

The Discoverer

The Monthly Newsletter of The Lodge of Discovery

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Greetings Brethren,

At this time of the year our thoughts are leaning towards the upcoming Installation ceremony and the start of another Masonic year. The incoming officers are learning their lines and practicing their perambulations in order to maintain the high standard of ritual in our Lodge of Discovery.

Editor:
 W. Bro. Alan Churchill
 P.O. Box 235
 Port Vila, Vanuatu
 Tel: 678 55 64486
achurchill@vanuatu.com.vu
www.LOD8737.org

Membership e-mail address list

A list of current members and their e-mail addresses is available on request.



Freemasonry—What is it?

Article By W. Bro. Stephen Dafoe—Freemasonry is the world's oldest and largest fraternal organization. It is believed to have originated with the craft guilds of medieval Europe and latterly, to have expanded to admit those who did not actually belong to the trade. The literal stone masons are referred to as operatives while those who did not actually work in stone were called speculative masons.

Secrecy

The secrets of Freemasonry are concerned with its traditional modes of recognition. It is not a secret society, since all members are free to acknowledge their membership and will do so in response to enquiries for respectable reasons. Its constitutions and rules are available to the public. There is no secret about any of its aims and principles. Like many other societies, it regards some of its internal affairs as private matters for its members.

While Freemasonry is the largest and best known fraternal organization the world has ever seen, it is without a doubt the least understood. It is hoped that this article and web site will help to make people have a better understanding of the organization.

Masonic ritual says the following of Freemasonry; "Freemasonry is a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols." While this statement is certainly true it is not the entire answer to the question, What is Freemasonry? This being said let us examine the portions of the statement.

Freemasonry is a beautiful system of morality.

Freemasonry while based on religious principles is not a religion and all members are nonetheless admonished never to make it such. It is open to all men who profess a belief in a Supreme Being and who believe that that Supreme Being rewards virtue and punishes vice. In this sense men of good morals can join together in non-sectarian and non-denominational fellowship adhering to the moral tendencies common to all faiths.

Veiled in allegory:

The dictionary defines allegory as:

"A story or narrative, as a fable, in which a moral truth or principle is presented by means of fictional characters, events, etc." *Funk and Wagnalls Standard Desk Dictionary*

This is certainly true where Freemasonry is concerned for within the first three degrees (Craft Masonry) the candidate is told the story of the building of Solomon's Temple and more especially the Masonic legend of Hiram Abiff one of the three principal architects at its building. As each degree progresses moral lessons of instruction are unveiled as they relate to the legend.

Illustrated by Symbols:

To the Freemason all tools employed by the operative stone mason carry a moral tendency. Symbolism has been, throughout all of recorded time, an important method of communicating ideas of all sorts. The square and compasses, the best known of these symbols are perhaps the most important of the symbols communicated to the Freemason.

The Masonic order, in addition to the aforementioned definition contained in the ritual, is said to be a Brotherhood of men under the Fatherhood of God. Once again, while Freemasonry is not a religion, it is founded on religious principles and no man can be made a Freemason if he is an atheist. Whether Christian, Moslem or Jew the Freemason believes in the God who created the universe and all prayers are offered to Him.



DARKNESS

As each new candidate for Freemasonry is admitted into the lodge room on the occasion of his initiation, he is said to be in a state of 'darkness'.

The state of darkness is symbolical of the candidate being (as all candidates are) in a state of spiritual ignorance of the Masonic philosophy. He remains in that state until 'brought to light' in the traditional and regular Masonic manner.

The Masonic process is directly related to the creation of the universe as recorded in Genesis iii 3-4 reading: 'And God said, let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.'

In an explanatory charge in the initiation ceremony dealing with the reasons for preparation, an allusion is made to the candidate's former state of darkness when he is told that 'the heart must be made to conceive before the eye can be permitted to discover'.

The symbolic state of darkness applied to Masonic candidates follows on from ancient mysteries, e.g. Druid, Grecian and Persian mysteries, where those seeking entry were often required to undergo periods of confinement in darkness, solitude and fasting, in preparation for their admission in what was termed as an act of regeneration.

