W. Bro. Robert Smith of the Lodge of Fiji, that is acting as the host lodge for this visit, to extend to you and Right Worshipful Bro Oliver Lodge a very hearty and warm welcome to the South Pacific.

We are honoured and privileged that you have travelled halfway around the world to be with us tonight to celebrate with us the Tercentenary of Grand Lodge.

As you will be aware our Group covers three lodges, two here in Fiji, and one in Vanuatu and whilst all lodges are represented here, regretfully for mainly logistical reasons all of our brethren cannot be here with us to greet you this evening.

Nevertheless our greeting is warm and sincere and is on behalf of all brethren in the South West Pacific Group, and we sincerely trust that both you and RW Bro Lodge and your wives have enjoyed your stay with us, albeit a short one, and that you take away with you the warm good wishes of all of the brethren of the South West Pacific Group.

Your visit to my knowledge is only the third formal visit we have had from Grand Lodge since the Lodge of Fiji was formed in 1882. I understand the first ever was in 1960 when the then Grand Secretary the Late RW Bro Subbs visited.

The second was in 1985 when the late RW Bro Lord Cornwallis visited both Vanuatu and Fiji. I was in Vanuatu at the time and my wife and I were privileged to host him at our home in Port Vila. Within the past twenty years we have had several informal and private visits by brethren from Grand Lodge including, a former Grand Secretary Very Worshipful Bro. Jim Daniels and a former Assistant Grand Master RW Bro David Williamson but no meetings were held during their visits.

So given the infrequent nature of these visits let me say we are indeed, very, very grateful that you and RW Bro Lodge have been able to spare the time to come to this isolated part of the Masonic world to join with us in our Tercentenary celebrations. Your visit adds the icing on the cake, so to speak, for us in this Tercentenary year and makes this a very special occasion for all brethren in the South West Pacific Group.

Our brethren in New Zealand I think hold the record for being situated the most distance from London but we in Fiji have another honour that you will probably not be aware of. The International Date Line, the 180th meridian actually runs through the Fiji Island Group, and you will see on maps the Dateline has been diverted to go around Fiji so that it is the same day and same time throughout the year in Fiji.

The important part of this for us as Freemason's is, because Fiji sits just to the West of the International Date Line where the new day begins, the Lodge of Fiji is the first Lodge not only in the English Constitution, but also of any Constitution throughout the world, to receive "light" every day for 365 days of the year.

You will see this situation of light and darkness is represented in Lodge Fiji's banner in the panel just behind you. There you can see the 180th meridian. You can see darkness waiting to receive "light" from the East.

Within Freemasonry we see this is a unique privilege that no one can take from us.

Being situated so far from London, we rarely attend the Grand Lodge Quarterly Communications or Annual Investitures, or committee meetings and we sometimes feel isolated from Grand Lodge because of distance. Indeed the only reason we do not attend as regularly as we would like is because of time, distance and cost, as a visit to London from here is a week out of our time as a minimum, apart from the exorbitant cost of travel and accommodation, as I am quite sure you will have discovered from this visit. Modern forms of communication and the Internet have helped to close this gap, but in general our isolation remains.

Our three lodges are situated in what were once called third world developing countries, and we have brethren from all walks of life, from different community groups, various sectors, lawyers, bankers, and many others as well as retired folk, and magically from this diverse group we all share our common bond of Freemasonry that we hold dear.

Unfortunately from within the various communities and people we live with there is suspicion about Freemasonry, the churches are not comfortable with it, while some within our communities still live with their traditional beliefs, and for most they have no understanding of the concept of Freemasonry. And yet from within this sometimes hostile environment Freemasonry has survived, through colonial times, coups, and political upheaval since its establishment in Fiji in 1875 in the old capital of Levuka with the establishment of a Scottish constitution Lodge, the Lodge of Polynesia, and I am happy to acknowledge the presence of brethren of the Lodge of Polynesia here with us this evening.

Since Fiji became independent in 1970, all lodges in Fiji have struggled for candidates as the former colonial communities were the backbone of our membership. With the departure of many colonial workers, localization, coups and local families emigrating we have lost many members.

And I should say I am not just talking about Fiji, this includes Vanuatu where the Lodge of Discovery was established in 1977 just a few short years before Vanuatu had its rebellion in 1980. It too has seen a significant change with many expatriates leaving after the Rebellion and a change in community and social circumstances since independence.

With this background and despite our small numbers we have a solid core of brethren in all three Lodges that keep our Lodges strong, and will continue to do so in years to come in both Fiji and Vanuatu.

In conclusion I trust you and RW Bro Lodge have enjoyed your visit, and that you now have some knowledge of Freemasonry in the South West Pacific, our joys, our sorrows, and the challenges that we live with to ensure that Freemasonry continues to survive and prosper in this isolated part of the world.

On your return to London, please convey to Grand Lodge the sincere greetings of all brethren, our intense loyalty and our affection. We wish you a safe journey home and trust that you and your good ladies have enjoyed your visit to the South West Pacific just as we have enjoyed having you with us for these past few days.

We all sincerely hope that you will both come back again before too long for a longer stay and visit both Fiji and Vanuatu and share with us the joy of our worldwide Masonic friendships.

Thank you, RW Bro Assistant Grand Master.

FREEMASONRY IN THE SOUTH WEST PACIFIC

An address given at the meeting of the Lodge of Fiji 1931 EC on 22 November 2017 on the occasion of the visit to Fiji of the Assistant Grand Master, RW Bro Sir David Wootton accompanied by the Grand Director of Ceremonies VW Bro Oliver Lodge.

Brethren All, in presenting this paper I have to acknowledge that much of the material I have used has been taken from the Late Sir Leonard Usher's history of the Lodge of Fiji written to commemorate the Lodge's Centenary in 1982 and from the Late W Bro Len Sherwood's papers written around 1966 that give a very precise insight into the early days of Freemasonry in Fiji.

