

Freestate Freemason



Spring 1999

The Grand Master's message—

THE YEAR OF CHANGE IS UNDERWAY!

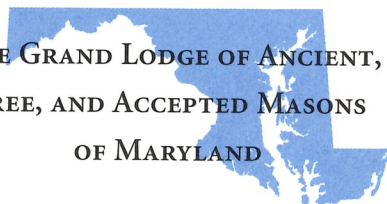
Brethren of the Maryland Jurisdiction:

As you know, I have permitted open installations this year. In spite of the short notice many Lodges took advantage of it and they have been very successful. With the exception of an objection from a very dear friend in Southern Maryland, these open installations have been very well received. I hope that many more Lodges will hold open installations next year and start now to prepare for the millennium. We want to enter the year 2000 in a way that, until now, Maryland Masonry couldn't begin to imagine. We want our Lodges to have memorable installations in January 2000. Let's throw open our doors to our loved ones, relatives, neighbors, and friends. Invite everyone to an exciting festive meal, then have an open installation that will be done to perfection. We have a year to prepare where everyone can see who we are and why we are so proud of what we are. After the Lodge is closed, finish off the day with a glorious celebration with all the bells and whistles. If all 116 Lodges throughout our jurisdiction were to do this, can you imagine the impact that it would have. It would sure be a real jump-start for the new century!

Sounds great, but your Lodge does not have the money? Of course! Neither does mine. Most Lodges don't, and this brings me to the next topic I need to talk to you about, a change that can improve the financial health of our Lodges..

(Continued on page 4)

THE GRAND LODGE OF ANCIENT,
FREE, AND ACCEPTED MASONS
OF MARYLAND





Issued quarterly by the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free, and Accepted Masons of Maryland, U.S.A. This publication serves as a medium for informing the Craft of pertinent activities of the Grand Lodge and constituent Lodges and for sharing with the media, community, family, and friends those events, activities, and personalities which exemplify the purposes and objectives of the Masonic fraternity.

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Deadlines for submitting articles, photos, and information for possible publication:

Winter Issue – October 15

Spring Issue – January 15

Summer Issue – April 15

Fall Issue – July 15

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WHY NOT!

Some men look at the world as it is and ask, "Why?"

Other men look at the world as it could be and ask, "Why not?"

It is with a great sense of humility and satisfaction that I accepted the invitation of Grand Master Larrimore to become Editor of the *Freestate Freemason*. Bro. Seymour Lipshitz laid the foundation and set the standard; I can do little more than be faithful to his vision.

It will take a few issues before the publication schedule becomes natural. There will be bumps along the road, but I'm confident that you will whisper good counsel in my ear and aid me in a reformation. If you have news or pictures or information or questions that you'd like to see in our publication, please send them to me. It is only with your help that the *Freestate Freemason* can achieve maximum service to the Craft.

Each Grand Master brings with him a vision of how he thinks Masonry should function in Maryland. All have striven to achieve the standards of excellence they have set for themselves. M.W. Francis Larrimore has done more than set a high standard of excellence, he has asked time, and time again, "Why not?" It is a question seldom heard in our fraternity because there is a deeply held myth that our forms and practices—the quaint, the odd, and the stupid—are eternal landmarks of Freemasonry.

Such is not the case, my Brothers. Every Grand Lodge, including Maryland, has gradually evolved, adding self-imposed rules and regulations. Some are vital to maintaining the unique character of the Craft, and others simply reflect the prejudices and follies of earlier times. The father of the modern, "authentic" school of Masonic history, Robert Freke Gould, had this to say about landmarks, "Everything is a landmark when an opponent desires to silence you, but nothing is a landmark that stands in his own way." Thus it is not only proper but also essential to revisit occasionally our forms and procedures and ask if they are still serving us well.

The issue of lotteries and games of chance is a prime example of the proper revisiting of a recent change. Our beautiful old Grand Lodge Building on Charles Street was built with help from the proceeds of over 300 raffles. Were the standards of those Brethren less than ours? Is it really improper for a Lodge to raffle off table decorations at a banquet? Will we be untrue to our principles and diminish our public reputation if we continue to host bingo games for our guests at Bonnie Blink?

This question will be considered at the Semi-annual communication in May, and I suspect other similar questions will come up later. What is important is not necessarily that a change pass or fail, but that our leaders are asking the question, "Why not?" This is how we will maintain our vitality and vision.

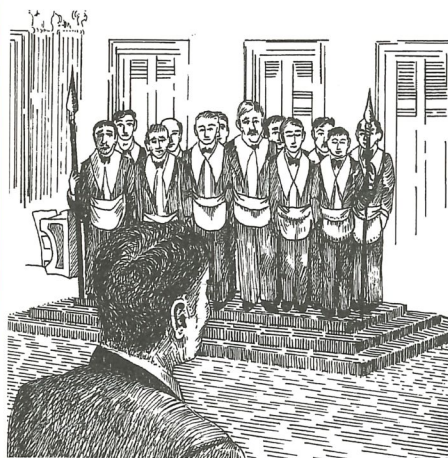
S. Brent Morris, P.G.D.C.

Perishing on the Rise

ROB MORRIS, P. G. L. M.:

Masonic Poet Laureate

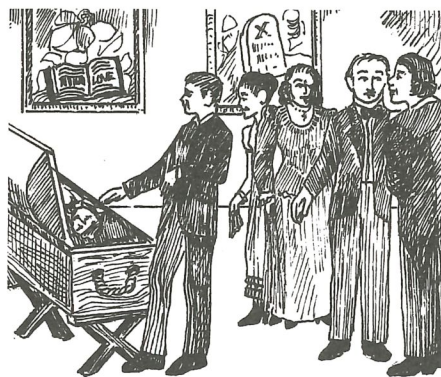
Old Jephtha Hoys had drilled his boys
With gavel, plumb and square, sir,
Till every craft a perfect shaft
Stood Perpendicular, sir.
Each Friday night 'twas his delight
To call them to the hall, sir,
And catechise the willing boys,
Till each could "cut and call," sir.