Mason on the Moon

Brother Edwin (Buzz) Aldrin, Jr. (1930-) was an astronaut and the second man to walk on the moon. Despite the U.S. Postal Service regulation that a living person may not be shown on a postage stamp, there is no doubt that the people shown on this stamp are Neil Armstrong and Edwin Eugene Aldrin, Jr. However, there is no way to specifically identify each of the figures on the stamp, so the postal regulation was not technically broken.

Aldrin was initiated on February 17, and passed April 12, 1955 in Oak Park Lodge No. 864, Montgomery, Alabama. He received his Master Mason's degree on February 21, 1956 in Lawrence N. Greenleaf Lodge No. 169, Denver, Colorado. He then affiliated with Montclair Lodge No. 144, Montclair, New Jersey.

When he made his trip to the moon, he carried a special deputation from the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Texas. This document deputized Aldrin as the special representative of the Grand Master. It authorized him to open a representation of the Grand Lodge of Texas on the moon and establish Masonic territorial jurisdiction there for the Texas Grand Lodge. There is definitely no argument now with Texas on the question of Grand Lodge territorial size.

[Excerpted from an article in *The Masonic Philatelist*, September 2014, The Masonic Stamp Club of New York]



GRANT ME ONE WISH

“What if this world operated on Masonic principles? There would be no war or strife. No religious fanaticism. No envy. No discord. Less need for charity, and more of it when needed. A world in which every man loved his neighbor as himself. Can you imagine it? It's said that if you can dream it, you can achieve it.”

—Richard T. Nation
Grand Master, Kentucky

REGAIN THE FIRE AND PASSION

“It is my firm belief that our Fraternity is on the cusp of great change. We have many issues and concerns facing us; and to be sure, they are not small, but neither are they insurmountable. I believe that we should not see them as problems, but look at them as challenges and opportunities, because that is what they are. The challenge—to revitalize our Fraternity; to revisit those values that our gentle Craft was founded on, to continue to study the teachings of Freemasonry, to reflect and rediscover its meaning in our own lives; in short, to re-invigorate our own love of the Craft, to regain the fire and passion.”

— William Beetcher
Grand Master, Wisconsin

OLD MASONRY, YOUNG MASON

John has wild hair, wears a T-shirt with holes in it, jeans and no shoes—the wardrobe for his entire four years of college. He became a Mason recently while attending college. After moving to his new town, he found that down the street from his new apartment is a well-dressed, very conservative Lodge. One day John decides to go there after work. He walks in with shoes, jeans, his work shirt, and long hair. The Lodge has already started and so John looks for a seat.

The Lodge is completely packed and he can't find a seat. By now the Brethren are looking a bit uncomfortable, but no one says anything. John gets closer and closer to the East and, when he realizes there are no seats, he squats down right on the carpet. (Trust me, this had never happened in this Lodge before!) By now the Brethren are really uptight, and the tension in the air is thick. About this time, the Secretary realizes that from way at the back of the Lodge, a Past Master is slowly making his way toward John.

Now the Past Master is in his eighties, has silver-gray hair, and a three-piece suit. A good man, very elegant, very dignified, and very courtly. He walks with a cane and, as he starts walking toward this boy, everyone is saying to themselves that you can't blame him for what he's going to do. How can you expect a man of his age and of his background to understand some college kid in the Lodge? It takes a long time for the man to reach the boy.

The Lodge watches as this elderly man drops his cane on the floor. With great difficulty, he lowers himself and sits down next to John and welcomes him so he won't be alone.

When the Secretary gains control, he says, "What I'm about to say, you will never remember. What you have just seen, you will never forget."

[Excerpted from an article in *Masonic Temple Topics*, May 2014]

FIDELITY

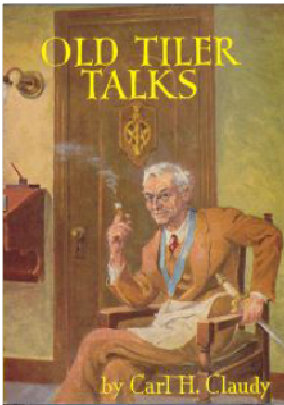
Fidelity implies the faithful performance of a duty, the demonstration of fealty, allegiance and loyalty, or unswerving adherence to a cause or obligation.