I have also used information gathered from the Lodge of Discovery that gives an account of its development since it was formed in 1977.

In looking at Freemasonry in Fiji we also have to acknowledge the role the Grand Lodge of Scotland has played in this from its very formative beginnings and I am happy to acknowledge the presence of brethren from the Lodge of Polynesia here with us this evening.

IN THE BEGINNING

Freemasonry in Fiji began in 1871 when, at High Noon on December 27, a Lodge of Free and accepted Masons in Polynesia" was opened in Levuka, then the seat of a Government headed by Ratu Seru Cakobau.

Ratu Cakobau on whom the title King of Fiji had been conferred by the European settlers responsible for forming his Government, had been advised that Freemasonry was a dangerous secret society, but enquiry among some of his Ministers who were members of overseas Lodges, convinced him otherwise.

He therefore signed a document authorizing Lodge Polynesia to meet "Under Royal Patronage and by Permission".

That settled matters so far as State authority was concerned, but for reasons which Lodge Polynesia historians have not so far been able fully to explain, Masonic authority for the Lodge's formation was less soundly based.

It appears that the founding brethren, men of high integrity and some of them with considerable Masonic experience were under the impression that a particular Lodge in Sydney Australia had some sort of District Grand Lodge authority to grant a charter for a new Lodge.

It took a little time for the realization of irregularity to dawn on the brethren concerned, and before an exchange of letters, taking months to travel to and fro half way around the world by sailing ships, resulted in the granting of a charter to Lodge Polynesia No 562 in the register of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. The date of the charter was February 1, 1875.

Four months before this, an event of major significance in Fiji's History had taken place.

On October 10, 1874, Ratu Cakobau and his fellow chiefs ceded all the islands of the Group to Queen Victoria, her heirs and successors, Levuka became the capital of the new British colony, but the Governor and his advisers realized the handicap arising from a harbor of limited size and the lack of room for expansion on the small hilly island of Ovalau.

They looked for an alternative site for the capital and the choice eventually fell on Suva, on the island of Viti Levu.

Suva was proclaimed the capital in 1877 and work began on the construction of roads and Government buildings in preparation for the official move from Levuka in 1882.

The Lodge of Polynesia has played a significant role in the Levuka community since its establishment and has given freely to many worthy causes on the island over the years.

Unfortunately during the George Speight coup in 2000 the magnificent Lodge Polynesia premises with its wood paneled walls, gas lights, all its furniture and memorabilia were destroyed by fire by rebels. The Lodge of Fiji immediately offered its premises in Suva for the Lodge of Polynesia to hold meetings and since the loss of their temple Lodge Polynesia has continued to meet in this Lodge. This I think exemplifies the brotherly love and affection and the strong bonds between English and Scottish brethren throughout Fiji.

THE LODGE OF FIJI 1931 EC

By 1877, the new capital already had a Masonic Lodge in the making. On July 12, 1881 the United Grand Lodge of England had issued a warrant for the establishment of the Lodge of Fiji 1931 at "Suva Na Viti Levu in the colony of Fiji"

The Warrant was signed and sealed by the Grand Master, MW Bro Prince Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, later King Edward the VII. You can see the warrant proudly hanging on the wall of the Lodge on my left.

The new Lodge met for the first time on May 2 1882. In all twenty brethren attended that first meeting, representing eleven different English, Scottish and Irish Constitutions.

At the initial meeting, in addition to the Warrant from Grand Lodge, two dispensations, now framed and hanging in the Lodge refectory were read.

One reduced to seven days the obligatory lapse of time between the conferment of successive degrees on a candidate.

It is interesting to note that possibly with this authority "In the first three years of existence the Lodge conferred 113 degrees" such it seems was the enthusiasm of candidates to join. The level of fees charged is also interesting to note. The initiation fee was fixed at ten guineas (\$21.00 in decimal currency). Residents paid six shillings a month and country members nine shillings a quarter. From these subscriptions, one shilling a month for each member went to Grand Lodge in London.

The second permitted the wearing of Masonic clothing at Divine Service, at the funeral of a brother who had expressed a wish for Masonic burial, and at the laying of the foundation stone of a public building erected for "pious or charitable purposes".

The brethren interpreted this dispensation somewhat liberally and that night appeared in full regalia at a ball to celebrate the birth of the new Lodge. For a considerable time the brethren of the Lodge of Fiji continued to appear in public in Masonic clothing, particularly at Masonic Balls, at special funeral services and at funerals of distinguished brethren. The last such occasion appears to have been in 1938.

OTHER ENGLISH LODGES IN FIJI

Following the establishment of the Lodge of Fiji four more English constitution lodges were established during the next 35 years, bringing the number of working English Constitution Lodges to five by 2014. Unfortunately with changing social patterns this number has now reduced to 2, operative English Constitution Lodges now working in Fiji.

The Rewa Lodge of Viti 2238 EC quickly followed and it held its first meeting on 21 July 1888 in the presence of 24 members and 3 visitors. It was based at Nausori, some 20k from Suva where the Nausori (Suva) airport is now located. Its initial membership was targeted at the settlers in that area and was later strongly supported by employees of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, as sugar became the main stay of the Fiji economy. Indeed the sugar industry played a big part in the spread of Freemasonry in Fiji to the main cane growing district in the Western Districts of Viti Levu in the early 1900s.

The Rewa Lodge received strong initial support but with the decline of sugar cane farming in the area and closing of the sugar mill, and with a subsequent decline in membership, it with the approval of the Lodge of Fiji, held all meetings in the Lodge of Fiji premises from 13 January 1951.

Its membership continued to decline following the 1987 Coup, and further coups in 2000 and 2006 that saw many local citizens and expatriates across the public and private sectors leave Fiji, and unfortunately this included some Lodge members.

