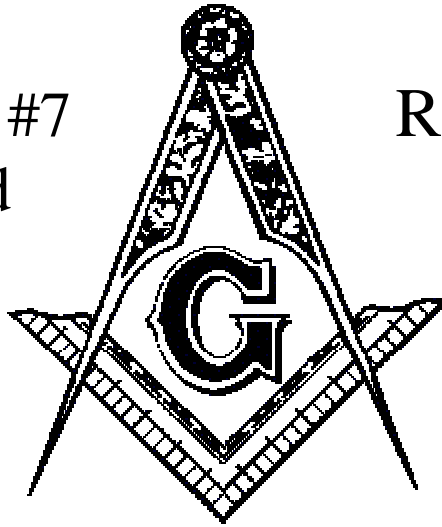


# Matanuska Lodge #7 Free and Accepted Masons of Alaska

1022 South Cobb Street  
Palmer, Alaska



## Reflections from the East

Vol. 2 No. 4  
July 29, 2001

**B**rethren, At the June meeting of Iditarod Lodge #20, it was decided to give a one day ritual class for all brothers who have been initiated and are at various stages in their degree work. The Grand Master has given special dispensation for Iditarod #20 to be the host Lodge and perform courtesy work for all other Lodges on 28 July, 2001, starting at 10:00 A.M. W.B. Russell W. Sanders is the brother to contact for Matanuska #7, Phone # 745-1651.

At our July meeting it was decided to have a cornerstone laying ceremony before the end of the current year. The cornerstone would commemorate the 50 year anniversary of Matanuska Lodge #7. All things considered, 15 September has been picked as a tentative date for the ceremony. That is, if we can pull things together by then.

Our August meeting will be a Step-up-Night and the September meeting will be Past Masters Night.

Fraternally,

W M Larry D. Wright



**Mt. Morris Lodge #535, F&A.M.**  
Mt. Morris, Michigan 48458  
Teddie N. Hoyt, WM 2001  
(517) 823-2376 e-mail: [teddie1@tds.net](mailto:teddie1@tds.net)  
Lenzy R. Lewis, PM, Secy.  
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**Brother Alaskan Masons, if you're ever in Michigan, We would be honored to have you visit our Lodge!**

**R**ecent Past: A one day ritual class was held at Bro. Bruno Wiita's homestead off Fairview Loop Road in Wasilla, on Saturday, July 28. This was a District 5 event under special dispensation from the Grand Master and in accordance with the Alaska Masonic Code. Twenty candidates from Matanuska #7, Glacier #10, Eagle River #13, Aurora #15, and Iditarod #20 were raised to the

Sublime Degree of a Master Mason. Seven of the candidates were from Matanuska Lodge and included:

Melton Jones	Jay M. Kertula
Douglas Mills	Harold D. Murphy
Ronald J. Polstra	William Tull
Daniel L. Wineiger	

The candidates had already been initiated in their various lodges, were conducted through the 2<sup>nd</sup> degree by Iditarod Lodge, and through the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree by Eagle River Lodge. During the break between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> degrees, Edward Manning, a member of Matanuska #7 who had previously been raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason, gave his proficiency in a committee which included the Grand Master.



**Grand Master's One Day Class  
Bruno Wiita's Homestead, July 28, 2001**

Those in attendance included, M W Charles Corbin, R W Steven Cox, R W L.V. "Joe" Dees, a District Deputy from the Grand Lodge of Virginia, many other Grand Officers from the M W Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Alaska, and other distinguished guests.

In addition to providing candidates, members from Matanuska Lodge provided logistics support and Lodge paraphernalia, assisted in the degree work, and provided a sumptuous lunch during the break between degrees. Hats off to W Russell W. Sanders for his excellent coordination and talent in the kitchen.

**Mat Su Shrine Club**  
**The First Monday of Every Month**  
**7:00 PM, Wasilla Amvets**  
**William Goodwin Jr., President**  
**(907) 376-1274**

**N**ear Future: The August stated meeting of Matanuska Lodge #7 will be at 7:30 PM on August 7, 2001. The August stated meeting will be "Step-up-Night" with Junior Warden, Jim Summers sitting in the East.

**August Stated Meeting**

Dinner will be served at 6:30 before the stated meeting.  
 Please come and share in the fellowship.

The September stated meeting of Matanuska Lodge #7 will be at 7:30 PM on September 4, 2001. The September stated meeting will be "Past Master's Night". Come and see what these Old Guys can do.

On Saturday, September 15, the Grand Master will lay a cornerstone at Matanuska Lodge in celebration of the Lodges half centennial. The committee is still looking for assistance in coordinating this event. If you are willing to help, please contact the Worshipful Master at 376-8240.

**Palmer Assembly No. 7**  
**International Order of Rainbow for**  
**Girls**

**The First and Third Friday**  
**7:00 P.M., Palmer Masonic Temple**  
**Lanita James, Mother Advisor**  
**907-376-3957**

**Beth Cline, Rainbow Board Chairman**  
**907-745-2011**

**N**ecrology: Brothers all: The message below has been forwarded to me to be sent to the 'AK Masons' list. The message is from Bro. Alexander Cheshev, Senior Warden of Pacific Rim Lodge No. 12 of Vladivostok, Russia. It is in regard to the Russian plane that crashed recently with no survivors.