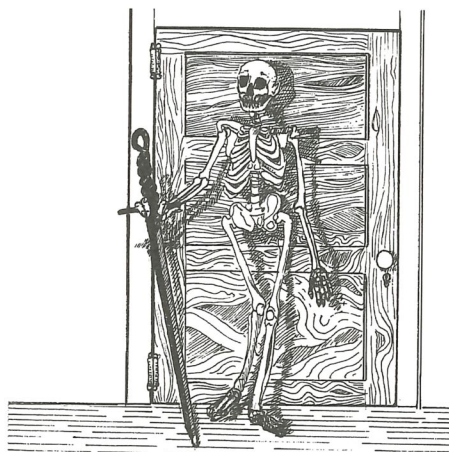
One evening late it was his fate,
In leaning back his chair, sir,
The window glass right through to pass,
And push the thing too far, sir;
In fact, he fled, heels over head,
Clear down unto the ground, sir;
With mighty noise old Jephtha Hoys
A broken neck had found, sir.



The neighbors there, with tender care,
Prepared him for the tomb, sir,
And on the way, a long array
Went out with grief and gloom, sir;
Yet many said, with whispering dread,
"No Mason here is seen, sir!"
Strange to declare, not one was there,
To cast the mystic green, sir!



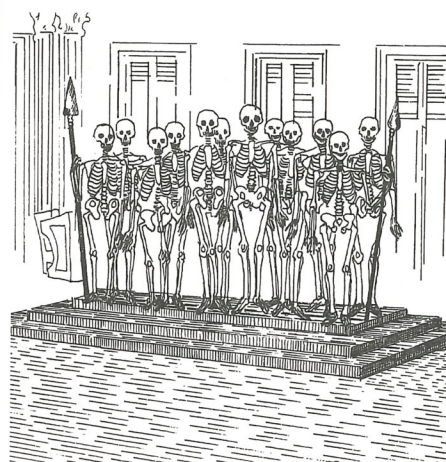
I'll tell you where those Masons were,—
Prepare for much surprise, sir,—
When Jephtha Hoys forsook his boys,
He left them *on the rise*, sir!
The Brethren stood straight as they could,
Till he should bid them sit, sir;
And as he's gone with no return,
Why there they're standing yet, sir.



The Tyler bore, outside the door,
The pangs of cold and thirst, sir;
The Wardens twain do still remain,
And will till they are dust, sir;
The Deacons stand with rod in hand,
Not one will budge the least, sir;



And strange to own, each skeleton
Is facing to the East, sir.



Then be my task humbly to ask
Each Master this to read, sir,
And beg and pray to them, that they
The moral well may heed, sir;
When calling up the mystic group,
To stand and catechise, sir,
Think of those boys of Jephtha Hoys,
Who *perished on the rise*, sir.



"This extravaganza was written in ridicule of the tendency of the times to stiffen up Lodge work, and turn the Worshipful Master into a mere martinet."

From *The Poetry of Freemasonry* (Chicago: The Werner Co., 1895), pp. 223–224. Artwork by Bruce M. Jones, ©1998 by The Scottish Rite Research Society. All rights reserved.



(Continued from page 1)

Lodges must be permitted to prosper; lodges must be given the freedom to involve their membership in fund raising activities. Dues alone will not support our Blue Lodges any longer. We must find other ways.

Please tell me why Lodges can't have a Bull Roast or an Oyster Roast or a Crab Feast or any other fun filled event that is open to the Public which has the purpose of raising money for the Lodge? Please tell me why a Lodge can not have a Masonic Bingo Night that is filled with fun and excitement, where the public is invited, like so many churches do to raise money for their needs and programs?

Why is it that you can walk into any convenience store and buy a lottery ticket that is sold by the government which has odds in excess of 2 million to 1—yet we are not allowed to have a 50/50 or a raffle or drawing to raise money for our Lodge.

Well, I'm sorry! I think that we should be able to do these things. That is why I asked PGM Naquin to propose a change to the Constitution to eliminate Section 2 of Article XVII.

My Brethren, we are responsible adults of good character and high moral standards. We do not need someone to take us by the hand and tell us what to do and how to do it. Our laws tell us that and we are obligated to abide by Federal, State and Local laws. That should be all that is needed. Brethren, free us from these antiquated shackles that

are holding us back. The world has been passing us by for a long time and we have an awful lot of catching up to do. Cut us loose so we can prosper and put excitement and enthusiasm back into our Lodges.

Help me Brethren! At the Semi-Annual Communication in May 1999, vote to eliminate Section 2 of Article XVII.

Last year I asked you for your help to correct the financial crisis in the Grand Lodge and you did just that at the Annual Communication in November. Now I need your help to make our Blue Lodges healthy and to give them new life. Permit them to prosper and raise the funds they need to enter the new millennium in a blaze of glory. Help me Brethren! Help me make this happen; only you can do it. Please stick with me!

I would like now to announce some changes that I am making that seem to be the wishes of the majority of the members.

Junior Wardens will be permitted to exemplify the 1st and 2nd Degrees, if they desire. It is felt that this will relieve much of the pressure when they are serving as Senior Warden and give them more time to plan for the East.

During my term as Grand Master I am also waiving the requirement for Prospective Worshipful Masters who have been out of the East more than 5 years, to re-certify in the conferral of the Three Degrees of Masonry. This requirement has seriously affected some Lodge's ability to fill their chairs.

The requirement to memorize the Memorial Service is also being waived during my term as Grand Master. The presiding Officer at a Memorial Service can read the service from the book. However, the Memorial Service should be practiced and read slowly and distinctly without stumbling with Masonic dignity. A Memorial Service is extremely important to the family of the deceased as well as the impression of Masonry that is made at one of our rare Public appearances.

Before being elected to the Grand East, there were two main things that I dreamed of accomplishing as Grand Master. One was to resolve the financial problem that existed in the Grand Lodge. You, my Brethren, resolved it for us at the Annual Communication when you almost unanimously supported a motion to transfer funds within the Grand Lodge.

The second thing that I wanted to accomplish was to reverse the declining membership. With the operating costs for the Blue Lodges increasing at a steady rate and the membership decreasing at an even greater rate, something must be done to turn these trends around. In an effort to help reverse the trend, we are going to do what all of the other jurisdictions that surround us, as well as many throughout the country, are doing. We are going to have an accelerated class on June the 19th. While the majority of the membership seem to want an accelerated class, there are those who oppose it. To those who oppose it I



say "I understand your feelings and I respect them, but I ask you to please be of an open mind and help me." I must have your help to make this effort work.