With this background the few remaining members and with the support of the Grand Inspector decided that the Lodge should be closed (rather than have it struck off) and the last meeting of the Lodge was held on 3 November 2007 with a total of 19 brethren, being four members and 15 visitors. The last meeting was a celebration of the Masonic love and affection brethren had enjoyed with the Lautoka Lodge brethren, both present and past, over many years.

The Lodge of Lautoka 3354EC was consecrated in 1908 and had strong membership through until the early 1970s as it received excellent support from employees of the then Colonial Sugar Refining Co (that I mentioned earlier) and expatriates in general. With the withdrawal from Fiji of CSR in the mid 1970s support for the Lodge collapsed and it went into decline. By the mid 1980s it was failing to meet and the last known Installation was held in 1987, the year of Fiji's first Coup.

The Lodge then failed to meet for some years although attempts were made to hold meetings, when enthusiastic brethren moved to revive the Lodge. Advertisements were placed in newspapers advertising for brethren interested in reviving the Lodge and soon a mix of expatriate and local brethren were found to support a proposal to Grand Lodge to revive the Lautoka Lodge. Fortunately the Lodge had not been struck off and with Grand Lodge support and the issue of a new warrant the first meetings were held in 1996 with an Installation that year when W Bro Ian Simpson was installed.

In 2008 an application was made to Grand Lodge for a Centenary Warrant which Grand Lodge declined to issue as they were not satisfied that Lautoka Lodge had met continuously for 100 years. Unfortunately during the years it had not met regularly all Lodge records were lost and the only surviving record is the Attendance Register that is incomplete.

Representations to Grand Lodge continued for several years but it would not change its stand, and much to the disappointment of brethren the Lodge does not have a Centenary Warrant which would have been a significant moral boost to brethren as we continue to strive to keep Freemasonry alive in this isolated part of the world.

The old Lodge building in Lautoka had become derelict and in reviving Lodge Lautoka a key requirement of the brethren was that the Lodge should transfer its meeting place from Lautoka to Nadi (where the international airport is) as this was where the large majority of brethren lived. Because of Nadi's central location in Tourism, Fiji's largest industry, it was seen Nadi would be where it could draw most support, from both the local community and tourists who were seen as an excellent source of visitors. With this decision to move to Nadi the Lodge's premises in Lautoka were no longer required.

Discussions were held with the Methodist Church in Lautoka and the vacant property was sold to the Church in 2003 for \$44,250 that at the time was seen as a good price. The old wooden building was donated to the Western Crippled Children Society

The other feature of the revival of Lautoka Lodge was the mode of dress and time for meetings. It was decided to do away with tradition, and formal dress would no longer be required and brethren could dress in work clothes, ie smartly dressed in long trousers and collared shirt and no tie (short or long sleeved) as it was thought this mode of dress would attract more visitors and brethren. Bula shirts, knitted golf shirts, T shirts and sandals being expressly prohibited. Grand Lodge approved the change.

Worth recording during the 2008 Coup, a meeting of Lodge Lautoka was being held on Denarau Island. It was interrupted and closed down by the Nadi police who had received reports from villagers that blood was being drunk at the meeting. The brethren, some 18 in all, were taken to the Nadi Police Station where they were held until the early hours of the morning, when a call to the Attorney General resulted in the immediate release of all brethren. Brethren are sincerely grateful to the Attorney General for his intervention.

An aside to this story is that the "prisoners" were probably the envy of all other prison inmates in Fiji when they were fed Big Macs and Coke as one of the brethren W Bro Marc McElrath (who is here with us tonight) whose family is the owner of McDonalds Restaurants in Fiji. A phone call through to his partner provided the nourishment brethren required. The incident was reported on BBC World News, although it is hardly the publicity Fiji and the Craft desires.

Lautoka Lodge has since purchased a ¼ acre plot of land at a cost of \$175,000 and with financial support from Lodge of Fiji is now in the final stages of planning their new Lodge premises that it is planned to have completed and dedicated in 2018 as part of the Tercentenary celebrations.

Details of the decline of the Ba Lodge of Fiji 4883 EC are sketchy.

Like Lautoka Lodge it relied almost entirely on CSR employees for its membership base and this suffered for the same reasons as Lautoka Lodge into the 1970s.

Brethren from the Lodge of Fiji visited the Lodge around 1975. The building was derelict being open to the elements. It had been stripped of all furniture and Masonic ornamentation except for the tracing boards which had rotted and were brought back to Suva and eventually burnt as they were of no further use because of their poor condition.

It is understood the Lodge was struck off in the 1970s.

Lodge Navua 3739 EC was established in Navua near Pacific Harbour (where you drove through on Monday in coming to Suva) and held its first meeting on 19 August 1914. Navua was then a sugar-growing and milling centre, access being by ship. Again the Lodges support came from the sugar industry in that area, and with the collapse of the industry and the closure of the sugar mill, the Lodge held its last meeting on 27 November 1920, when there were 15 subscribing members.

There are two non surviving Lodges in Fiji that were granted warrants, but the lodges were never consecrated. These are the:

Lodge Vanua Levu 2713EC named after the second largest island of the Fiji Group that was to have met in Labasa. The Lodge was never consecrated.

In 1902, 9 brethren petitioned to form Lodge Thiele No 2953 EC that was to meet in Lautoka and was named after the "outstanding Freemason in Fiji at the turn of the century". The Lodge was never consecrated.

I now turn to Vanuatu where the Lodge of Discovery 8737 EC was dedicated in 1977 and has met in Port Vila since, although not without incident. And I am pleased to see Lodge of Discovery brethren are here with us this evening.

The Lodge has around 30/35 members with up to 20 members regularly attending meetings. Numbers over the years have remained at about this same level. The Lodge recruits well and receives a steady flow of candidates from both the local and expatriate communities.

Its rented building in Port Vila had served the Lodge well until sadly it was destroyed by fire following the deranged work of an arsonist in April 2002, who had a private grudge against one of the Lodge brethren that had nothing to do with Freemasonry. Unfortunately he decided to take his anger out on the Lodge rather than the brother involved and so the Lodge suffered.

