



FREE STATE Freemason

A PUBLICATION OF THE GRAND LODGE OF
ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF MARYLAND



VOLUME 46, ISSUE 2

SPRING 2021



FREE STATE FREEMASON ARTICLES AND ADVERTISEMENTS

The *Free State Freemason* is published bi-monthly from September through June (there is no issue in July or August). Deadlines for submissions are the 1st day of February, April, August, and October for publication in the following issue. These dates **ARE FIRM** and can not be changed due to printing schedules.

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These points should be followed for articles submitted for inclusion in the *Free State Freemason* publication:

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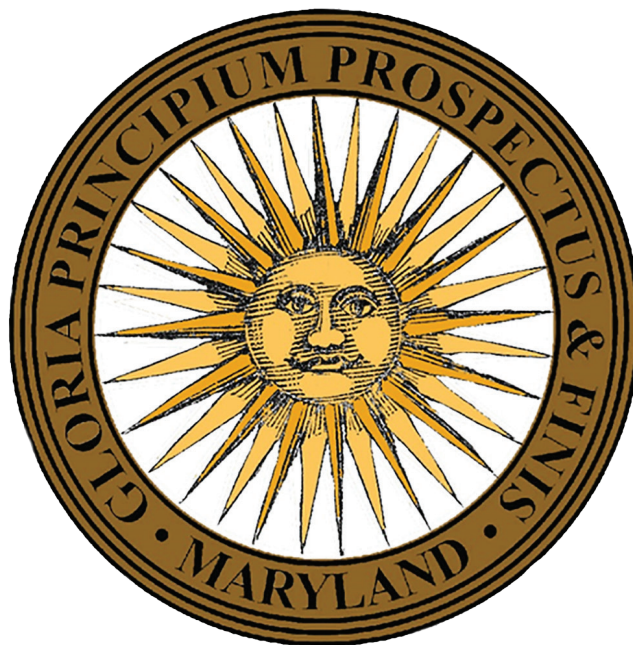
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*five (5) issues



The Maryland Free State Freemason is published four times annually for the members, families and friends of Ancient and Accepted Masons of Maryland. The views expressed in the Maryland Free State Freemason do not necessarily reflect those of the Grand Lodge of Maryland, or its officers.

SUBMISSIONS & GENERAL INQUIRIES

*Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted
Masons of Maryland
304 International Circle
Cockeysville, Md. 21030*

Office: 410-527-0600

Fax: 410-527-1276

office@glmd.org

Tom Foster • Editor

Print Links, LLC • Layout & Design

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FREE STATE Freemason

A PUBLICATION OF THE GRAND LODGE OF
ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF MARYLAND

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MAKING GOOD MEN BETTER

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*The view of a sunny spring day
from the portico of the Grand
Lodge of Maryland.*



FREEMASONRY is the oldest fraternal organization in the world. It is dedicated to promoting improvement in the character of its members. A Mason is taught to be a good citizen, to be of good character, to care for those less fortunate, and to give back to his community.

THE MASONIC FRATERNITY contributes over \$1 Billion each year to its philanthropic pursuits. Over \$750 Million of that in the United States alone. The Crippled Children's and Burns Hospitals sponsored by Shrine Masons are world famous for their ability to help those most in need.





GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE

Greetings Brethren,

I hope that everyone is doing well and has been enjoying these early weeks of spring!

I am writing today because in my 37-plus years as a Master Mason, I have witnessed many changes, and have certainly had more than a few surprises but nothing that can quite compare with these first few months as Grand Master.

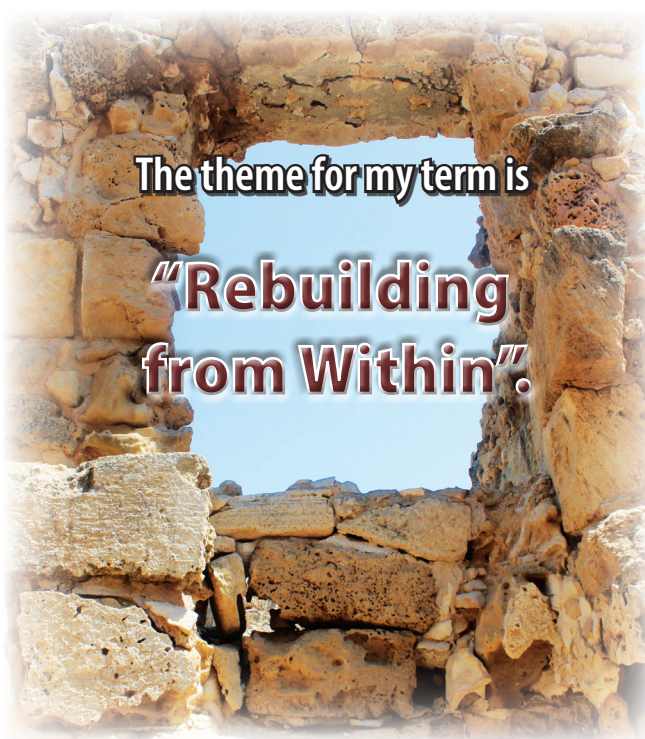
There have been some very nice surprises and kindnesses by so many of our Brothers, and some that were, frankly, not so nice. One of these has been that I see so many lodges who lack qualified, "certified" officers. As I write this, I cannot tell you the number of Brothers who have requested a "pass" because of not being prepared to certify in the Three Degrees as required by our Constitution. I had one request for a pass because he stated he was "too old" to remember all the "stuff" that was required of him. He was only 56 years old!! This when we have a Worshipful Master who returned to the East this year who is 93 years old and can still do all the "stuff" required of him.

My Brothers, Masonry has been in Maryland for well over two hundred years – long before computers, i-phones, i-pads, cypher books, or ritual books were ever thought of. Yet, despite this, they did the required work.

What has happened? The greatest and best of men in all ages have been encouragers and promoters of the art and they have never deemed it derogatory to their dignity

to level themselves with the fraternity and learn the work. However, we started cutting corners and making it easy hoping to get more members.

We have been trying so hard to get men in Masonry that we forgot about putting Masonry in the men. We have passed out ritual books, we passed out cypher books, allowed the work to be put on digital devices, and looked the other way when these things were being used in Lodges. This was completely unheard of just a few short years ago.



There was a time in the not-to-distant past when men worked their way through each of the officer's chairs, learned all the work for each chair, and were required to be certified in the funeral ritual before they could become certified to earn the distinction of becoming Worshipful Master of their lodge. Today we have Worshipful Masters who have not yet been a Mason for two years who hold that title.

How has this happened to our gentle Fraternity?

In my humble opinion, therein lies the problem. "GENTLE". We have relaxed

our requirements to such a degree that many look for an easy way out. We have lowered our standards so low that we have lodges that are failing – we have Worshipful Masters and officers who cannot do the work and therefore, are literally unable to confer any of the Degrees.

Last year, for the first time anyone can remember, the Grand Lodge Officers had to start doing the Entered Apprentice Degree because some lodges had no one who knew the work. I realized we had serious problems before becoming Grand Master. Last year we only had thirty new Worshipful Masters out of 103 lodges. Seventy were

serving their 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and all the way up to 12th term in the East of their lodge.