The ritual will be presented in a well-planned and rehearsed dramatization and explanation. Each Candidate will have his own instructor who will be with him at all times during the conferral of the degrees to explain every detail of the ritual. It will be the responsibility of the instructor to take the candidate to Lodge on a number of occasions and to continue working with him and to report his progress to the Grand Lecturer. So please Brethren, leave your negativism at home and come help make these accelerated classes work. Only you can do it! Of course, petitions will be

handled in the usual way. The candidates must be investigated and voted on by the Lodge.

The date is the 19th of June so start getting the petitions in. There will be an additional fee of \$50 to cover the costs for meals, books etc.

Regional meetings are now being planned to cover the entire jurisdiction. These meetings will be somewhat different than in the past. The main purpose of the meetings will be to hear from you about your desires, concerns, ideas, comments, complaints and suggestions. No thought is too silly or outrageous to be presented, no complaint too sensitive to be heard and no idea too creative to be laid before the body. All of the information that is received will be taken to the Steering Committee for evaluation.

Please make every effort to attend at least one of these meetings. Even if you do not participate in the discussions, you will certainly learn a lot by just listening. These are going to be very interesting and informative meetings, especially for me and I am looking forward to them. See you there, Brethren!

In closing, I want to make it known to all of you that I am available to meet with any Lodge, or group of Lodges, to discuss ways that will improve and strengthen our Blue Lodges. Call me! The year of change is under way. Let's do it!

Sincerely & fraternally,

Francis E. Larrimore
Grand Master

Amendments to be Considered at the Semi-Annual

Three amendments to the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Maryland will be voted on at the Semi-Annual Communication in May 1999. These amendments were proposed at the Annual Communication in November 1998.

1. The first proposed Amendment would amend Article VIII, Election of Grand Officers and Board Members, to provide that a Grand Secretary or a Grand Treasurer who has served ten (10) consecutive elective terms in his office

is not eligible for re-election or appointment to that office for one year after his last term in that office. The sponsor of this proposed Amendment has advised this Committee that the intention of the proposed Amendment is to have the ten-year period begin on November 15, 1999, the date of the next Annual Communication of Grand Lodge. This means that if the proposed amendment passes, the current Grand Secretary and Grand Treasurer would be eligible to serve for ten more years beginning November 15, 1999.

2. The second proposed Amendment would amend Article XVI, Subordinate Lodges, by adding bull

roasts, crab feasts, and similar social events to the events that a Lodge may sponsor.

3 The third proposed Amendment would amend Article XVII, General Masonic Limitations, by removing the prohibition against lotteries and games of chance.

It is the opinion of the Committee on Masonic Jurisprudence that the proposed Amendments do not conflict with any other provision of the Constitution and are otherwise suitable for presentation at the Semi-Annual Communication in May 1999. The full wording of each amendment has been sent to the Secretaries of every constituent Lodge in Maryland.



Tragedy In North Catalina

Bob Dixon, Holly Springs No. 115, N.C.

I regret to inform you all of a tragic event that recently took place during the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of North Catalina Island.

In the middle of a routine committee report, the Grand Master noticed smoke coming from a ventilator at the back of the auditorium. He immediately rushed to the podium, grabbed the microphone, informed the assembled brethren that there was a fire, and ordered the building cleared. Chaos resulted.

Many of the brethren were either asleep or talking to their neighbors and completely missed the announcement. They remained in their seats and in the aisles and made evacuation very difficult.

One group objected because the Grand Master had ordered the room evacuated. They felt he had no authority to order the lodge representatives to do anything without introducing a resolution and submitting it for a vote. They gathered around the Judge Advocate on the stage to initiate Masonic charges, interfering with those trying to leave.

A third group felt the Grand Master acted improperly because there was no officially approved ritual for evacuating a burning building, so they sat down to write one.

In his haste to get to the podium the Grand Master left his gavel by

his chair and lost his hat, so another group objected because he wasn't properly equipped to preside, let alone to deliver instructions to the delegates.

Yet another group was offended because the Grand Master didn't technically have the floor when he spoke, as there was someone else speaking at the time. This was considered a blatant disregard of *Roberts' Rules of Order*.

All in all about 5% of the assembled Masons heard the Grand Master's order and left the building. The rest were trapped inside and perished as it burned to the ground. Compounding the tragedy, a nearby fire company actually responded to the fire alarm. Unfortunately, the group of fire fighters included Black firemen, so the fire fighters were refused admission to prevent the Black firemen from potentially learning any Masonic secrets.

This disaster had one positive outcome, though. The Grand Lodge has taken immediate measures to prevent a similar tragedy from happening in the future.

Several hundred pages were added to the Masonic Code, prescribing the required procedures for building evacuation in case of a fire. A ritual supplement was published with a new section covering fires and other imminent disasters. The Grand Master was provided with stickum for his gavel and velcro for his hat to make them easier to hang on to. Lastly, the Grand Lodge compiled a list of all-white fire companies in the event of future fires.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This sad story was published in the November/December 1998 North Carolina Mason and identified as a parody. While there is no Grand Lodge of North Catalina Island to be found in the List of Lodges—Masonic, the story is too believable to be fiction. The behavior of the North Catalinian Masons should be familiar to anyone who has attended a session of the Grand Lodge of Maryland. Probably the name of the Grand Lodge has been changed to protect the guilty. We shall search for the truth and try to identify the Grand Lodge in a future issue of the Freestate Freemason.

Freestate Shield & Square Club

The Freestate Shield and Square Club is a newly formed Masonic degree team organized by members of Maryland law enforcement, who are also members of the world's largest fraternity, Freemasonry. This Club operates with permission of the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons in Maryland, and under the care of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Maryland. The mission of the Freestate Shield and Square Club is to help further and promote Maryland Freemasonry. We hope to accomplish this task by offering to all constituent Lodges the services of our newly formed degree team. This degree team will be available to confer any degree but primarily the Master Mason Degree on any and all qualified brethren. However we



would especially enjoy conferring the Master Mason Degree on brethren who are also members of law enforcement. In addition, we will entertain requests from bordering jurisdictions to exemplify the Maryland Master Mason Degree. Active membership is open to all active or retired law enforcement officers. Associate membership is open to other categories of law enforcement such as those who may have served for several years and then pursued other careers. The first degree work performed by this group was in December of 1998 in the James W. Bowers Lodge in Hancock, Md. by invitation of W.M. Warren Peck. Since then degree work has been conferred in Howard 101, Charity 134, Antietam 197, Georges Creek Valley Lodge 161, Centre Lodge 108, Temple Lodge 128, and Perseverance Lodge 208.