A worthy Past Master W Bro George Vasiliev came to the Lodge's rescue and generously donated land for a new Lodge and a new Lodge building was built with generous assistance from many brethren.

The new Lodge was dedicated on 12 March 2005 by The Grand Inspector with some 50 brethren present including visitors from New Zealand, Australia and Fiji.

From its beginnings the Lodge has become noted for the sumptuous repast it offers in the South with a three course meal and fine French wines which is the envy of other Lodges in the South West Pacific Group.

The Lodge is now very well established with a 41 year history and looks forward with confidence to its future. VW Bro McDonald our Grand Inspector is a past master of the Lodge being its 7th master.

This address is about Freemasonry in the South West Pacific, and not just about English Lodges. In this respect Scottish Freemasonry has played a strong part.

I have already mentioned the establishment of the Scottish Constitution Lodge of Polynesia in 1871 as the first Masonic lodge in Fiji.

There has been an existing Scottish Constitution Royal Arch chapter in Fiji since 1899, the Loloma Royal Arch Chapter NO 261 SC that meets in Suva.

This Scottish Chapter was formed in 1899 and whilst it appears from the sparse records available that it had reasonable attendance through until the late 1960s it has since then struggled for survival with numbers at meetings being as low as 5 and up to the occasional 8 or 9, with Dispensations from the Grand Superintendant of Workings being a regular necessity. This position remains unchanged and its longer term future must be in doubt.

Thus with a Scottish Chapter in Fiji most Royal Arch Masons in Fiji are Scottish Royal Arch masons. There are no records or know reasons why we have a Scottish Chapter and not an English Chapter.

The Lautoka Royal Arch Chapter 463 SC was constituted on 20 November 1919 under the Grand Lodge of Scotland. It struggled for attendance from its early days and is thought to have continued to meet until the late 1970s and it is understood to have collapsed in the early 1980s.

Brethren, that completes my brief summary of Freemasonry in the South West Pacific. There could be more about Samoa, American Samoa, the Solomon Islands and PNG, but that I think should be the subject of another paper.

Thank you brethren, I trust you have found this paper interesting and it has given you a brief insight into the beginnings of Freemasonry in Fiji and Vanuatu.

Delivered by: W Bro Andrew Naiqulevu
Prepared by: VWor Bro Ross McDonald



The Royal Albert Hall venue of the tercentenary celebration.



LOD—UGLE VISIT TO FIJI

To celebrate the tercentenary of UGLE an eminent team consisting of the Assistant Grand Master (Sir David Wootton) and the Grand Director of Ceremonies (Oliver Lodge) together with their wives visited New Zealand and Fiji in November. Vanuatu was originally on the list but, due to time restraints, Vanuatu could not be fitted in. However, the Lodge of Discovery were represented in Fiji by the W.M. Andrew Hibgame, W. Bro. James Kluck (IPM), W. Bro. Russell Chilton (D of C) and W. Bro. Rex Kersley OGR accompanied by his wife, Lou. The following photographs were supplied by the Lodge of Fiji.



Grand DC, AGM, GI and the LOD contingent

Photo by Russell Chilton



Launch of booklet- Freemasonry in the South West Pacific Group—a collection of papers



Grand D of C & Lou Cochrane



Ah! A "Fiji Golden" moment

READING MASONS & MASONS WHO DO NOT READ

By Albert G. Mackey

I suppose there are more Masons who are ignorant of all the principles of freemasonry than there are men of any other class who are chargeable with the like ignorance of their own profession. There is not a watchmaker who does not know something about the elements of horology, nor is there a blacksmith who is altogether unacquainted with the properties of red-hot iron. Ascending to the higher walks of science, we would be much astonished to meet with a lawyer who was ignorant of the elements of jurisprudence, or a physician who had never read a treatise on pathology, or a clergyman who knew nothing whatever of theology. Nevertheless, nothing is more common than to encounter Freemasons who are in utter darkness as to everything that relates to Freemasonry. They are ignorant of its history - they know not whether it is a mushroom production of today, or whether it goes back to remote ages for its origin. They have no comprehension of the esoteric meaning of its symbols or its ceremonies, and are hardly at home in its modes of recognition. And yet nothing is more common than to find such socialists in the possession of high degrees and sometimes honoured with elevated affairs in the Order, present at the meetings of lodges and chapters, intermeddling with the proceedings, taking an active part in all discussions and pertinacious maintaining heterodox opinions in opposition to the judgment of brethren of far greater knowledge.

Why, it may well be asked, should such things be? Why, in Masonry alone, should there be so much ignorance and so much presumption? If I ask a cobbler to make me a pair of boots, he tells me that he only mends and patches, and that he has not learned the higher branches of his craft, and then he honestly declines the offered job. If I request a watchmaker to construct a mainspring for my chronometer, he answers that he cannot do it, that he has never learned how to make mainsprings, which belongs to a higher branch of the business, but that if I will bring him a spring readymade, he will insert it in my timepiece, because that he knows how to do. If I go to an artist with an order to paint me a historical picture, he will tell me that it is beyond his capacity that he has never studied nor practiced the computation of details, but has confined himself to the painting of portraits. Were he dishonest and presumptuous he would take my order and instead of a picture give me a daub. It is the Freemason alone who wants this modesty. He is too apt to think that the obligation not only makes him a Mason, but a learned Mason at the same time. He too often imagines that the mystical ceremonies which induct him into the Order are all that are necessary to make him cognizant of its principles. There are some Christian sects who believe that the water of baptism at once washes away all sin, past and prospective. So there are some Masons who think that the mere act of initiation is at once followed by an influx of all Masonic knowledge. They need no further study or research. All that they require to know has already been received by a sort of intuitive process.