The theme for my term is “Rebuilding from Within”. I believe we need to start the rebuilding at the very foundation. We are in trouble! The Grand Lodge has spent over a million dollars on advertising and our membership continues to decline. Today we stand at less than 12,000 members. Again, I ask, how did this happen? Instead of the dozens of possible answers that could be given, let us instead ask “How can this be CHANGED?”, and CAN it be changed?

I strongly believe the answer to that question is “yes it can”. We all need to start being Masons and start making new Masons by presenting good ritual, teaching good catechism, explaining the meaning of the ritual as well as the oaths and obligations that are presented in each degree. Then, and only then, will we become the Fraternity we have always been. “The few, the proud, the Marines” is not just a slogan or meaningless catchphrase. It is a principle, an expectation, and a desire to be the best. It becomes a way of life. I truly believe Freemasonry is the best fraternity in the world. We just need to start being the few, the proud, *the Masons* that our fraternal ancestors created all those centuries ago.

This is why I made the decision in December that effective immediately and in keeping with the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Maryland to suspend, cancel, terminate, and revoke all standing resolutions, edicts, and related actions made and issued after May 17, 2019.

There will be no “passes” allowed, and only those properly certified by the Grand Lecturer or his appointed

Deputy in the three degrees of Masonry as well as the funeral ritual will be eligible to be elected as Worshipful Master of a lodge in Maryland.

The Grand Lecturer and his Deputies will be expected to know the work and assist their assigned lodges in performing all ritual work in a respectable manner. (This does not mean perfect.)

Grand Inspectors will only pass those who meet the requirements as printed in Article 16 of the Constitution, and who pass an approved Masonic Law Exam.

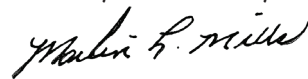
My Brothers, Maryland Masons have done this for over 200 years, and we CAN do it again today. It only takes the desire to accomplish the task at hand and succeed.

I fully realize that this is not going to sit well with some, and I know it will cause some to say they will drop out. However, if Masonry is not worth the effort, or the desire is only for the title of Master or Past Master, then perhaps these men have joined the wrong fraternity.

I want the few, the proud, the Masons who want to be the best for all our Brothers: Past, Present, and Future.

Working together we can rebuild from within, and it all starts with you. I remain faithfully in your service.

Sincerely and fraternally,



Marlin L. Mills

Most Worshipful Grand Master
Of Masons in Maryland



2021 Family Day Picnic Cancelled

To protect the health and wellbeing of the guests of Maryland Masonic Homes, our children who are not yet eligible for COVID-19 immunization, and those who are not yet immunized; the Annual Family Day Picnic formerly scheduled for Saturday, June 5, 2021 has been cancelled.

FROM THE GRAND SECRETARY'S DESK



A RETURN TO NORMALCY

Fraternal greetings, my Brethren!

It has been a while since I have addressed the members of the Grand Lodge in this format, so I have some ground to cover.

When I first became Grand Secretary in November 2015, my first intentions were to have the Grand Lodge staff be as accommodating and helpful to the craft as we could possibly be. This was welcomed by the lodges and the individual brethren as well. Over the period of the next three years, several changes in policy took place, some minor, some major, that we felt would be helpful. This seemed to work well. We were able to accomplish what we set out to do.

With the change in leadership a few years ago, things changed. Most communications came from the top and the office staff was not involved. This is why the number of communications from the Office of the Grand Secretary were fewer in number. As of the installation this past November, we have reversed that trend. Grand Master Mills has expressed his desire to let the office function as it has in the past, only inserting himself where it is customary and necessary. The lodges will now be getting most of their notifications from the Office of the Grand Secretary, as it had been in the past. The day-to-day operations have returned to normalcy.

In conjunction with this resumption of normal communications, we are also beginning to see the government restrictions related to COVID-19 being gradually, but safely relaxed.

Lodges have begun to meet in person again and social gatherings are increasing in number. It is wonderful to be able to share fellowship and brotherhood once again with our Brothers.

I have been asked to remind those participating in the Maryland Masonic Academy programs that their certificates will now be prepared on a monthly basis and forwarded to the King Solomon's Society leadership for distribution. This will ensure that they are received on a timely basis.

I would also like to remind the lodges that, in addition to electing the new Grand Lodge officers and Board members at the Semi-Annual Communication on May 15th, the Grand Lodge will be voting on two proposed amendments to the Grand Lodge Constitution. Copies of the amendments have been distributed to the lodges and you will also find a summary of them in this issue of *The Free State Freemason*. It is urged that you will take time in your individual lodges to discuss these amendments in order to determine which way your lodge will vote.

Another return to normalcy is that we are once again publishing Compass Points. Please take the time to notify Bro. Tom Foster of lodge degree work, programs, social functions, or any other event that you would like to be publicized to the Grand Lodge membership.

Finally, I feel honored and privileged to serve as your Grand Secretary. Please contact me with any help you may need. I am always here to help.

Sincerely and fraternally,
Kenneth R. Taylor
RW Grand Secretary

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Past Master of Evergreen #153

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Masonic
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The Grand Master's Ball

A Black Tie Event



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of Maryland

304 International Circle
Cockeysville, MD 21030

Saturday
July 24, 2021
6 PM - 11 PM

Menu



Char-Grilled New York Strip Steak
& Shrimp Stuffed with Jumbo Lump Crab
Salad with Candied Bacon & Pecans
Loaded Baked Potato
Creamed Spinach
Crepes with Fresh Berries & Chantilly Cream
Delicious Appetizers
OPEN BAR



Dinner by Atlantic Caterers

Music & Dancing to the Music of



ALL CURRENT GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS CONCERNING COVID-19 WILL BE ADHERED TO.

THE MARYLAND CHILD IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM

Since 2014, the Maryland Child Identification Program (better known as MD-ChIP) has been funded by a three dollar annual assessment on the membership. This assessment was to have continued annually for a period of ten years or until the program was discontinued.

At the conclusion of this current assessment period, the Child ID program will have in excess of \$175,000 in funding which is dedicated solely for its support. These funds, administered by Masonic Charities of Maryland, cannot be used for any other purpose.

In reviewing this fund balance compared to the average annual expenses incurred by the program, it is apparent to me that there are sufficient revenues to fully fund the program for many years, in fact decades into the future. Therefore, I am of the opinion that it is no longer necessary to collect an annual assessment for what is a fully funded program. Please note that MD-ChIP is *not being eliminated*.

Our Grand Master Marlin Mills is in agreement with this reasoning and will be introducing the following Proposed Amendment at the Semi-Annual Communication in May to eliminate the assessment for MD-ChIP. This Proposed Amendment will be voted upon at the Annual Communication in November.

Tom Foster
President
Masonic Charities of Maryland

Proposed Constitutional Amendment Change

Amending and restating Article X "Revenue of the Grand Lodge", Section 1 "Revenue" (as revised 05/18/2019) Paragraph 5.

Whereas Paragraph 5 states "for each member, for the use, maintenance and support of the Maryland Child Identification Program, Three Dollars (\$3.00) annually, beginning January 1,

2014 and lasting ten (10) years or until the Grand Lodge of Maryland decides to discontinue the program, whichever occurs first, except that no Lodge shall be charged any assessment for the following members:

- a. Members who are guests of the Maryland Masonic Homes; and
- b. Members who are determined to be mentally incompetent.