Charter & Active Members

John R. (Jack) Biggs, D.G.L., Retired Md. State Police Lt. & Degree Master
 Bruce Tanner, D.G.L., Md. State Police Captain
 R. Gary Pierce, D.G.L., Sgt. Md. State Police
 Marin Printz, D.G.L. Retired Lt., Corrections
 David Kane, PM, G.I., Corrections Sgt.
 George Lacey, Retired Federal Officer
 Michael Hurm, P.M., FBI Agent
 James Rhinehart, Retired Md. State Police Sgt.
 Bruce Flaughter, P.M., Retired State Police Trooper

Tom Morris, Md. Cecil County Sheriffs Dept., Sgt
 Greg Sweitzer, P.M., Prince Georges County Police
 Martin Mills, P.M., Harford County Sheriffs Dept.
 Terry Beal, P.M., Correctional K-9 Officer

Honorary Members

John Naquin, M.W.P.G.M.
 Jack Frazier, Grand Secretary
 Ronald Belanger, Marshall
 Jerry Place, D.G.L., Ritualist

Associate Members

Frederick Laser, Part-time D.N.R. Officer
 Jack Middleton, Resigned
 Baltimore City P.D.
 Bill Sorrell, City Commissioner
 Al Lytle, Retired Navy Shore Patrol

Should you have questions regarding the Freestate Shield and Square Club or want to schedule degree work, please contact Bro. Biggs at: 410 329-6665 or via the internet at: k3sp@hotmail.com.

S&C Dedication at Alexandria, Va.

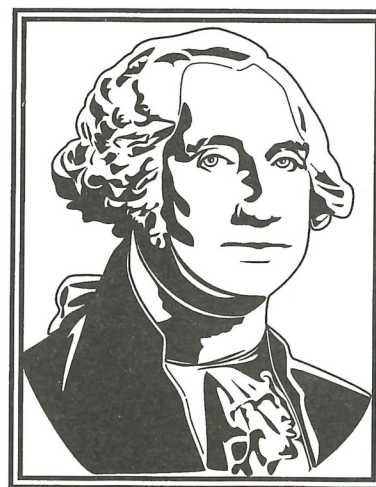
Saturday, June 26, will see the dedication of the world's largest square and compasses at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia. The gathering will also commemorate the 200th anniversary of the death of George Washington, our first President and the best known Freemason in the world. The

Memorial in Alexandria was constructed by American Masons as a lasting tribute to their brother.

The square and compasses emblem is 60 feet wide, 70 feet long, and is inclined at an angle of 33 degrees. It is visible from Alexandria and will be seen by planes landing at Reagan Washington National Airport. The emblem is completed, and landscaping is being finished now. All will be ready by the time Commemoration day arrives.

The Grand Lodge of Virginia will dedicate the emblem at 3:00 PM, after which the U.S. Army Band will give a concert on the Memorial grounds. A picnic dinner will be served from 4:00-7:00 PM, and fireworks will cap off the day. The Memorial will open at 9:00 AM and tours will be conducted from 9:00-5:00, but will be limited because of the expected large crowds.

The George Washington Masonic National Memorial is a national treasure, and it is in our back yard. If you haven't visited the impressive 333 foot tall building you owe it to yourself (and family) to spend a morning of afternoon exploring it.





Maryland Masonry Celebrates the Millennium

Al Lytle, P.M., T.J. Shryock No. 223

Those of us who are sticklers for precision, might discuss, until the cows come home, whether the 21st century begins on January 1, 2000 or January 1, 2001. The Grand Master of Masons in Maryland, Brother Francis E. Larrimore, has solved this for all of us by declaring that Maryland Masonry will celebrate the millennium during the remainder of 1999 and throughout the year 2000.

Grand Master Larrimore has appointed a Grand Lodge Millennium Committee and charged them to "plan and organize several large and many small Masonic programs to celebrate the year 2000. These programs should involve all of the Collateral Bodies. They should be designed to create lots of excitement and enthusiasm and bring the Masonic Family out into the public with all the bells and whistles throughout the state."

The Millennium Committee has hit the deck running and is enthusiastically involved in the development of an entertaining and motivating agenda. The committee hopes to schedule events that will be fun and will provide a platform to articulate and emphasize Masonic goals for the next Millennium.

The first of these events will be a huge Independence Day celebration on the Fourth of July 1999, on the grounds of the Grand Lodge at

Cockeysville. All Masons are invited to come out and to bring their families, their picnic baskets, and their blankets. Friends and neighbors will also be welcome, as will Masons from adjacent jurisdictions. Hamburgers, hot dogs, and sodas can be purchased and entertainment will be provided. After dark we will enjoy the fireworks display from Oregon Ridge. Plan to attend this one. It will be a memorable event!

A complete activities schedule will be published that will include family affairs and dinner-dances in each area of the state, culminating in a major year-ending celebration in December of 2000. In order for the Millennium celebration to be successful and to have the desired high impact on our membership, the full participation of the constituent Lodges is crucial. To that end, the Millennium Committee has assigned one of its members to each state area to solicit your ideas and to enlist your participation. Those members and their phone numbers and email addresses are listed below. Each constituent lodge and collateral body is encouraged to appoint a Millennium Representative with email capability to act as liaison with the Committee member listed for their area as follows:

Northeast /Eastern Shore

Jere Place, Union No. 48

410-398-7553, jplace@dpnet.net

Central Maryland

Jack Biggs, Charity No. 134

410-357-4600, k3sp@hotmail.com

Southern Maryland

John Hall, Prince Frederick No. 142

410-326-3750

Western Maryland

Warren Peck, J.W. Bowers No. 173

304-258-6405

Events Chairman

Bill Sorrell, Annapolis No. 89

410-268-5459,

bsorrell.annp@juno.com

Liaison with Collateral Bodies

Bill McLaughlin, Patapsco No. 183

410-879-9280,

mclaughlin@msn.com

Millennium Committee Chair

Al Lytle, T.J. Shryock No. 223

lytlea@bah.com

The names of Millennium Representatives will be added to the Grand Lodge web site as a focal point for communicating and for sharing ideas. When complete, all Maryland lodges will be electronically linked.