The great body of Masons may be divided into three classes. The first consists of those who made their application for initiation not from a desire for knowledge, but from some accidental motive, not always honourable. Such men have been led to seek reception either because it was likely, in their opinion, to facilitate their business operations, or to advance their political prospects, or in some other way to personally benefit them. In the commencement of a war, hundreds flock to the lodges in the hope of obtaining the "mystic sign," which will be of service in the hour of danger. Their object having been attained, or having failed to attain it, these men become indifferent and, in time, fall into the rank of the non-affiliates. Of such Masons there is no hope. They are dead trees having no promise of fruit. Let them pass as utterly worthless, and incapable of improvement.

There is a second class consisting of men who are the moral and Masonic antipodes of the first. These make their application for admission, being prompted, as the ritual requires, "by a favourable opinion conceived of the Institution, and a desire of knowledge." As soon as they are initiated, they see in the ceremonies through which they have passed a philosophical meaning worthy of the trouble of inquiry. They devote themselves to this inquiry. They obtain Masonic books, they read Masonic periodicals, and they converse with well-informed brethren. They make themselves acquainted with the history of the Association. They investigate its origin and its ultimate design. They explore the hidden sense of its symbols and they acquire the interpretation. Such Masons are always useful and honourable members of the Order, and very frequently they become its shining lights. Their lamp burns for the enlightenment of others, and to them the Institution is indebted for whatever of an elevated position it has attained. For them, this article is not written.

But between these two classes, just described, there is an intermediate one; not as bad as the first, but far below the second, which, unfortunately, comprises the body of the Fraternity.

This third class consists of Masons who joined the Society with unobjectionable motives, and with, perhaps the best intentions. But they have failed to carry these intentions into effect.

They have made a grievous mistake. They have supposed that initiation was all that was requisite to make them Masons, and that any further study was entirely unnecessary. Hence, they never read a Masonic book. Bring to their notice the productions of the most celebrated Masonic authors, and their remark is that they have no time to read—the claims of business are overwhelming. Show them a Masonic journal of recognized reputation, and ask them to subscribe. Their answer is that they cannot afford it, the times are hard and money is scarce.

And yet, there is no want of Masonic ambition in many of these men. But their ambition is not in the right direction. They have no thirst for knowledge, but they have a very great thirst for office or for degrees. They cannot afford money or time for the purchase or perusal of Masonic books, but they have enough of both to expend on the acquisition of Masonic degrees.

It is astonishing with what avidity some Masons who do not understand the simplest rudiments of their art, and who have utterly failed to comprehend the scope and meaning of primary, symbolic Masonry, grasp at the empty honours of the high degrees. The Master Mason who knows very little, if anything, of the Apprentice's degree longs to be a Knight Templar. He knows nothing, and never expects to know anything, of the history of Templarism, or how and why these old crusaders became incorporated with the Masonic brotherhood. The height of his ambition is to wear the Templar cross upon his breast. If he has entered the Scottish Rite, the Lodge of Perfection will not content him, although it supplies material for months of study. He would fain rise higher in the scale of rank, and if by persevering efforts he can attain the summit of the Rite and be invested with the Thirty-third degree, little cares he for any knowledge of the organization of the Rite or the sublime lessons that it teaches. He has reached the height of his ambition and is permitted to wear the double-headed eagle.

Such Masons are distinguished not by the amount of knowledge that they possess, but by the number of the jewels that they wear. They will give fifty dollars for a decoration, but not fifty cents for a book.

These men do great injury to Masonry. They have been called its drones. But they are more than that. They are the wasps, the deadly enemy of the industrious bees. They set a bad example to the younger Masons - they discourage the growth of Masonic literature - they drive intellectual men, who would be willing to cultivate Masonic science, into other fields of labour - they depress the energies of our writers - and they debase the character of Speculative Masonry as a branch of mental and moral philosophy.

When outsiders see men holding high rank and office in the Order who are almost as ignorant as themselves of the principles of Freemasonry, and who, if asked, would say they looked upon it only as a social institution, these outsiders very naturally conclude that there cannot be anything of great value in a system whose highest positions are held by men who profess to have no knowledge of its higher development.

It must not be supposed that every Mason is expected to be a learned Mason, or that every man who is initiated is required to devote himself to the study of Masonic science and literature. Such an expectation would be foolish and unreasonable. All men are not equally competent to grasp and retain the same amount of knowledge. Order, says Pope-Order is heaven's first law and this confess, some are, and must be, greater than the rest, richer, wiser.

All that I contend for is that when a candidate enters the fold of Masonry he should feel that there is something in it better than its mere grips and signs, and that he should endeavour with all his ability to attain some knowledge of that better thing. He should not seek advancement to higher degrees until he knew something of the lower, nor grasp at office, unless he had previously fulfilled with some reputation for Masonic knowledge, the duties of a private station. I once knew a brother whose greed for office led him to pass through all the grades from Warden of his lodge to Grand Master of the jurisdiction, and who during that whole period had never read a Masonic book nor attempted to comprehend the meaning of a single symbol. For the year of his Mastership he always found it convenient to have an excuse for absence from the lodge on the nights when degrees were to be conferred. Yet, by his personal and social influences, he had succeeded in elevating himself in rank above all those who were above him in Masonic knowledge. They were really far above him, for they all knew something, and he knew nothing. Had he remained in the background, none could have complained. But, being where he was, and seeking himself the position, he had no right to be ignorant. It was his presumption that constituted his offense.

A more striking example is the following: A few years ago while editing a Masonic periodical; I received a letter from the Grand Lecturer of a certain Grand Lodge who had been a subscriber, but who desired to discontinue his subscription. In assigning his reason, he said (a copy of the letter is now before me), "although the work contains much valuable information, I shall have no time to read, as I shall devote the whole of the present year to teaching." I cannot but imagine what a teacher such a man must have been, and what pupils he must have instructed.