It is brought to the notice of every newly initiated brother as being an excellence of character; in relation to Freemasonry, the candidate is instructed that his fidelity should be exemplified in a number of prescribed ways.

Much is made of representational expression and movement in the portrayal and explanation of the Masonic philosophy. Evidence of the importance placed on the subject of fidelity is shown by the allotting to it of a special sign or posture. It is appropriate that central to the sign is the heart, whence springs all human life and emotions.

The sign of fidelity is employed at different points of Masonic ceremonies and practices. In particular, at the conclusion of meetings, a most suitable opportunity is provided for all brethren to demonstrate together in a solemn and sincere manner their fidelity to the order.

It is also of moment that at the consecration of lodges and the dedication of temples, salt is sprinkled on the floor of the lodge room as a symbol of fidelity as well as hospitality and friendship.



Tiler Talks— Gold and Iron

"Old Tiler, why are not more Masons, Masons?" asked the New Brother in the anteroom.

"For the same reasons that not more friends are friends, or hot dogs, sausages, I guess," answered the Old Tiler. "You tell me the answer."

"It seems mighty queer to me that we can't make more lodge members feel the inner spirit of Freemasonry," answered the New Brother. "I can't understand it."

"That shows you haven't a very observing pair of eyes or a great understanding of human nature," smiled the Old Tiler. "If this were a perfect world made up of perfect men there would be no need of Freemasonry!"

"Maybe not. But if you can see what I can't, and understand what is hidden from me, tell me, won't you?"

"I'll try," answered the Old Tiler. "A great many years ago there was a great leader of men on earth; I don't know whether it was Guatama Buddha, or Mohammed, or Brahma. No matter what his name was, this great leader and teacher of men wandered in a sparsely settled part of the back country near the sea, hungry and tired and footsore. He had asked several of the country people for aid and shelter but while they were not unkind they also were poor and offered him nothing, thinking him one of themselves.

"At last, however, he found a poor peasant who took him in. The peasant gave him some dry clothes, for his were wet from storm, and shared his crust of bread and his humble cottage. In the morning he gave the wanderer breakfast and a staff to help him on his way.

"What can I do to repay you?" asked the great leader of his host.

"I need no payment. I, too, have been a wanderer and you have both my sympathy and my aid for love only," answered the peasant. "Then the great leader told him who he was. 'And because I have power, I will reward you in any way you wish,' he said. 'Choose what you will have.'

"If it is indeed so, oh, my Lord," answered the peasant, 'give me gold; gold, that I may buy clothes and food and women and wine; gold, that I may have power and place and prominence and happiness.'

"Gold I can give you, but it would be a poor gift," answered the great leader. 'Who has gold without earning it eats of the tree of misery. And because you have been kind to me I will not give you such a curse. Gold you shall have, but a task you shall do to earn it. You wear an iron bracelet. On the shore of the sea, among many, is a pebble which if you touch it to iron will turn it to gold. Find it, and all iron will be your gold.'

"Hardly stopping to thank his benefactor, the peasant ran to the seashore to pick up pebbles and touch them to his bracelet to see if it would turn to gold. All morning he ran, picking up pebbles, touching the iron, and then, so that he wouldn't pick up the wrong pebble twice, he tossed the useless pebbles, which were not the magic stone, into the sea.

"After a while the task became monotonous; pick up pebble, touch it to iron, throw it out in the sea - over and over again. So he amused himself with visions of what he would do when he should have won the great wealth. He planned his harem and his wine cellar, pictured the great banquets he would give, thought of the slaves he would purchase and how he would be recognized by all as a rich and powerful noble. Meanwhile, of course, he was busy picking up pebbles, touching them to his bracelet and throwing them into the sea.