Brethren, to be publicly appreciated, we must be publicly visible. This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase Freemasonry in our communities. In so doing, we will proclaim our dedication to Masonry's enduring principles and to rejoice in our good fortune in being affiliated with the world's greatest fraternity. When the Millennium Committee calls on your lodge to participate in the many Y2K activities planned during the next year and a half, just say "yes." You won't regret it.



Cryptic Walk of Remembrance

The Millennium is fast upon us, and to mark this milestone a monument honoring the grand Council of Royal & Select Masters of Maryland will be erected on the grounds of the Grand Lodge of Maryland at Bonnie Blink in Hunt Valley. Further embellishments will include a time capsule and ornamental brick path, the "Walk of Remembrance," surrounding the monument and leading to the old Grand Lodge's cornerstone which has been resituated from North Charles Street. This project, a fund raiser for the Maryland Grand Lodge, is the brain child of Edward A. Foreman, Jr., who will be come Most Illustrious Grand Master of the Grand Council, R.&S.M. at the millenium's turn.

The time capsule, containing contemporary artifacts and regalia of Cryptic Masonry and a scroll of remembrance, will be buried under the monument on the day of its dedication, June 10, 2000, for unearthing and opening 100 years hence.

Masons everywhere are invited to support the Grand Lodge by making their mark on history:

BE A BRICK—BUY A BRICK!

Show your support for the ongoing work of the Grand Lodge with your purchase of a brick (or bricks) to be placed in the "Walk of Remembrance." Each will have room for three lines of inscription (15 characters per line). Patrons

may purchase a brick for themselves or in memory of another at \$25 per brick. you may purchase as many as you like while supplies last. Another option: for \$10, your name (or another's) will be added to the scroll of remembrance, or you may choose to do both at a combined cost of \$30. However you do it, your name will be come a permanent visible part of the history of the Maryland Grand Lodge, and your purchase will be of lasting benefit to this wonderful place.

For more information about this unique project, contact Robert Foreman, Chairman, 410-876-3957, RLake4MAN@aol.com, or Richmond Laney, Sales Chairman, 301-384-2200, RichmondCL@juno.com.

The 365 Club

Every now and then you hear about an idea that's so good you know it's going to work (and you wish you had thought of it yourself). Our Grand Secretary, Jack R. Frazier, has had one of those strokes of genius: "The 365 Club." Membership is open to any Mason who thinks our fraternity is worth 1¢ a day or \$3.65 a year. Dues can be paid directly to the Grand Lodge through Bro. Frazier, and all proceeds will be put in the endowment of the John Coats Memorial Lodge. (This is the fund that supports the day-to-day activities of the Grand Lodge.) If each of the 23,000 Masons in Maryland thought the Craft was worth 1¢ a day to them, the John Coats endowment would grow by \$75,000 a year! What's it worth to you?

Apron Talk at Patmos No. 70

Tuesday, April 20, was a special evening at Patmos Lodge 70, meeting alternately in Columbia and Savage. Ms. Barbara Franco, Executive Director of the History Society of Washington, DC spoke to members of Patmos, their families, and friends on decorated Masonic aprons. The program was one of a series of special events planned by the Master, James B. Coker.

The Lodge opened promptly at 7:30 PM, quickly conducted its necessary business, adjourned, and invited in their guests shortly after 8:00 for the fascinating program.

Ms. Franco was curator at the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum of our National Heritage in Lexington, Massachusetts. The museum specializes in all aspects of American life, and it has a permanent exhibit of fraternal materials. Ms. Franco staged a special exhibit on early American Masonic aprons while she was there, and she is considered the national expert on the subject..

Her talk traced the development of decorated aprons from a home craft prepared by wives and female relatives of Masons to custom-made items manufactured by milliners to mass-produced factory aprons. This fascinating talk was illustrated with dozens of slides.

If you missed Ms. Franco's excellent presentation, it will be repeated on October 29 at the 20th anniversary of the Maryland Masonic Research Society. Details will follow.



Your Fraternity at Work

Our Masonic fraternity has long supported research and treatment of a wide range of illnesses, injuries, and dysfunctions in children. More recently the youth in our country have been plagued with social afflictions such as drug abuse, poverty, and domestic problems.

Masonic Charities of Maryland (MCM) is dedicated to caring for Maryland's youth by helping teachers, students, and their families recognize and overcome physical and substance abuse problems and by offering financial assistance for promising students to continue their education with scholarships enabling them to go on to college. The letter from Dr. Nancy Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools is testimony to the fine support we are providing to education in Maryland.

MCM is one of only two tax-exempt 501(C3) Masonic charities in Maryland (the other is the Maryland Masonic Homes, Bonnie Blink). All contributions to Masonic Charities of Maryland help support its important work in the state. The Masonic scholarships given in each Maryland school district are funded by MCM.

This is Masonry at its finest—helping our youth prepare for the future. Your contributions and those of your Lodge are part of this vital philanthropy. It is through the generosity of Maryland Masons and Lodges that Masonic Charities continues its important work.



Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

Maryland State Department of
EDUCATION

Schools for Success

200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
Phone (410) 767-0100
TTY/TDD (410) 333-6442

January 26, 1999

Mr. Francis E. Larrimore
Most Worshipful Grand Master
Grand Lodge of AF&AM of Maryland
304 International Circle
Cockeysville, MD 21030

Dear Mr. Larrimore:

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the many excellent contributions made by Masonic Charities of Maryland, Inc. to the children and families of Maryland. The generous support provided by Masonic Charities has allowed us to realize initiatives such as the Maryland Student Assistance Program which began in 1987. All 24 school systems have a Student Assistance Program designed to intervene with students and families who are experiencing difficulties with alcohol and other drugs.

You'll be happy to know that in the last three years, more than 1000 additional school team members have been trained to work with existing school-based teams in more than 350 schools across the State. Masonic Charities of Maryland has provided more than \$400,000, which has been used to implement and sustain this fine program.