This article is longer than I intended it to be. But I feel the importance of the subject. There are in the United States more than four hundred thousand affiliated Masons. How many of these are readers? One-half - or even one-tenth? If only one-fourth of the men who are in the Order would read a little about it, and not depend for all they know of it on their visits to their lodges, they would entertain more elevated notions of its character. Through their sympathy scholars would be encouraged to discuss its principles and to give to the public the results of their thoughts, and good Masonic magazines would enjoy a prosperous existence.

Now, because there are so few Masons that read, Masonic books hardly do more than pay the publishers the expense of printing, while the authors get nothing; and Masonic journals are being year after year carried off into the literary Academia, where the corpses of defunct periodicals are deposited; and, worst of all, Masonry endures depressing blows.

The Mason, who reads, however little, is it only the pages of the monthly magazine to which he subscribes, will entertain higher views of the Institution and enjoy new delights in the possession of these views.

The Masons who do not read will know nothing of the interior beauties of Speculative Masonry, but will be content to suppose it to be something like Odd Fellowship, or the Order of the Knights of Pythias - only, perhaps, a little older. Such a Mason must be an indifferent one. He has laid no foundation for zeal.

If this indifference, instead of being checked, becomes more widely spread, the result is too apparent. Freemasonry must step down from the elevated position which she has been struggling, through the efforts of her scholars, to maintain, and our lodges, instead of becoming resorts for speculative and philosophical thought, will deteriorate into social clubs or mere benefit societies. With so many rivals in that field, her struggle for a prosperous life will be a hard one.

The ultimate success of Masonry depends on the intelligence of her disciples.

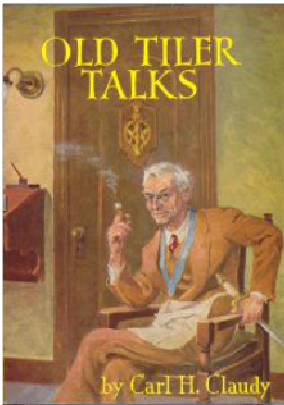
- Source: The Master Mason 1924



ANSWERS TO THE NOVEMBER QUIZ



1. The Earth constantly revolving on its axis around the sun - does the Earth revolve from East to West or from West to East? **The Earth moves towards the East therefore it revolves from West to East.**
2. In which country was Hiram Abif born? **Tyre - now part of Lebanon.**
3. In one of our prayers we use the term 'supplicate' - what does this mean? **To ask humbly.**
4. Only two of our original Grand Masters were kings, one was Solomon King of Israel, the other was Hiram, King of Tyre - in which modern country is Tyre? **Lebanon, see question 2 above.**
5. Think of the three grand principles on which our Institution is founded - what is the middle one and how would you demonstrate it in modern life? **Relief - by helping another person or persons. This differs from charity which is interpreted by some as giving money. Relief is more personal.**
6. How would you describe 'a cowan' to a non-masons? **Dictionary definition is a dry-stone-wall-builder, but we take it to mean imposter who lacks the skill of a qualified craftsman.**
7. We know that the three immovable jewels were big and heavy, but why are the movable jewels so called? **Because they are moved each year to different people. In olden days these symbolic tools were actually handled and used, thereby they had to be movable.**
8. What constitutes the 'Ornaments' in a Lodge? **Ornaments make things beautiful and in our Lodges these are the Mosaic Pavement, The Blazing Star, and the Indented Tessellated Border.**
9. What is the lowest Grand Lodge rank that entitles the holder to be called Right Worshipful Brother? **Past Grand Junior Warden**
10. What does the word 'inculcate' mean? **To encourage strongly or impress with some urgency.**



Old Tiler Talks— HIS CHRISTMAS

"DID you have a happy Christmas?" inquired the New Brother in the anteroom.

"Indeed, yes! Did you?"

"Not particularly. Same old day, same old expense, same old gifts, same old thing," yawned the New Brother. "What did you do that made it happy?"

"First thing I went to church," answered the Old Tiler.

"Why, I didn't know you were a church goer!" The New Brother was surprised.

"It is debatable," confessed the Old Tiler. "But on Christmas I like to go to church. Any-way, I had to see the rector. I had a turkey for someone who would need it. After church I got in the automobile and the chauffeur drove me to see Brother Fosdick and--

"Whoa! You have a car and chauffeur?" demanded the New Brother.

"Always on Christmas," grinned the Old Tiler. "Feel mighty important, too! But it's not mine, of course. A banker lends it to me."

"Oh!"

"I couldn't get around without a car," explained the Old Tiler. "So Brother Vandever lends me his. I called on old Brother Fosdick. He hasn't been in lodge in ten years, but he doesn't know it. He thinks he was at the last meeting, and will be there the next. His mind isn't as clear as it was. He orders me to vote on this and how to do that, and is so important about it that he has a good time, thinking he is still a power in the lodge. It's not much of a Christmas present, but it's what he likes best."

"Oh!" said the New Brother.

"Then I was driven to the Masonic Home. Had some toys for some pets and never can deny myself the pleasure of giving them.

" Pets?"

"Pets is the word. Two children of a brother of this lodge."

"Oh!"

"We had a riotous time, the kiddies and I. They showed me their tree and all their gifts and we played tag a while and they blew horns and it was real Christmas-like. It's a shame to take up so much of the children's time but I had a lot of fun and they were very kind, of course because I am old."

"Is that it?" said the New Brother.

"The big kick came in the afternoon. I made a few calls on sick and housed brethren, and then went to dinner. After dinner we got in the car and went to the orphan asylum, and I had the time of my life. We must have given away five hundred dollars in toys and games and books and dolls."

"You gave away five hundred dollars?"

"No, we did. I didn't pay for them. I am poor. Brother Vandever paid for them. All I did was buy them and take them there in Brother Vandever's car. He went along because he likes to."

"All you did was spend the money and distribute it and plan it. He just went along. I see," said the New Brother.