And

Whereas, at each regional meeting of the Grand Lodge of Maryland held in the spring of 2021, the chairman of the Maryland Child Identification Program stated that the program has sufficient equipment, supplies, and funds to be self-sufficient for many years

And

Whereas the president of Masonic Charities of Maryland, Inc. has confirmed that there are sufficient funds for the support and operation of the Maryland Child Identification Program for approximately Thirty (30) years or longer

And

Whereas the membership of the Grand Lodge of Maryland has generously support-

ed the Maryland Child Identification Program through their Three Dollar (\$3.00) assessment since 2014, and has therefore ensured its success for many years to come

Now

Therefore I, Marlin L. Mills, by the virtue of the authority in me vested, as the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons in Maryland, by the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Maryland, propose that the aforementioned assessment, specifically Article X, Section 1, Paragraph 5, be terminated effective with the 2021 assessment and that no further assessments be collected for this program.



RÉSUMÉS for Brothers Running for Elected Offices in 2021



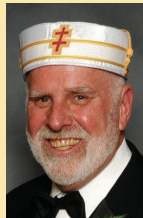
M.W. BRO. MARLIN L. MILLS

For Election to the Office of
Most Worshipful Grand Master



R.W. BRO. FREDERICK A. SPICER

For Election to the Office of
Most Worshipful Deputy Grand Master



R.W. BRO. T. SCOTT CUSHING, SR.

For Re-election to the Office of
Right Worshipful Grand Treasurer

Election to the Office of
Right Worshipful Grand Secretary

R.W. BRO. KENNETH R. TAYLOR (INCUMBENT)

Masonic History: Raised in Howard Lodge No. 101 in 1991, Worshipful Master in 1997, 1998, 2000 and 2020 (earned Grand Master's Award all 4 years), currently Chaplain. Lodge Ritualist since 1998 and Catechism Instructor to over 100 Brothers; also serves on several committees.



Masonic Leadership: R.W. Grand Secretary – 2016 to present. R.W. Senior Grand Warden in 2009. W. Grand Standard Bearer in 2004. Grand Inspector 2004-10. Board of Managers – 2010-15. Deputy Grand Lecturer – 2011 to present. Served on the Grand Lodge Vision 25 Committee and on the Grand Lodge Masonic Trial Committee.

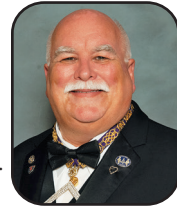
Masonic Affiliations: *Scottish Rite* – Valley of Baltimore, 32° 1992, KCCH 2009, Coroneted 33° 2013. Past President of Arundel Scottish Rite Club. *York Rite* – Concordia Chapter and Council, Maryland Commandery, York Rite College. *Shriners International* – Boumi Shrine 1992. Knights of Mecca. *Other Affiliations* – Baltimore Highlands Square Club, President 1999, current Treasurer.

Professional: Employed in the real estate industry since 1983 with specialty in appraisal since 1985. Owner of Ken Taylor Appraisals.

Personal: Born in Baltimore, MD in 1955. Graduated from Sparrows Point High School in 1973. Attended Essex Community College. Resides in Catonsville, MD with Rosemary, wife of 32 years. Four children and seven grandchildren.

M.W. BRO. RICHARD P. NAEGELE

Blue Lodge History: Raised in Mt. Nebo Lodge No. 229 in 1978. Worshipful Master in 1988 and 1990. Current Worshipful Master of Ancient Baltimore Lodge No. 234. Honorary Member of Patuxent Lodge No. 218, Liberty Pickering Lodge No. 219, Perry Hall Lodge No. 235, and Scouters Lodge No. 236.



Grand Lodge Leadership: M.W. Grand Master in 2019-20. R.W. Senior Grand Warden in 2014. W. Grand Marshal in 2011-12. W. Grand Standard Bearer in 1995. Grand Inspector 2013-16. Served on Board of Directors of Masonic Charities of Maryland and as Scholarship Chairman. Chairman of Youth Committee. Chairman of Vision 25 Committee. Leadership Academy Instructor. 2014 Conference of Grand Masters in North America Committee. Vice Chairman of 2019 Conference of Grand Masters in North America Committee. Inducted into King Solomon's Society and Hiram's Guild. Recipient of Warren Seipp Medal for Distinguished Service.

Masonic Affiliations: *Scottish Rite* – Valley of Baltimore KCCH in 2001. Coroneted 33° in 2013. *York Rite* – Druid Chapter No. 28 and Phoenix Chapter No. 7, ME Grand High Priest in 2014, Bronze Medal in 2004, Ephraim Kirby Award for Ritual Excellence. Hiram Council No. 5 and Jerusalem Council No. 2, Most Illustrious Grand Master in 2009-10, Grand Recorder 2012-16, Order of the Secret Vault, Adult Youth Leadership Award. Monumental Crusade Commandery No. 3, Right Eminent Grand Commander in 1999, Grand Inspector General, Knight Commander of the Temple. Tidewater Allied Masonic Degrees No. 234, Secretary. Templenoe Knight Masons No. 78, Secretary. Maryland York Rite College, Order of the Purple Cross. St. Cyprian Red Cross of Constantine. *Shriners International* – Boumi Shrine. *Tall Cedars* – Baltimore Forest No. 45. *Eastern Star* – Gleaner Chapter No. 49, Past Worthy Patron. *DeMolay* – initiated 1971. MSADC DeMolay Advisor. Active Member of DeMolay International. Legion of Honor. *Rainbow* – Charity Assembly. Chairman of Advisory Board. Grand Cross of Color. *Other Affiliations* – Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatis. Euclid Council Universal Craftsmen Council of Engineers. Masonic Veterans Association.

Professional: Graduated Loch Raven High School in 1974, University of Maryland Baltimore Campus in 1979, and received a Master of Arts in Special Education from Loyola College. Received certification in Administration I. Retired as a public-school teacher after 32-year career including serving as Teacher in Charge. Served as Title I Reading Supervisor from 2007-11.

Personal: Resident of Baltimore, MD. Secretary of the Baltimore Kickers German Club. Treasurer of the Maryland Cocker Spaniel Club.

For the Office of Right Worshipful Senior Grand Warden

W. BRO. JEFFREY M. GROGG

Blue Lodge History: Raised in Queen City Lodge No. 131 in 2008. Worshipful Master in 2013 and 2019. Current Chaplain. Member of St. Florian 9-11 Lodge No. 238. Member of Esoteric Lodge of Research No. 237.

Grand Lodge Leadership: W. Assistant Grand Chaplain 2018-present. W. Assistant Grand Tyler in 2018. Grand Inspector 2015-present.

Masonic Affiliations: *York Rite* – Salem Chapter No. 18. Salem Council No. 11. Antioch Commandery No. 6, served as Eminent Commander. *Shriners International* – Ali Ghan Shrine in 2008. Currently serve as Illustrious Potentate. Imperial Aide from 2018-present. Member of Motor Corps.