"The day wore on. The visions became more and more entrancing, the task more and more mechanical. And at last, just as the sun was going down, the peasant looked at his bracelet- and behold! It was ruddy yellow gold! Some one of the thousands of pebbles he had touched to the iron was the lucky one, the magic one, and because he had been thinking of something else, doing his task mechanically, he cast it into the sea."

The Old Tiler stopped, thoughtfully puffing at his cigar. "That's a very nice fable," observed the New Brother.

"Much," answered the Old Tiler. "In Masonry we are too much like the peasant. We take the pebbles of the beach, the many that apply to us, touch them to the iron of our Freemasonry and cast them out into the sea of life. Or we take the touchstone which is Freemasonry and touch it to the iron which is a man, and let him throw it away. Work the simile how you will, what we do is to neglect the newly made Mason; we give him only perfunctory attention. We do our work mechanically. We are letter perfect in our degrees, and too often without the spirit of them. We have ritualists who can dot every I and cross every T, who have every word in place and no wrong words, but who have no knowledge of what they say. I once knew a Grand Master who didn't know what a hecatomb was, and plenty of Masons cannot tell you if the two pillars on the porch were supports for a loafing place or whether they have a spiritual meaning not at all concerned with the porches.

"The reason more Masons do not deserve the title is not altogether their fault. It's our fault! We don't know enough ourselves to teach them; we don't care enough about it to teach them. A good balance in the bank, a growing membership, a free feed, 'nice' degrees- and we call ourselves a successful lodge. But we make only ten men real Masons for every hundred to whom we give the degrees, and the fault is ours, not theirs; my fault, your fault, our fault because we don't study, don't learn, don't care to learn the real secrets of Freemasonry and so cannot teach them."

"There is one who teaches in this lodge," answered the New Brother, slowly, "and one who tries to learn."

"Yes?" answered the Old Tiler. "Who are they?"

"You, who teach, and I, who try to learn," answered the New Brother.

"Humph," grunted the Old Tiler, but his eyes smiled, well pleased.

SEVEN MISTAKES OF MAN

1. The delusion that individual advancement is made by crushing others down.
2. The tendency to worry about things that cannot be changed or corrected.
3. Insisting that a thing is impossible because we ourselves cannot accomplish it.
4. Refusing to set aside trivial preferences in order that important things may be accomplished.
5. Neglecting development and refinement of the mind by not acquiring the habit of reading.
6. Attempting to compel other persons to believe and live as we do.
7. The failure to establish the habit of saving money.

Freemasonry gives a man a wonderful opportunity to serve others; providing one does not get egotistical over holding office and can retain a certain amount of humility and the desire to serve, coupled with the desire to help others in distress so far as is possible, much pleasure can be obtained from the organisation

VERY TRUE

There are many brethren who can recite our ritual from Alpha to Omega without the omission of a word or syllable, who are unconscious of the fact that behind the play of words, lie concealed thoughts and meanings which invite our investigations and will repay us for our researches. The demand of the hour is not for men who can recite the ritual, but for men who know what the ritual means, and who are willing to live by its teachings in their daily lives and conduct.

Nothing is ever accomplished by a committee unless it consists of three members, one of whom happens to be sick, and the other absent.



The Christmas dinner

Lodge Birthdays

Derek Butterfield	38 (J HM)
Jock Hannaford	38 (J HM)
Doug Bailey	11
Kevin Green	7
Jim Woodford	6
Luke Sadler	1

All is quiet in the South—the lull before the storm of Installation perhaps? The Grand Inspector will be with us this year just to put a wee bit of pressure on the officers and brethren.

News from the South

We talk of making a man a Mason. Such an operation is impossible. We can only put him in the way of becoming a Mason, he himself in his innermost heart and mind must do the rest.

The Mysteries

The original purpose of the mysteries was to teach men to know and practice their duties to themselves and their fellows, the great practical of all philosophy and all knowledge.

Freemasonry still follows the ancient manner of teaching. Her symbols are endeavours to interpret these symbols. He who would become an accomplished Mason must not be content merely to hear the lectures; he must study, interpret, and develop these symbols for himself.