"Yes, I'd pay for part of them, but that would take some of the joy from Vandever," the Old Tiler explained happily. "We had fun. Then we went back to Brother Vandever's home and he gave me a present - think of that! There it is!" The Old Tiler pointed to a handsome stick. "He's quite a wag, is Brother Vandever. He's already done so much for me, lending me the car and all. I had no present for him. I told him so. He said I had already given him Christmas, which was nonsense, because I hadn't given him anything. I hardly know where the day went. But I had a real good time. That's what Christmas is for, isn't it?"

"I always thought it was a day to get up late and laze around and stuff myself and go to bed disgusted," snapped the New Brother. "I think I'll try your scheme next time."

"There's plenty of room for you in the car," answered the Old Tiler. "I'd love to have you and so would Brother Vandever. "

"Oh" said the New Brother, thoughtfully.

Lodge Birthdays

Alan Churchill	35
Peter Wilson	34
Brendan Toner	2
Antoine Boudier	1

News from the South

A gin and tonic evening which was to be held at the WMs house was relocated to the NZHC residence in Tassiriki (older brethren will remember this as the British residence), because of forecast inclement weather raised funds for the South—a splendid function!!



DECEMBER QUIZ



- 1) What order of architecture is the pillar that stands on the Senior Warden's pedestal?
- 2) In the 1st Degree you were hoodwinked for several reasons, name two of them.
- 3) Of the seven liberal Arts and Sciences name the Sciences.
- 4) How many knocks are there in closing a Lodge in the 1st Degree after the Master says, Brethren, assist me to close the Lodge?
- 5) Name the Father and Mother of King Solomon.
- 6) We know ourselves to be Masons by the regularity of our initiation. What is this regularity?
- 7) How many times does the Candidate walk round the Lodge during a 1st Degree Ceremony?
- 8) The four corners of the square pavement represent the virtues of Temperance, Prudence, Fortitude and Justice and describe the characteristics of the virtue Prudence.
- 9) In the Charge after Initiation you were congratulated on being admitted a member of our ancient and honourable Institution - what makes it honourable?
- 10) Name the three distinguishing characteristics of a good Freemason (Hint - see page 84 in your Blue Book).

With acknowledgement to the Craft Masonry Education Website New Zealand



OBLIGATION

The solemn promise made by a Freemason on his admission into any degree is technically called his obligation..

In a legal sense, obligation is synonymous with duty. Its derivation shows its true meaning, for the Latin word 'obligatio' literally signifies a 'tying or binding/.

The obligation is that which binds a man to do some act, the doing of which thus becomes his duty.

By his obligation, A Freemason is bound or tied to the Order. Hence the Romans called the military oath which was taken by the soldier his obligation, and hence, too, it is said that it is the obligation that makes the Mason.

Before that ceremony there is no tie that binds the candidate to the Order so as to make him a part of it; after the ceremony, the tie has been completed, and the candidate becomes at once a Freemason, entitled to all the rights and privileges and subject to all the duties and responsibilities that inure in that character.

The jurists have divided obligations into imperfect and perfect, or natural and civil.

In Freemasonry there is no such distinction. The Masonic obligation is that moral one which, although it cannot be enforced by the courts of law, is binding on the party who makes it, in conscience and according to moral justice.

It varies in each degree, but in each it is perfect. Its different clauses in which different duties re described, are called its points, which are either affirmative or negative, a division like that of the precepts of the Jewish law.

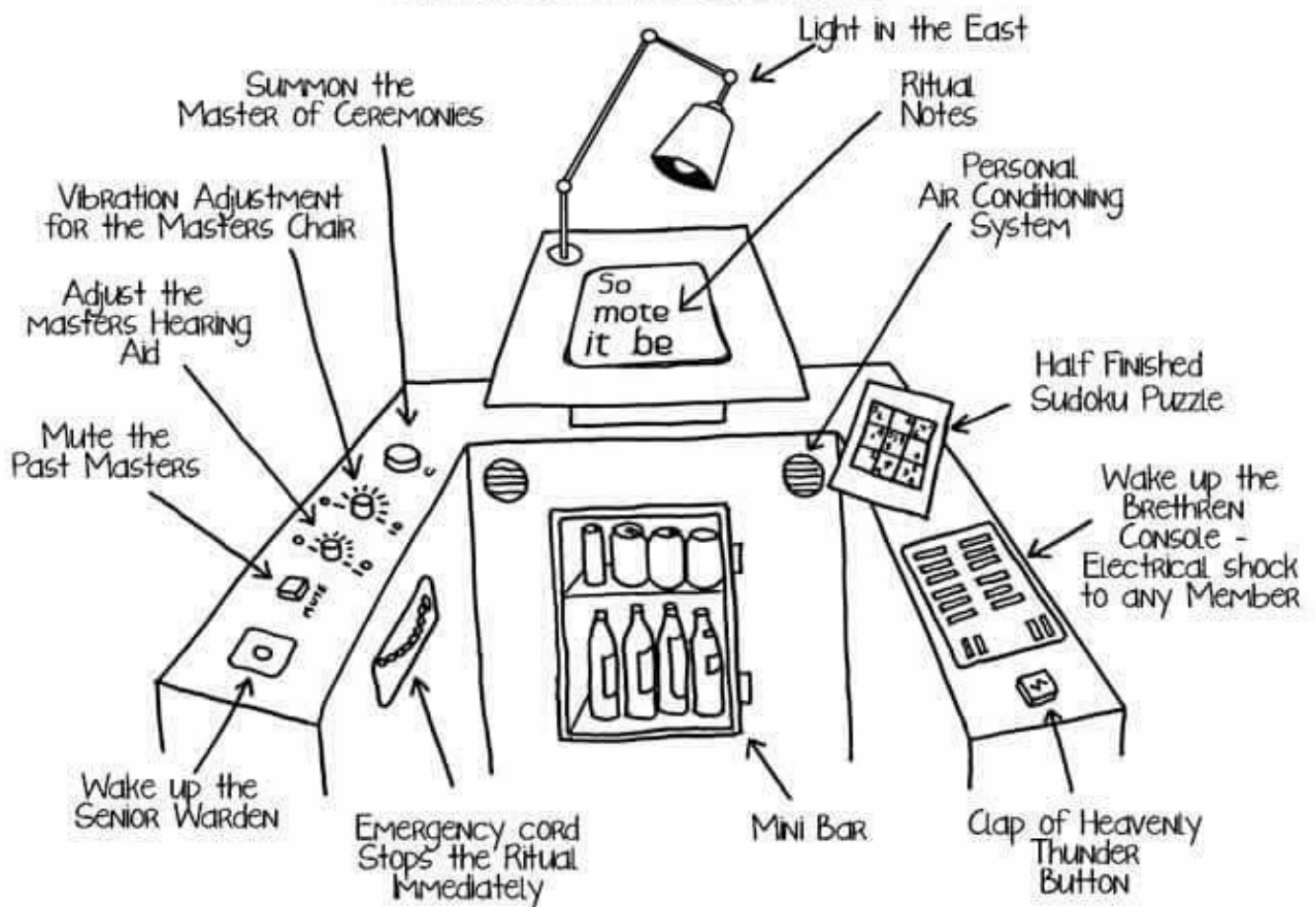
The affirmative points are those which require certain acts to be performed; the negative points are those which forbid certain other acts to be done.