Professional: Graduated from Ridgeley High School in West Virginia in 1973, Potomac State College in 1975. Worked for the City of Cumberland Fire Department from 1976 to 2017. Was promoted to Equipment Operator and promoted to Lieutenant. National Registered EMT-P, first in Region 1. Field Instructor for Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute. Lead Coordinator of the Allegany County Hazardous Incident Response Team.

Personal: Resident of Wiley Ford, WV. Two children, Sara, and Andrew. Twin grandsons Mason and Maximus. Volunteered with American Red Cross. Coached youth football. Served as a high school football and basketball official for 36 years. Coached varsity tennis and golf at Fort Hill High School.



W. BRO. DAN B. LANE

Blue Lodge History: Raised in Naval Lodge No. 4 in 1991. Member of Silver Spring Lodge No. 215. Worshipful Master in 2009 and from 2011 – 15. Current Lodge Secretary. Lodge Master Mason of the Year in 2009, 2011 and 2013. Member of Kensington-Bethesda Lodge No. 198. Worshipful Master in 2007.

Grand Lodge Leadership: W. Junior Grand Steward in 2008. Grand Inspector from 2008 – 15. Francis E. Larrimore Medal for Meritorious Service in 2016.

Masonic Affiliations: *Scottish Rite* – Valley of Baltimore, 32° in 2008. *York Rite* – James F. Allen Chapter No. 33. King Solomon Council No. 13. York Rite Commandery No. 13. *Shriners International* – Almas Shrine. Legion of Honor. *Other Affiliations* - President of Past Masters Association of Montgomery County. Member of Southern Maryland Past Masters Association. Member of Masonic Veterans Association.

Professional: *Education* – Earned GED in 1978. Pastry Arts Degree. *Career* – U.S. Marine Corps from 1978 to 1998. Davidus Cigars from 2013 to present.

Personal: Resident of Silver Spring, MD. Married to Natividad for 38 years. Two children, Dan, Jr., and Domenico, both are Masons. Volunteer for Meals on Wheels. Advisor for the Montgomery County Police Explorer Program. Active with Disabled American Veterans, Wider Circle, and the American Legion.



W. BRO. RICHARD L. MENDEZ

Blue Lodge History: Raised in Silver Spring Lodge No. 215 in 2010. Worshipful Master in 2015 and 2016. Charter member of Terrapin Lodge No. 241. Charter member of Logia Sol Naciente No. 242. Past Master of Harmony Lodge No. 17 (Washington, D.C.). Member of Mariner's Lodge No. 67 (New York).

Grand Lodge Leadership: W. Grand Pursuivant



in 2016. Grand Lodge Regional Leadership Instructor for Montgomery County. 2016 Award of Merit for Outstanding Lodge Trestleboard.

Masonic Affiliations: *Scottish Rite* – Orient of the District of Columbia. KCCH in 2015. Venerable Master of Kadosh in 2019, Chairman of Class Registration. 32nd Degree Cast Member. Co-chairman of DCSR Charity Golf Tournament. Honorary Chieftain for the Knights of St. Andrew in 2016. *York Rite* – James F. Allen Chapter No. 33. King Solomon Council No. 13. *Shriners International* – Almas Shrine. *Other Affiliations* – Azim Grotto No. 17.

Professional: *Education* – Graduated Montgomery Blair High School in 1984, University of Maryland College Park in 2001. *Career* – Real Estate Investment Management business from 2007 – present. Prior to this a 15-plus year career in real estate, marketing, advertising, management, and international telecommunication sales. Remax One Exit Realty.

Personal: Resident of Olney, MD. Married to Lucy for 15 years. One daughter, Cassandra. Volunteer at Interfaith Works Montgomery County, MD. Volunteer at Circle 15-16 and at MD-ChIP events for various lodges. Member of Holy Cross Church. Member and Past Vice President of Capital Cichlid Association 2006-present.

W. BRO. SHAWN R. WINPIGLER

Blue Lodge History: Raised in Columbia Lodge No. 58 in 1978. Worshipful Master in 1983, 2005, and 2006. Also served as Treasurer.

Grand Lodge Leadership: W. Grand Standard Bearer in 2021. W. Assistant Grand Marshall in 2009 and 2010. W. Grand Sword Bearer in 2008. Currently serve on Grand Lodge Committee on Ritual. Served on Vision 2025 Committee.

Masonic Affiliations: *Scottish Rite* – Valley of Baltimore and Valley of Frederick, 32° in 1979. Life Member. *York Rite* – Enoch Chapter No. 23. Enoch Council No. 10. Jacques DeMolay Commandery No. 4. *Shriners International* – Ali Ghan Shriners. Ambassador to Columbia Lodge No. 58 and Lynch Lodge No. 163 in 1983. Keystone Kops in 1980. Frontier Shrine Club. *Tall Cedars* – Frederick Forest No. 132. Grand Tall Cedar in 1986, 1987, 2004, 2009, 2010, and 2013. Past Trustee. Key Club Life Member. Western Maryland Tall Cedars Degree Team. *Eastern Star* – Frederick Chapter No. 79. *DeMolay* – Legion of Honor in 2010. *Other Affiliations* – Past Masters Association of Frederick, Past President. Masonic Veterans Association. Free State Shield and Square Club.

Professional: *Education* – Graduated from St. John Catholic High School in 1972. *Career* – Worked in family business with father and brothers from 1968-2012 and with wife and sons from 2013 to present. Owner, Operator, Foreman, Supervisor, and Labor. Sub-contractor for the telephone company, Washington Gas, and Allegany Power.

Personal: Resident of Frederick, MD. Married to Becky for 47 years. Three children and two grandchildren. Active in Trinity United Methodist Church. Frederick County Fish and Game Protection Association. Life Member of Independent Hose Company No. 1. Life Member of Citizens Truck Company No. 4.

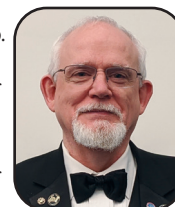


For the Office of Right Worshipful Junior Grand Warden

W. BRO. SCOTT J. CAMERON

Blue Lodge History: Raised in Columbia No. 58 in 2003. Worshipful Master in 2007 and 2008. Current Lodge Secretary. Member of Brunswick Lodge No. 191. Member of Lodge St. James No. 289 in Dufftown, Scotland.

Grand Lodge Leadership: W. Grand Director of



Ceremonies in 2011. Grand Inspector 2012 – 2018, Vice President of the West Central Region from 2014 - 2018. Member of King Solomon's Society.

Masonic Affiliations: *Scottish Rite* – Valley of Frederick, KCCH in 2007, Coroneted in 2013. Venerable Master in 2012. Wise Master in 2013. Secretary 2013 to present. Founding Honorary Member of Frederick KSA. Life member. *Tall Cedars* – Frederick Forest No. 132, Grand Tall Cedar 2019 - present. Life member. *Eastern Star* – Frederick Chapter No. 79, Worthy Patron 2016-17. *DeMolay* – Legion of Honor Honorary Member 2018. *Job's Daughters* – Bethels 28 Frederick and 26 Hagerstown. Past Associate Grand Guardian 2009. Past Associate Bethel Guardian. *Other Affiliations* -Royal Order of Scotland, Life member. Frederick County Past Masters Association, current Secretary.