Albert Pike

That Black Ball again

A black ball is not a dagger for a coward's use, with which to even up an old score.



It is not a brush with which to besmirch the character of one who may hold different views from yours. A black ball is a fraternity shield to protect not individuals, but the Order from those who would injure it. It should never be cast with a prejudiced mind, or a selfish thought. Remember, it is a serious thing to constitute one's self jury and executioner in one single act without the Order's interest in mind.

New Zealand Craftsman 1938

Personally, I think one of the greatest things about marriage is that as both husband and father, I can say anything I want to around the house. Of course, no one pays the least bit of attention to me.

QUESTIONING THE STEWARD

Q. How were you first to be made a Steward?

A. My coat sleeves, shirt sleeves and vest sleeves were rolled up, and a corkscrew thrust into my hand.

Q. What is a corkscrew?

A. An instrument fashioned like a winding staircase which our ancient Brethren ascended to receive their beer.

Q. Where did they receive it?

A. In a convenient room below the chamber.

Q. How did they receive it?

A. In half tankards and tankards.

Q. Why in that peculiar manner?

A. In half tankards well knowing the same could easily be replenished, or in tankards from the great reliance they placed on the mildness of the brew in those days.

Q. Name the two advertisements that hung at the porchway or entrance.

A. That on the left was called 'Tusker' and that on the right was called 'Solbrew'.

Q. What was their separate and conjoined signification's?

A. The former denotes 'No.1' and the latter 'XXX' and when conjoined 'Instability'.

Q. What is beer?

A. A peculiar product of chemistry, veiled in mystery and illustrated by labels.

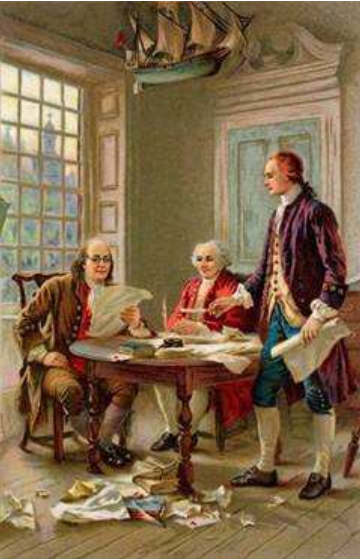
Q. How is it depicted?

A. By a ear of corn and a couple of hops placed near a barrel of water.

Q. How do you know yourself to be a Steward?

A. By repeated trials and sessions at the bar and a willingness of the Worshipful Master to release me early so as to get to the bar before the other less fortunate Brethren.

Humour



A government which robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend on the support of Paul. **George Bernard Shaw**

Giving money and power to government is like giving whiskey and car keys to teenage boys. **P.J. O'Rourke, Civil Libertarian**

Government is the great fiction, through which everybody endeavours to live at the expense of everybody else. **Frederic Bastiat, French economist (1801-1850)**

I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts. **Will Rogers**

If you think health care is expensive now, wait until you see what it costs when it's free! **P.J. O'Rourke**

In general, the art of government consists of taking as much money as possible from one party of the citizens to give to the other. **Voltaire (1764)**

Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics won't take an interest in you! **Pericles (430 B.C.)**

No man's life, liberty, or property is safe while the legislature is in session. **Mark Twain (1866)**

Talk is cheap...except when government does it. **Anonymous**

The government is like a baby's alimentary canal, with a happy appetite at one end and no responsibility at the other. **Ronald Reagan**

The only difference between a tax man and a taxidermist is that the taxidermist leaves the skin. **Mark Twain**

What this country needs are more unemployed politicians. **Edward Langley, Artist**

A government big enough to give you everything you want, is strong enough to take everything you have. **Thomas Jefferson**

We hang the petty thieves and appoint the great ones to public office. **Aesop**

THE CONSTITUTION

They keep talking about drafting a Constitution for Iraq.... why don't we just give them ours? It was written by a lot of really smart guys, it has worked well for over 200 years, and we're not using it anymore.