The whole of them is followed by a general point of secrecy, common to all degrees.



Dear Santa, all we want for Xmas.....

The Worshipful Masters Chair Control Instructions



Signed, W.M.'s

MYSTERIES OF THE APRON

From the New Zealand Craftsman—March 1902

Under the above title we find the following elucidation in the "Masonic Home Journal." We are not prepared to accept its conclusions, though seemingly plausible.

The closest students of symbolism have not as yet solved the "mystery of the apron," though there are theories without number, some going so far as to maintain that it has come down from the operative branch of the Craft, and is therefore without symbolic significance, save that attached to it by the ritualists:-

"If we would know the hidden mysteries of Freemasonry" we must delve deeper than mere ritualism. Even the apron has a hidden meaning that iks beyond the ritualistic idea of an emblem of innocence, and a badge.

The true Masonic apron is white lambskin, whose significance is familiar to every Mason. It is not rounded, but is a perfect square, and its right-angles inculcate truth and honesty, the great lessons of morality.

Its four equal sides are to remind the wearer that in innocence he is to practice the four cardinal virtues—temperance in word and act, fortitude in a noble purpose, prudence in wisely judging, and justice to the humblest and greatest alike.

"The flap is an equilateral triangle, whose three equal sides refer to the three attributes of God—omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence. On some aprons the flap is adorned by the All-seeing Eye, but the equilateral triangle has the same significance in unadorned simplicity.:

"The two strings or cords remind us that reverence for and the practice of Masonic virtues inculcated by the apron should be bound to the heart and conscience by double ties of love to God and to love of man."

"The apron with its flap represents the material and the spiritual. The number of the apron's sides (4) and of the flap (3) constitute the sacred number seven, which Pythagoras called a perfect number, because it is made up of the perfect figures of a square and a triangle. That number refers to the seven liberal arts and sciences, much revered among Masons, and which, according to 'legend of the craft,' was the foundation of Masonry.

As early as 1735, "God and the square'..... Was given in answer to the question, "How many make a Lodge?' So we have the answer in the apron—referring to the divine and the human."



A Freemason's Christmas Wish

It is the time of year when the Brethren rejoice,
and sing carols of praise in resounding voice.
Days of merriment and long nights of cheer,
as we all await the "Happy New Year!".

It is a time of family and life-long friends,
a time of happiness and to make amends.
Roast turkey and baubles and the Nutcracker Suite,
we each have our own way to make Christmas complete.

As we stroll through this happy month of December
find time to pause and take time to remember
that distinguishing sign of a Freemason's heart -
those acts of Charity. How great they are.

As your family gathers 'round your Christmas tree,
and the children play with giggles of glee,
spare a thought for the poor, the man with no shoes,
whose money for food is less than your dues.

Remember also the Grand Lodge above,
and the Supreme Great Architect's act of love.
And practise those virtues we hold so true.
Have some fun! But let Temperance chasten you.

And during this season of peace and joy
look well to our future - the girl and boy.

Then wonder what lessons you may them teach,
and with your guidance what heights they may reach.

So, to all of my Brethren from far and wide,
whether your Christmas be snow, or hot and dry,
may the Architect grant his celestial boon
and keep your good health 'til we meet again soon.

Take care of yourself and those you find dear.
Keep this festive spirit throughout the next year.
Look toward your next date with our happy band.
'Til our next merry meeting. Apron, heart, and hand.

Bro. Andrew Bradley



**Peace on Earth, and
goodwill towards all
men "God Bless Us,
Every One!"**

Humour

LEXOPHILIA - WHO ON EARTH DREAMS THESE UP?

A lexophile of course!

- Venison for dinner again? Oh deer!
- A cartoonist was found dead in his home. Details are sketchy.
- I used to be a banker, but then I lost interest.
- Haunted French pancakes give me the crêpes.
- England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.
- I tried to catch some fog, but I mist.
- They told me I had type-A blood, but it was a Typo.
- I changed my iPod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now.
- Jokes about German sausage are the wurst.
- I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid, but he says he can stop any time.
- I stayed up all night to see where the sun went, and then it dawned on me.
- This girl said she recognized me from the vegetarian club, but I'd never met herbivore.
- When chemists die, they barium.
- I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I just can't put it down.
- I did a theatrical performance about puns. It was a play on words.
- I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me.
- Did you hear about the cross-eyed teacher who lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils?
- When you get a bladder infection, urine trouble.
- Broken pencils are pointless.
- What do you call a dinosaur with an extensive vocabulary? A thesaurus.
- I dropped out of communism class because of lousy Marx.