Professional: *Education* - Graduated Greater Johnstown Vo-Tech in 1980, Electronics Technology Institute in 1984. *Career* – Tech, Manager, Systems Engineer for Telltronic, Inc. from 1985-97 and 2012-17. RF Engineer for Racal/Thales Communication from 1997-2012. SSTS II – Systems Engineer for Motorola Solutions, Inc. from 2012 – present. Designed the first emergency call box in the DC area. Designed custom Fire Station Alerting Systems. Design and setup 911 dispatch solutions for several counties in the mid-Atlantic area.

Personal: Resident of Frederick, MD. Married to Dana for 36 years. Two children, Jeremiah, and Katie. Co-Membership Chair for Clan Cameron, North America. Founding member of the Mid-Atlantic Branch of Clan Cameron. Founding member of the Mid-Maryland St. Andrews Society. Pipe Major of the Frederick Scottish Pipes & Drums.

W. BRO. S. MICHAEL RASHAD, SR.

Blue Lodge History: Raised in Washington Lodge No. 3 in 2009. Worshipful Master in 2011 and 2012. Member of Concordia Lodge No. 13. Worshipful Master in 2014. Charter Junior Warden of Maryland Masonic Lodge of Research.

Grand Lodge Leadership: W. Senior Grand Deacon in 2018. Deputy Grand Lecturer from 2013 to present. Grand Lodge Education Committee 2014. Grand Lodge Ritual Committee in 2012.

Masonic Affiliations: *Scottish Rite* – Valley of Baltimore, 32^o in 2009. *York Rite* – Tuscan Chapter No. 42. Druid Chapter No. 28. Hiram Council No. 5. Monumental Crusade Commandery No. 3. Maryland York Rite College No. 58. Tidewater Council No. 334. Templehoe Council Knight Masons No. 78. Neaptide. *Shriners International* – Boumi Shrine. Knights of Mecca. *DeMolay* – Honorary DeMolay in 2010.

Professional: Graduated from Boys Latin School of Maryland in 1985, Loyola University of Maryland in 1994, MBA from Loyola University of Maryland in 2000. 26-year career in Healthcare Operations, Technology, and Customer Success Leadership.

Personal: Resident of Lutherville, MD. Two children, Michael, Jr., and Ryan.



W. BRO. RAFAEL A. RODRIGUEZ

Blue Lodge History: Raised in Collington Lodge No. 230 in 2011. Worshipful Master in 2017. Lodge Ritualist in 2018. Catechism Instructor. Chartering and current Worshipful Master of Logia Sol Naciente No. 242.

Grand Lodge Leadership: W. Junior Grand Deacon in 2019. Grand Inspector from 2018 – present. Deputy Grand Lecturer for Logia Sol Naciente No. 242. Maryland Masonic Academy Master of the Craft



and Pillar of the Craft. Inducted into King Solomon's Society in 2018. Inducted into Hiram's Guild in 2020.

Masonic Affiliations: *Scottish Rite* – Orient of the District of Columbia. *York Rite* – Mt. Vernon Chapter No. 25, served as Excellent King. Harmony Council No. 20. *Shriners International* – Almas Shrine. Almas Mini Motors. *Tall Cedars* – Annapolis Forest No. 126. Served as Forest Guide. *Eastern Star* – Marlboro Chapter No. 61. *DeMolay* – Bowie-Collington Chapter. Chairman of Advisory Council 2015 to present. Zerubbabel Key in 2014. Guild of the Leather Apron Advisor of the Year in 2014. DeMolay Cross of Honor in 2017. *Other Affiliations* – Southern Maryland Past Masters Association.

Professional: *Education* – Graduated from Julio Vizcarrondo High School in 1986 and from University of Maryland University College in 2016. *Career* – Served in the United States Army from 1988 to 1993. Currently employed by the United States Government as an Information Technology Specialist since 2008. Prior experience as an Information Technology Engineer from 1993 to 2008.

Personal: Resident of Bowie, MD. Married to Yolima for 12 years. Four sons and one granddaughter. Member of American Legion Beltway Post No. 172. Active with Boy Scouts Troop No. 1009. Member of University of Maryland University College Alumni Association.

For the Board of Managers (Elect Three)

W. Bro. Thomas R. Fulcher

Howard Lodge No. 101

R.W. Bro. Mark E. Pearlstein

Amicable-St. John's Lodge No. 25

W. Bro. Steven W. Walls

St. Alban Birmingham Lodge No. 233

For the Board of Trustees (Elect Three)

W. Bro. John E. Herold

Mt. Ararat Lodge No. 116

W. Bro. Robert E. Lusk

Union Lodge No. 48

For Masonic Charities of Maryland Board of Directors (Elect Three)

W. Bro. Frederick Laser, Jr.

Charity Lodge No. 134

Bro. Cameron B. Newman

Ionic Lodge No. 145

W. Bro. Richard E. Thurfield, Jr.

Mt. Ararat Lodge No. 44

For Library & Museum Board of Directors (Elect Three)

W. Bro. Steven G. Gemeny

Door to Virtue Lodge No. 46

W. Bro. Thomas G. Heimiller

Perry Hall Lodge No. 235



PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

At the Semi-Annual Communication on Saturday, May 15, 2021 the following Proposed Amendment to the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Maryland will be voted upon. The proposed amendment provides financial support to the Stephen J. Ponzillo, Jr. Memorial Library and Museum via an annual \$3.00 per capita assessment. The language of the Proposed Amendment reads as follows:

Article X

Revenue of the Grand Lodge

Section 1. Revenue

D. From dues and assessments, which each Lodge shall pay in the following amounts when making its return to the Grand Secretary, as provided in Article XVI Section 11:

ADDING:

6. For each member, for the use, maintenance, and support of the Stephen J. Ponzillo, Jr. Memorial Library and Museum, Three Dollars (\$3.00) annually, beginning January 1, 2022, except that no Lodge shall be charged any assessment for the following members:

- a. Members who are guests of the Maryland Masonic Homes; or
- b. Members who are determined legally to be mentally incompetent.

There will also be a number of proposed amendments to change specific language in the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Maryland. In order for all members to be fully informed, each of these proposed amendments are summarized here for your review.

Proposed Amendment #1

Calls for the addition of language to Article II, Section 1 as follows:

C. In case a State of Emergency is declared which could limit participation by members of the Grand Lodge at the Semi-Annual or Annual Communications, the Grand Master may move the Communication to another date provided

the membership is given at least 30 days' notice.

Proposed Amendment #2

Calls for a rearrangement of words in Article III, Section 1 as follows:

Currently Reads: B. All elected Past Grand Officers;

Proposed Change: B. All Past Elected Grand Officers;

Proposed Amendment #3

Calls for the addition of language to Article VI, Section 4 as follows:

E. Past elected Grand Lodge Officers entitled to vote pursuant to Article VI, Section 1, Subsection A hereof may appoint another Past Master as his proxy for the purpose of balloting in his stead on any matter coming before the Grand Lodge. Such proxy shall only be applicable to a session of the Grand Lodge stated in the proxy and shall expire at the conclusion of such named session.