Another program supported by your organization is the Educational Grant Program, which awards scholarships to deserving youth in all 24 school systems. We are especially pleased to learn that this year there is a commitment by the Masons to increase the number of available \$1,000 scholarships from 24 to 48 across the State. We also thank you for making awards to students regardless of race, religion or nationality and without requiring a connection to Masonry.

Please accept my gratitude for your generous support of educational opportunities for Maryland students and their families. I commend you and your organization for the cooperative and successful partnership forged between the Maryland State Department of Education and the Masonic Charities of Maryland, Inc.

Sincerely yours,

Nancy S. Grasmick
Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

NSG/lr

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Lodge _____ No. _____

Masonic Charities of Maryland
409 Washington Ave., Suite 900
Towson, MD 21204

Name _____

Address _____



New Developments at Bonnie Blink

The Maryland Masonic Homes is a retirement community that originated in the 1930s with the commitment by the Grand Lodge to deliver quality of life and care to eligible Maryland Master Masons and their eligible dependents. Our original mission of assisting those who had marginal means by which to support themselves has expanded to meet the growing needs of our fraternity. As in the beginning, we are committed to delivering a high, yet affordable, quality of life and care in an enjoyable, peaceful, serene, safe, and spiritually enriched retirement environment.

Most Maryland Masons know of Bonnie Blink as the site of the annual Harvest Home Day. This fall celebration recalls the days when Lodges joined in husking corn for winter feed for the dairy herds. The cows have long left the grounds, but the early morning tradition of pancakes, sausages, and coffee continues. Also continuing and evolving is the tradition of excellent care for Masons and their dependents.

Bonnie Blink is managed by the Board of Trustees, who are elected by the Grand Lodge. The Trustees are constantly looking for ways to make Bonnie Blink attractive to our guests. There are now several options for living at Bonnie Blink, options that were not available too long ago. A brief summary is presented here. For more information, call 410-527-1111.

Independent Living

Thirty-five uniquely designed independent living apartments with breath-taking views of Baltimore County and surrounding acreage avail themselves to our qualifying Masonic families. Apartments, which are located in the Doric building, create easy accessibility to all activities and locations. Unique floor plans of one and two bedroom apartments boast living space from 335 to 1,180 square feet.

Assisted Living

Our retirement community would not be complete without our new Assisted Living Unit located on five floors of the Ionic Building. This thirty-four room area combines a home-like setting with the advantage of health care. Each room is able to accommodate two persons, these rooms range in size from 168 to 271 square feet. Equipped with a bath, ample closet space, and a beautiful view, these rooms are "homey" while providing daily or occasional assistance with some functions of daily living.

Healthcare Center

Whether the health needs are long term, require overnight observation, or a rehabilitation stay, the Healthcare Center can accomplish the task. Spacious semi-private and private rooms accentuate the commitment to peaceful, quality care in our 130 bed nursing facility. The Healthcare Center is on three floors of the Corinthian Building. Each room is equipped with a bathroom,

closet, and may be furnished by the guests to maintain a home-like atmosphere. Nursing Care is just moments away if needed.

Payment Options

Life Care is the option most of us know, where guests surrender all current real or personal property and current and future income in exchange for quality life care. *Private Pay* lets residents pay a fee for either Independent Living, Assisted Living, or Healthcare. The entrance fee is 90% refundable upon discharge and re-occupancy of the unit.

Your Masonic Homes

The next time you're "on the hill," whether for a Lodge meeting or pancakes and sausages, take a moment to consider the proud tradition of Maryland Masons. We have made a promise to care for our members and their eligible dependents, and we are keeping that promise. Bonnie Blink provides dignified, complete care for its residents, and this is due to the support of Maryland Master Masons.

If you'd like to know more about the homes, all you have to do is to ask. You can have a tour of the facility or receive more detailed written information. Whether you're considering moving to Bonnie Blink or supporting the homes with a gift, the Grand Lodge of Maryland wants you to know about the history and tradition represented by the "castle" on the hill. Bonnie Blink is *your* Masonic home.



Wallace McLeod, P.S.G.W., Ontario

The Charges of a Freemason. In our Constitution (Ontario) in Section 371, we read the words, “Every newly initiated candidate shall be presented with a copy of the Book of Constitution...” One hopes that a new Mason will become familiar with our regulations by reading through this book. But if he does so, he may be puzzled by the first section of Part VI, which is entitled, “The Charges of a Freemason, Extracted from the Ancient Records of Lodges throughout the World, for the Use of Lodges.”

In this section, he will find some parts that sound familiar, a bit like the ritual. “The persons made Masons and admitted members of a lodge must be good and true men, free born, and of a mature and discreet age and sound judgment, no bondsmen, no women, no immoral or scandalous men, but of good report.”

But what is he to make of other portions? “The Master, knowing himself to be able of cunning, shall undertake the lord’s work as reasonably as possible.”

Such rules as this cannot apply in any literal sense to most of us. Why then are they printed for every Mason? The reason is historical. In its present form most of the wording of this section goes back two hundred and seventy-five years. In 1723, the Reverend James Anderson, with the approval of his Grand Lodge, published the most influential work on Masonry ever printed,

the first book of *The Constitutions of the Free-Masons*. He included a section called “The Charges of a Free-Mason, extracted from The ancient Records of Lodges beyond Sea, and of those in *England, Scotland, and Ireland*, for the Use of the *Lodges* in London.” Apart from a number of tiny changes, the modern wording is identical.

Anderson’s Sources. But here too we must ask the same question. Why did this book of Constitutions, designed for non-operative Masons, include rules that apply to operative masons? And where did Anderson find this material? The second edition of his *Constitutions*, printed in 1738, tells a bit more. At the Annual Festival on June 24, 1718, when the Grand Lodge was one year old, the Grand Master “desired any Brethren to bring to the Grand Lodge any old Writings and Records concerning Masons and Masonry in order to shew the Usages of ancient Times; And this Year several old Copies of the Gothic Constitutions were produced and collated.”

And in September 1721, the Grand Master and the Grand Lodge, “finding Fault with all the Copies of the old Gothic Constitutions, order’d Brother James Anderson, A.M., to digest the same in a new and better Method.” The end result of his labors was the book of Constitutions, which was duly approved by the Grand Lodge, and printed in 1723. And James Anderson did make use of the old manuscripts that he called “the Old Gothic Constitutions.” We can tell from the

wording of his text that by the time of his second edition he had obtained access to at least six of them, and that he quoted and paraphrased them quite extensively.