Proposed Amendment #4

Calls for the deletion of Article VII, Section 3 which currently reads:

Section 3. Nominating Committees

Not later than ninety days prior to each Semi-Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge, the Grand Master shall appoint three Nominating Committees, one for the Board of Managers, one for the Board of Trustees of the Grand Lodge, and one for the Board of Directors of the Masonic Charities of Maryland, Inc. Each such Nominating Committee shall be filled by the appointment of five permanent members of the Grand Lodge, two of whom must be members of a Lodge in Baltimore City or Baltimore County, and two of whom must be members of one or more of the other Lodges in Maryland. No brother shall be appointed to, or serve on, more than one Nominating Committee at the same time. The names of all prospective nominees for each of the three Boards to be voted on at the Semi-Annual Communication shall be submitted to the Chairman of the appropriate

Nominating Committee not later than thirty days prior to the Semi-Annual Communication of Grand Lodge. From among the prospective nominees submitted to each Nominating Committee, each such Nominating Committee shall respectively nominate all qualified Master Masons for the vacancies to be filled on each Board, and the name(s) of the Master Mason(s) thus selected shall be placed in nomination by the Chairman of each Nominating Committee, or his designee, at the Semi-Annual Communication. In selecting Master Masons for nomination and election to these three Boards, the respective Nominating Committees shall give consideration to the qualifications provided for in Section 2 of this Article and shall, to the best of their ability, select for nomination only those Master Masons who are the most qualified to conduct the business and affairs of their respective organizations.

Nothing in this Section shall prevent any other qualified Master Mason, whose name has been duly submitted to a Nominating Committee, as a prospective nominee, as herein above provided, from being nominated from the floor and elected. In the event of a contested election for any position on any of said Boards, each nominee may appoint a spokesman who shall be allowed three minutes to address the Grand Lodge on the qualifications of such nominee prior to the election.

As a result of the proposed deletion of Article VII, Section 3, this amendment also proposes renumbering Section 4 and Section 5 as Section 3 and Section 4 respectively.

Proposed Amendment #5

Withdrawn

Proposed Amendment #6

Calls for the replacement of words in Article XII, Section 4 which currently reads:

Section 4. Meetings

The Board shall meet monthly, from September to June inclusive, at a time and place to be determined by the Board, and at other times as determined by Grand Master upon forty-eight hours prior written notice or upon

telegraph or telephone notice not later than the day before the day set for the meeting.

*The word telegraph would be replaced by the words **electronic communication**.*

Proposed Amendment #7

Calls for the replacement of words in Article XIII, Section 4 exactly the same as that called for in Proposed Amendment #6.

Proposed Amendment #8

Calls for the addition of words to Article XIII, Section 5. The new proposed language is italicized and in bold below:

Section 5. Duties

The Board shall have and exercise sole control of the operations of the Homes including, but not limited to, ***the supervision of the Board of Directors of Maryland Masonic Homes, Ltd.***, all personnel, salaries and wages, job assignments, maintenance of buildings and grounds, rules governing admission and care of guests, and all other policies and practices necessary to attain the objective of providing a Home for eligible Master Masons of Maryland and their eligible dependents.

Proposed Amendment #9

Calls for the complete deletion of Article XIV Board of Relief and all its Sections, except for reserving Article XIV for future use.

Proposed Amendment #10

Calls for the deletion of the following Sections of Article XV Standing Committees:

Section 13. Committee on Masonic Homes Endowment

This Committee shall consist of ten to fifteen members. Their duty shall be to devise and carry out plans for securing an adequate endowment for the Maryland Masonic Homes.

Section 15. Blood Donor Committee

This Committee shall consist of at least three Past Masters and such other Brethren as needed. Their duty shall be to fulfill the responsibilities of the Craft in providing life-blood for its eligible members and their eligible dependents.

Section 16. The Committee on Masonic Research and Information

This Committee shall consist of at least six members of whom at least four shall be Past Masters. The Curator and Librarian shall be members of this Committee. The duties of the committee shall be to:

A. Superintend the dissemination of Masonic information among the Craft;

B. Render assistance to Grand Master and other officers of Grand Lodge, to subordinate Lodges, and to the general membership, through the acquisition, preparation, and distribution of printed material, the purpose of which is to increase the interest and knowledge of the members;

1. No book, pamphlet, brochure or article may be printed in the name of the Grand Lodge unless authorized and approved by the Board of Managers and the Grand Master. The funding for all publications shall require the approval of both the Board of Managers and Grand Master;

C. Consult with the Masonic Library and Museum.

As a result of these proposed deletions, this proposed Amendment also calls for the re-number of Section 14. Committee on Public Relations as Section 13.

Proposed Amendment #11

Calls for the replacement of words in Article XV, Section 6 as follows:

Currently Reads:

Section 6. Committee on Work

This Committee shall consist of not more than seven Deputy Grand Lecturers,

qualified to instruct in the mysteries of Ancient Craft Masonry, at least one of whom shall be conversant with the German Language. The Worshipful Grand Lecturer shall be Chairman of this Committee.

Proposed Change:

Section 6. Committee on Work

This committee shall consist of ~~not more than seven~~ **six** Deputy Grand Lecturers, qualified to instruct in the mysteries of Ancient Craft Masonry, ~~at least one of whom shall be conversant with the German Language~~ **along with one who is conversant for each foreign speaking Lodge**. The Worshipful Grand Lecturer shall be Chairman of this Committee.

Proposed Amendment #12

Calls for the rewriting of Article XVI, Section 2, Subsection A as follows:

Currently Reads:

A. Committee Approval – Before presenting proposed By-Laws or amendments to its By-Laws to its membership, each Lodge shall transmit three copies of them bearing the signatures of the Worshipful Master and Secretary, to the Office of the Grand Secretary for the approval of the Grand Lodge Committee on Bylaws.

Proposed Change:

A. Committee Approval – Each Lodge shall provide the Office of the Grand Secretary a copy of its most current set of By-Laws that have been approved by the Grand Lodge Committee on By-Laws for its records. Before presenting a complete revision or proposed amendments to existing By-Laws to its membership, each Lodge shall first transmit a copy thereof bearing the signatures of the Worshipful Master and Secretary to the Office of the Grand Secretary showing the current language and the proposed amendments for approval by the Grand Lodge Committee on By-Laws.



Proposed Amendment #13

Calls for the addition of language to Article XVI, Section 2, Subsection C.3. The proposed addition appears below in bold italics:

3. That the proposed By-Laws, or the amendment, either was adopted or rejected in the exact form as previously approved by the Grand Lodge Committee on By-Laws. ***The Lodge shall provide a copy of its new By-Laws as amended and as approved by the membership to the Office of the Grand Secretary for its records.***

Proposed Amendment #14

Calls for a word replacement in Article XVI, Section 3, Subsection C.4. This replacement is illustrated below in strike-through and bold italics:

4. Certify on the back of qualification to confer the degrees that he, and the Wardens-Elect, together with the Grand Inspector of such Lodge, ~~have~~ ***will*** read Article XVI, of the Constitution and Standing Orders and Resolutions of the Grand Lodge of Maryland, as required by Section 3.F of Article XVI.