The Old Charges: Number, Date, Location, Form. But what are these “Old Gothic Constitutions”—also known as the “Old Charges” and the “Old Manuscript Constitutions”? In all, 119 copies have survived, all going back to the same original, and there are references to 15 more that are lost. New versions are turning up all the time; in the last ten years, six more have come to our attention.

Nearly two-thirds of them are earlier than the first Grand Lodge of 1717—perhaps as many as 75. Fifty-five go back before 1700. Four were written about 1600, one is dated 1583, one is about 1400 or 1410, and one goes all the way back to 1390.

Most are located in England; London alone has more than fifty. Thirteen are in Scotland—none of them earlier than 1650; four are in the United States; one was last heard of in Germany; and one has wandered to Canada—the Scarborough Manuscript of about 1700.

The Old Charges present various aspects. About fourteen are known only from printed transcripts. A few are written on separate sheets of paper or vellum; about thirty-three are written on sheets that are fastened together in book form; but the typical form, represented by more than fifty versions, is a scroll or roll of paper or parchment, between three and fourteen inches wide, and

The “Old Charges”



anything up to fourteen and a half feet in length.

Contents. Let us summarize the contents, with a few typical examples of the wording.

They nearly all begin with an Invocation: “The might of the Father of Heaven, with the wisdom of the glorious Son, through the grace and goodness of the Holy Ghost, that be three persons in one Godhead, be with us at our beginning, and give us grace so to govern us here in our living that we may come to His bliss that never shall have ending. Amen.”

Then comes an announcement of the purpose and contents, followed by a brief description of the Seven Liberal Arts or Sciences, one of which is Geometry, or Masonry. Then we have a proof of the fundamental nature of Geometry.

[Then there is an extended Traditional History of Geometry, Masonry, and Architecture, taking up over half of the text. It is based in the first instance on the Bible. The art of building was invented, we are told, before Noah’s Flood, by Jabal; and metal-founding was discovered by his brother Tubal-cain. They knew that God would send destruction for sin, so they wrote their arts on Two Great Pillars, that were found after the Flood. Then we hear about Nimrod, and the Tower of Babel; and how Abraham went to Egypt, and taught the Liberal Arts and Sciences to the Egyptians; and how he had a student Euclid; and then how King David loved Masons well; how Solomon built the Temple, with the help of King Hiram and his

Master Builder. One man who worked at Solomon’s Temple later went to France, and taught the art to Charles Martel; subsequently the Craft was brought to England, in the time of Saint Alban; and finally about the year 930, Prince Edwin called a great assembly of Masons in the city of York, and established the regulations used “from that day until this time.”]

(Note: Read this section as an ancient document, but remember, the evolution of Masonry is not historically accurate.)

Next we have the manner of taking the oath: “Then let one of the elders hold the Book, so that he or they may place their hands upon the Book, and then the rules ought to be read.”

Then comes the admonition: “Every man that is a Mason take right good heed to these charges, if that you find yourselves guilty in any of these, that you may amend you against God. And especially ye that are to be charged, take good heed that ye may keep these charges, for it is a great peril for a man to foreswear himself upon a Book.”

Next come the regulations or Charges proper. Some are to administer the trade: “No Master shall take upon him no lord’s work, nor no other man’s work, but that he know himself able and cunning to perform the same....” These are the ones that are still quoted in “The Charges of a FreeMason.” Others do not concern trade matters at all, but are intended to regulate behavior.

No doubt they were essential in a community of tradesmen who were thrown together in close proximity for twenty-four hours a day. Still, they are unexpected, and serve to mark the masons’ lodge as different from most other craft organizations. “No Fellow [is to] slander another behind his back, to make him lose his good name or his worldly goods.” And also that “no Mason shall play at hazard or at dice.”

Finally comes the Oath: “These charges that we have rehearsed, and all other that belong to Masonry, ye shall keep, so help you God and Halidom, and by this Book to your power. Amen.”

What were they used for? In its most common version, the text is about 3,500 words long. To copy it out by hand represents a substantial investment of time and effort, and yet it was copied repeatedly. In the circumstances, it is fair to ask what the Old Charges were used for. To begin with, the rules and orders served a practical purpose. They clearly were intended to regulate the Craft.

We also know that occasionally the manuscripts were treated like a Warrant or Constitution. One early Scottish lodge had a copy of the Old Charges, written on a single sheet of parchment; it had been mounted and framed, and the members believed that their meetings would not be legal unless it was exhibited in the lodge room.

In a sense, the Old Charges also
Continued on p. 14



(Continued from p. 13)

served as The Work, because they described certain procedures that were to be followed when any man was made a Mason, and they included little bits of ritual, such as the Invocation and the Obligation.

We see then that they provided *ordinance, authority, and ritual*, three practical matters. But as well they must have had a psychological effect. They inculcated in masons a sense of respect and reverence for their craft. They told how it went back before the Flood, how it was connected with famous buildings in the Sacred Writings, and how it could number among its votaries even monarchs themselves. This was no servile trade of recent devising, but an ancient and honorable institution.

Bro. Wallace McLeod is a member and Past Master of Mizpah Lodge No. 572, Toronto, Canada, and of Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076, London, England, the premier Lodge of research; he is the Grand Historian of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario.

This article is from the September 1998 *Short Talk Bulletin*, vol. 76, No. 9, published monthly by the Masonic Service Association of North America, 8120 Fenton St., Silver Spring, MD 20910-4785, 301-588-4010, www.msana.com, \$4.00 per year.

The Short Talk Bulletin is an excellent source of interesting and informative Masonic information. Each issue is designed to be a "short talk" at a Lodge meeting.

Grand Master's Accelerated Class

Saturday, June 19, will be a special day in Maryland Masonry. Grand Master Francis E. Larrimore is holding an "accelerated class." The three degrees of Symbolic Masonry will be conferred in one day on over 100 candidates. The planning for this event is intensive and will guarantee it is successful.

Men today are busy: busy with work, busy with family, and busy in their community. They are so busy that many don't have the time to go through the degrees of Masonry in the usual manner. Rather than loose these potentially active Masons, the Grand Master is trying an innovative solution: maintain the moral lessons but reduce the time. The result will be seen on June 19 at the Grand Lodge building.