Proposed Amendment #15

Calls for a rewrite and addition to Article XVI, Section 4, Subsection D as follows:

Currently Reads:

D. Flag and Masonic Creed Ceremonies – The flag ceremony shall be carried out at the opening of the Lodge as prescribed by the Committee on Work.

1. Just prior to placing the flag in the place of honor in the East, the Masonic Creed shall be repeated in unison by all members present.

2. A member who is not a citizen of the United States shall not be required to recite the Masonic Creed. He shall, however, remain standing.

Proposed Change:

D. Flag and Masonic Creed Ceremonies – the flag ceremony shall be carried out at the opening of the Lodge as prescribed by the Committee on Work.

1. ***The Masonic Creed shall be repeated, in unison, by all members present prior to the flag ceremony.***

2. A member who is not a citizen of the United States of America shall not be required to recite the Masonic Creed, ***Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag nor salute or place his hand over his heart.*** He shall, however, remain standing.

Proposed Amendment #16

Calls for the deletion of Article XVI, Section 4, Subsection B5 which currently reads:

5. When the petition is returned with approval by the Grand Secretary, the Lodge Secretary shall give no less than two weeks notice to all the Lodges in the County or in Baltimore City wherein the petitioner applies, giving the name, residence and occupation of the petitioner.

- a. Notices shall be read to the membership of the Lodge. They shall be filed in order of their receipt by the Secretaries of the Lodges, properly fastened by clips, and maintained upon their desks at the Communication of their Lodges, for the information of interested members. This file shall be kept current for four months, after which the expiring lists may be withdrawn.

As a result of the proposed deletion, this proposed Amendment also calls for the renumbering of Subsection B6 as B5.

Proposed Amendment #17

Withdrawn

Proposed Amendment #18

Withdrawn. Referred to the Board of Managers

Proposed Amendment #19

Withdrawn. Referred to the Board of Managers



THE HISTORY AND SYMBOLISM OF THE MASONIC CABLE TOW

Robin Summerfield, PM, East Gate Lodge No. 216

“Free him from his cable tow.”

These words will undoubtedly be familiar to most Freemasons as the first order given by the Worshipful Master after a candidate for Masonry has taken the solemn vow that binds, or ties, him to the Craft. This brief statement, denoting the moment when an initiate is released from the physical bonds of the cable tow and secured by the sacred bond that unites Freemasons, may too frequently be met with insufficient consideration of this important symbol.

In fact, some leading Masonic scholars, among them Albert Pike, have considered the cable tow to be largely unsymbolic, serving simply to assist in removing an unwilling or unworthy initiate. Others, including Bro. Joseph Fort Newton, find such a dismissal of the symbolic meaning of the cable tow to be surprising in view of the general nature of Masonry and the symbolism inherent in nearly every aspect of its ritual. “Masonry is a chamber of imagery,” according to Newton, “The whole Lodge is a symbol. Every object, every act is symbolical.” (Newton, J. F., 1969, p. 76.) Why then, would the cable tow be any different?

While this symbol is used in various forms in each of the three symbolic degrees, little information about its meaning or purpose is provided to new Masons as part of their advancement in the degrees; a brief explanation of the Cable Tow first appears during the lecture to the newly initiated Entered Apprentice, where it is said to serve in assisting in the removal of an unworthy candidate from the Lodge, and a second time, during the reception of a new Master Mason, where it is used as a symbol delineating the scope and extent of a Mason’s obligation. However, the role of this symbol – variously termed noose, rope, or cable tow – in initiative orders throughout history, recommends a study of its history and symbolism to Freemasonry.

In *The Craft and Its Symbols*, the prolific Masonic author and filmmaker Bro. Allen Roberts writes that the cable tow, or similar cord, has been used in initiations since time immemo-

rial as a “visible pledge of submission and fidelity” and “the symbol of a vow to assist one another, even at the risk of our own lives.” (Roberts, A. E., 1975) Bro. Newton contends that the cable tow, or something akin to it, used very much as it is used

in Masonry, can be discovered far back in the history of initiation, and that “no matter what the origin and form of the word as we employ it may be – whether from the Hebrew ‘chabel,’ or the Dutch ‘cabel,’ both meaning a rope – the fact is the same. In India, in Egypt, in most of the Ancient Mysteries, a cord or cable was used in the same way and for the same purpose.” (Newton, J. F., 1969, p. 76.)

The Biblical account of the relentless siege and sacking of the vastly outnumbered Hebrews at Samaria by the armies of Syrian King Ben Hadad, and of the Syrians being afterward defeated by the Hebrews under the command of King Ahab, details the vanquished Syrian King sending his servants to seek mercy from the Hebrews dressed in sackcloth and with ropes upon their heads – some translations read “ropes around our necks” – as a sign of their submission. Ahab responded to this gesture with great mercy by sparing the life of Ben Hadad and calling him a brother. Thus, the rope further served as a symbol of the covenant between the two kings and of Ben Hadad’s promise to restore the cities he had destroyed.

Similar examples of this symbol come to us from Hindu scripture and tradition. Bro. William Simpson, a renowned artist and war correspondent and an early member of Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076, London – he was



proposed as a joining member upon the Lodge's consecration by order of H.R.H. Albert Edward, GM, on January 12, 1886, and was admitted as such at its second meeting on April 7, 1886 – presented a paper to the Lodge in 1890 tracing the use of the cable tow to the initiatory rituals of the Brahmins in medieval India.

The Brahmins were the highest ranking of the four varna, or social classes, in Hinduism who served as priests and teachers (or gurus) and preserved Vedic ritual traditions. During the initiation marking a student's acceptance by a guru, the initiate is presented with a "sacred thread," which was a thin cord consisting of three cotton strands. Bro. Simpson noted the similarities between the cable tow of the Masonic initiate and this sacred thread or cord of the Brahminical novitiate in the ritual of Upanayana, which is translated as "the act of leading to or near," as he begins his "search for light surrounded with a hempen zone," delineating this sacred thread.

The term Mystic Tie has come to represent the symbolic Cable Tow that binds Freemasons together. In the *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, Albert Mackey traced the use of this expression among Masons to at least as early as 1786, when Robert Burns referenced the "dear brothers of the mystic tie" in his poem "The Farewell to the Brethren of St. James Lodge, Tarbolton." Mackey described this Mystic Tie as "that sacred and inviolable bond which unites men of the most discordant opinions into one band of brothers, which gives but one language to men of all nations and one altar to men of all religions." (Mackey, Clegg, & Haywood, 1946)

While the Cable Tow certainly symbolized a binding tie, objections among some of Bro. Simpson's Quatuor Coronati brothers to his comparisons of the cable tow to the Brahminic initiation arose from the role of the cord or loop of rope as the weapon of the Hindu god of the oceans, Varuna, in the Vedic tradition. However, Bro. Simpson responded that, while this might suggest a punitive or sacrificial role of this "sacred thread," at the completion of the ceremony "when [the novitiate] had realized the full symbolism of the rite...he walks out freed from Varuna's noose...The inference seems plain. The hempen zone with which he began

to seek for light had, amongst its significations, that of a noose; and he escaped from the dangers it signified by the proper performance of the initiatory rites."