Each candidate must be elected to membership in a Maryland Lodge following a regular petition and investigation. If the candidate chooses, he can participate in the special class on June 19. Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Masons who have not had the time to advance may also join the class.

While the time between degrees has been shortened considerably, a great effort is being made to emphasize teaching these new Masons what they must know about their new fraternity. To this end an excellent training book has been prepared by the Grand Lodge. It will be given to each candidate on June 19, and it may be purchased any inter-

ested Maryland Masons.

Candidates on June 19 will not learn the first and second degree catechisms, but they must pass a written exam before advancing to the next degree. They will be required to learn the Master Mason's catechism.

Each candidate will be assigned a mentor who will be with him during the ceremonies. The mentor will help him understand the lessons of the degrees and will take an active part in the ceremonies. When the day is done, it is hoped that the candidates will have gained a better understanding of what Masonry means. The candidates book can be studied at home to help with the learning.

Accelerated classes have been tried in other jurisdictions, and the results are positive. New Masons are returning to the lodges with questions and enthusiasm. In many cases these new members are becoming involved in the Lodge and are starting the activity by learning the catechisms they missed.

While an accelerated class may seem like a radical idea, it is actually returning to earlier customs. Centuries ago it was not uncommon to find sailors receiving their degrees in one or two evenings while they were in port. The Lodges accommodated work schedules then, just as we are accommodating out new members now.

If you would like to witness this historic event, get the details from your Lodge secretary or from the Grand Secretary's office.



Herchenrother Receives Certificate

Bill Herchenrother, long-time stalwart of the Grand Lodge, received a certificate from the Grand Lodge making him a "Member Emeritus of the Board of Trustees." This was in recognition of his years of faithful service to the Grand Lodge. Making the presentation was M.W. Francis E. Larrimore, Grand Master.

Townshend Night at Centennial Lodge

Centennial Lodge # 174 of Upper Marlboro, Maryland, recently dedicated their regular meeting in honor of the many members of the Townshend family who have belonged to the organization.

The officers for the evening were all Townshend family members: Worshipful Master, Woodrow W. Townshend, Sr., P.M.; Senior Warden, Kenneth S. Rose, Sr., P.M.; Junior

Warden, John W. Tippet, Sr., P.M.; Senior Deacon, Woodrow W. Townshend, III; Junior Deacon, Daniel B. Townshend; Senior Steward John W. Tippet, Jr.; Junior Steward, Harry W. Townshend, Jr.; Chaplain, Donald G. Cooke.

Past Master Townshend gave a talk on the history of Centennial Lodge telling how it was chartered in 1877 at Brandywine, Maryland, moved to Cheltenham four years later, and finally moved to Upper Marlboro. Meetings in Upper Marlboro were first held in the old Bowie Mansion on Main St. between Water St. and the old Court House and are now held at its present location on Croom Station Road. His grandfather, Samuel G. Townshend, Sr. was the first Master Mason raised in Centennial Lodge in 1877, and since that time, the records of the lodge show many men of this family have been members and officers.

A portion of Mr. Townshend's talk:

The Baltimore and Potomac Railroad (later to become the Pennsylvania Railroad) completed a track to Popes Creek, Md. and ran its first train into Charles County on January 1, 1873. This brought Southern Maryland into the overall economic scheme of the state which was expanding mostly as a result of a railroad construction program linking the Port of Baltimore to the resources of the new middle west.

As a result of the railroad being in operation in 1873, the little village of Brandywine was expected to develop into quite a town. On February 24, 1877, Centennial Lodge

No. 174 was issued a dispensation to organize and on May 9, 1877, a charter was granted. The name was suggested by Brother William Montgomery Wilson, the first secretary, who had just returned from the Philadelphia Celebration of the Centennial of American Independence. The lodge met on the second floor of the building known in my early years as the Bean & Early General Store (still in use, but now an antique store) and is located on the northwest corner of Brandywine Road and the railroad track.

The Baltimore and Potomac Railroad never crossed the Potomac river and the railroad into St. Mary's County was built only as far as Mechanicsville, 21 miles from Brandywine, so the expected great development did not occur. Along with the community, Centennial Lodge did not develop beyond the initiation and affiliation of eight members in twelve years. Finally in 1889, with only nine members on its roster, our lodge in Brandywine, returned its Charter and ceased to operate.

After a four year Interval, 1889 to 1891, Brother John W. Horn, Past Junior Grand Warden secured a dispensation to revive Centennial Lodge No.174 and meet at Cheltenham, Maryland in a building on the grounds of the House of Reformation, now known as Boys Village of Maryland. Brother Horn at that time was Superintendent of the House of Reformation. The charter was restored to Centennial Lodge on May 10, 1893.

Maryland Masonic Calendar



May 1999

- 17 Semi-annual Communication, Grand Lodge of Maryland
- 22 Maryland Masonic Research Society, Annapolis Lodge, 162 Conduit St., 1:00 pm.

June 1999

- 12 Annual Family Day picnic, 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. All family, friends, and neighbors welcomed. Food provided. \$5.00 donation per adult
- 19 **Grand Master's Accelerated Class, Grand Lodge, Bonnie Blink. 8:30 am, donuts & coffee; 9:00 am, degrees start.**

- 26 Dedication of world's largest square and compasses at G.W. Masonic National Monument, Alexandria, Va. 3:00 pm

July 1999

- 4 Independence Day Celebration at Grand Lodge: pic nic dinner and fireworks. Bring your friends and a blanket. Details in inside article.
- 24 Grand Master's Ball, 7:00 pm to 12:00 am. \$40.00 per person, dinner included

August 1999

- 8 Crab Feast sponsored by John Coates Memorial Lodge on Grand Lodge grounds. Tickets available from your Lodge.

September 1999

- 18 Harvest Home Day, Bonnie Blink, Maryland Masonic Homes, 6:00–10:00 am. Male family, friends, and neighbors are welcomed.

October 1999

- 29 20th Anniversary Celebration, Maryland Masonic Research Society. Barbara Franco will speak on 18th-century decorated Masonic Aprons

November 1999

- 15 Annual Communication, Grand Lodge of Maryland

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