This would seem to have a striking resemblance to the Masonic initiation. As previously mentioned, Bro. Roberts described the cable tow as an outward, visible pledge of submission and fidelity. The act of removing the cable tow – and freeing the newly obligated brother from its physical bonds – reflects the reciprocal duties of the individual Mason and his fraternity. "At the same time," according to Roberts, "because the rope has two ends, the Fraternity has placed itself under obligation to [the individual brother]. It has promised to train, teach, guide, and instruct [him] to be of more service to [his] fellowman as well as the Craft." (Roberts, A. E., 1975, p. 14.)

Bro. Roberts also equates the moment in which the tangible and binding Cable Tow is replaced by the intangible and liberating tie of Masonic brotherhood with the experience of a newborn child. "Just as [the umbilical cord] is cut, to be replaced by love and care, so is the Masonic cord replaced by a stronger bond – the Mystic Tie of Brotherly Love." (Roberts, A. E., 1975, p. 13.) Perhaps the following words from Bro. Newton best illustrate that moment when the bonds of submission in the form of the cable tow are replaced by those of brotherly love, relief, and truth, "just as the physical cord, when cut, is replaced by a tie of love and obligation between mother and child, so, in one of the most impressive moments of initiation, the cable tow is removed, because the brother, by his oath at the Altar of Obligation, is bound by a tie stronger than any physical cable." (Newton, J. F., 1969, p. 77.)

In *Symbolical masonry: An Interpretation of the Three Degrees*, Bro. Harry Haywood expands on this concept of rebirth through ritual, "To my own mind the candidate is as a child struggling for release from narrow environments and external restraints in order to enter into the larger life of liberty and self-direction. The cable tow about his neck symbolizes all those external checks and restraints, such as conventionality, fear of the world, fear of the

adverse opinions or displeasure of men, and of the control of teachers and parents on which a child naturally depends but which must be thrown off when one has reached full responsibility as a man 'of mature age.' The removal of the noose symbolizes the attainment of inward light, judgment, and the power of self-direction – in other words, real manhood, which has its center and support in an inward power that is stronger than any pressure from without.” (Haywood, H. L., 1923, p. 79.)

A Mason's obligation binds him to answer all summons sent him from a legally constituted lodge “within the length of his cable tow.” So, exactly what is the length of a cable tow? Mackey's encyclopedia cites the early 19th Century German Masonic lexicographer J.C. Gadick's measure of three English miles, or 15,840 feet, as the length of an Entered Apprentice's cable tow. But the practical answer may not be that simple. In his History of Freemasonry and Masonic Digest, J.W.S. Mitchell, Past Grand Master of Missouri, writes, “We think the length of the cable-tow is not ascertained by miles or feet, but by the reasonable ability of the brother. There are cases where it becomes the duty of a Mason to travel scores of miles to perform a duty; and he may be so situated that it is not his duty to leave his family fire-side.” (Mitchell, J., M.D., 1858, p. 698.)

Bro. Roberts, who devoted much of his

Masonic scholarship to understanding the influence of the fraternity on the lives and relationships of its members during the American Civil War, goes still further in his view of the great responsibilities of brotherhood and the seemingly limitless power of its bond, “How long is a cable tow? It's as long as you want it to be. It will reach as far as your moral principles go, or your material conditions will allow. Each man must be his own judge of the length of his cable tow. But if the cord of each Freemason were tied around the world, no earthly power could break the bond of brotherhood. It is truly the Mystic Tie that binds the Craftsmen together. This tie keeps Freemasonry a house undivided.” (Roberts, A. E., 1975, p. 14.)

In this time of increasing political polarity, economic disparity, and general incivility, perhaps the benefits of this Mystic Tie, as envisioned by Bro. Newton in similar times a century ago, can extend far beyond the individual Mason or his Lodge and bind together all those who seek light and truth. “Such is the Divine cable tow,” he claimed, “by which the world is held in its moral orbit. To discover that cord running through our lives...uniting us with all the seekers after truth, all lovers of right, all servants of God and man, is the mission and blessing of Masonry. What is the length of our cable tow? Who knows how far it reaches?” (Newton, J. F., 1969.)

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"FROM A LODGE...AT JERUSALEM"

Mike Codori, PM, Montgomery-Cornerstone Lodge No. 195



When opening the Lodge in the Entered Apprentice degree, the first question is posed to the Senior Warden by the Worshipful Master “Whence came you?” To most of us, the reply “From a Lodge of the Holy Saints John at Jerusalem” becomes a rote part of the opening exchanges and rarely is given more than a passing thought. It becomes buried in the litany of the traditional dialogue between two chief officers entrusted with the opening ceremonies. But how many of us have ever taken the time to explore the importance of that opening response?

We are taught that the building of King Solomon’s Temple was performed by Masons, all “classed and arranged by the Masonic skill and wisdom of King Solomon,” alluding to the antiquity of the origin of our fraternity. Although we dwell on the values and symbols of our organization in advancing the Craft, especially with those new to Masonry, we seem to accept the timeline of our formation, with little challenge or question. In fact, what empirical evidence do we have that we existed as a fraternal organization so many years ago?

In 2007, one of my friends traveled to the Mid-east and spent several days in Jerusalem. One of

the high points of his trip to that ancient city was to walk the route that Christ took along the Via Dolorosa (“Road of Sorrow”) on the way to His Crucifixion at Golgotha. As my friend took his time in his walk to reflect on his Christian heritage, he passed a home with iron railings. There, firmly embedded in the railings, was a remarkable image know to all Masons, and pictured here.

When had the Square and Compasses been incorporated into the structure of the home? Could it have been there on that fateful day when Jesus passed by on his last journey in this life? If Masons were workmen on the Temple long before that time, is it possible that our central symbol had been respectfully preserved all that time?

Regardless of the paucity of verified answers to these questions, it presents us with questions of our own, as we explore our personal Masonic journeys. Like some of my Catholic brothers who wrestle with the issues between Masonry and their faith, I have sought answers to the somewhat incongruity between my Catholic faith and my life as a Mason. I see continuity in the scriptural passages used in our degrees and the readings I hear and recite at Sunday Mass. For me, my faith is reinforced by my Masonic experience and my strength as a Mason is corroborated by my faith. I have found comfort and solace in reconciling this challenge. Other brothers still search for resolution, I am sure.

No matter what faith you practice, if any, or cultural heritage you claim, the presence of this iron symbol of our Craft in the multicultural city of many faiths stands as a bulwark against the fractional and temporary authorities that characterize our human history. Despite the changing scope and landscape of our lives, world conflicts, epidemics, and pandemics, I invite you to look to this timeless Square and Compasses to navigate our life journeys and remember the tenets and values it symbolizes to keep us focused on the ever-improving path each of us must travel on our way to that final home, “not made with human hands, eternal in heaven”.

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234th Semi-Annual Communication

Saturday, May 15th
10 AM - Corinthian Room

Coffee and Donuts will be available at 9:00 AM • Lunch at approximately 12 noon.

You must have a pre-purchased ticket – none sold at door

Cost: \$20 each from the Grand Lodge Office

Attire for all elected lodge officers is tuxedo, lodge apron, collar, and Past Master jewel if applicable.

Attire for all other Master Masons is dark suit.