Thomas V. Houser  
 July 5, 2001

**Slava Dokuchaev**

"We have lost our dear Brother Slava Dokuchaev. He perished 03 July, flying from Yekaterinburg to Vladivostok. His flight crashed near Irkutsk. I believe you can read about this horrible catastrophe on the internet or in the newspaper. "I cannot believe this happened; just a few days ago I was talking to Slava in Moscow where we attended Grand Lodge of Russia meeting. "Yesterday we gathered the members of Pacific

Rim Lodge and discussed about helping Slava's family. Now we are waiting for when his family returns to Vladivostok from Irkutsk (where the catastrophe took place). "Pray for our Brother Slava Dokuchaev." Brother Slava was treasurer of PRL12 and builder of the new lodge building in Vladivostok.

**Herbert T. "Steve" Stephens**

May10, 1929 – June 1,2001

Herbert Theodore "Steve" Stephens, 72, died June 1, 2001, at his home in Wasilla. A memorial service was at the Matanuska Lodge No. 7, on South Cobb Street in Palmer.

Mr. Stephens was born May 10, 1929, in Long Beach, Calif. He graduated from San Bernardino College. He served as a first lieutenant in the 82nd Airborne Division of the Army during the Korean conflict and as a captain in Air America during the Vietnam War.

Mr. Stephens moved to Alaska in 1979 and lived with his wife, Bonna, in Anchorage, Nenana, Barrow, Palmer and Wasilla. He worked as a pilot for Great Northern Airlines and retired in 1995. He was a member of the Masons, Moose, Elks, American Legion Post and Shiners. He was also a member of National Sojourners, Alaska No. 355.

His family said: "Steve loved books and reading. He had a love of flying. He was a qualified member of OX5 Aviation Pioneers, which he was very proud of. He was an educated man and a free thinker. He was a man to be so very proud of." Mr. Stephens is survived by his wife, Bonna Stephens of Wasilla; and sons, Nicholas of Ontario, Calif., and Steve of Corpus Christi, Texas.

Arrangements were by Valley Funeral Home & Crematory of Wasilla.

**Mat Su Chapter Order of DeMolay**  
**The Second and Fourth Wednesday**  
**7:00 P.M., Palmer Masonic Temple**  
**Max VanLue, Master Counselor**  
**907-892-3422**  
**Charlie Phipps, Scribe**  
**907-376-4694**

**Light**

**Advancement Hurried.** Nothing can be more certain than that the proper qualifications of a candidate for admission into the mysteries of Freemasonry, and the necessary proficiency of a Mason who seeks advancement to a higher degree, are the two great bulwarks which are to protect the purity and integrity of our Institution. Indeed, we know not which is the more hurtful to admit an applicant who is unworthy, or to promote a candidate who is ignorant of his first lessons. The one affects the external, the other the internal character of the Institution. The one brings discredit upon the Order among the profane, who already regard us, too often with suspicion and dislike; the other introduces ignorance and incapacity into our ranks and dishonors the science of Masonry in our own eyes. The one covers our walls with imperfect

and worthless stones, which mar the outward beauty and impair the strength of our temple; the other fills our interior apartments with confusion and disorder, and leaves the edifice, though externally strong, both inefficient and inappropriate for its destined uses.

But, to the candidate himself, a too hurried advancement is often attended with the most disastrous effects. As in geometry, so in Masonry, there is no "royal road" to perfection. A knowledge of its principles and its science, and consequently an acquaintance with its beauties, can only be acquired by long and diligent study. To the careless observer it seldom offers, at a hasty glance, much to attract his attention or secure his interest. The gold must be deprived, by careful manipulation, of the dark and worthless ore which surrounds and envelops it, before its metallic luster and value can be seen and appreciated.

Hence, the candidate who hurriedly passes through his degrees without a due examination of the moral and intellectual purposes of each, arrives at the summit of our edifice without a due and necessary appreciation of the general symmetry and connection that pervade the whole system. The candidate, thus hurried through the elements of our science, and unprepared, by a knowledge of its fundamental principles, for the reception and comprehension of the corollaries which are to be deduced from them, is apt to view the whole system as "a rude and indigested mass" of frivolous ceremonies and puerile conceits, whose intrinsic value will not adequately pay him for the time, the trouble, and expense that he has incurred in his forced initiation. To him, Masonry is as incomprehensible as was the veiled statue of Isis to its blind worshipers, and he becomes, in consequence, either a useless drone in our hive, or speedily retires in disgust from all participation in our labors.

But the candidate who by slow and painful steps has proceeded through each apartment of our mystic Temple, from its porch to its sanctuary, pausing in his progress to admire the beauties and to study the uses of each learning, as he advances, "line upon line; and precept upon precept," is gradually and almost imperceptibly imbued with so much admiration of the Institution, so much love for its principles, so much just appreciation of its design as a conservator of divine truth, and an agent of human civilization, that he is inclined, on beholding, at last, the whole beauty of the finished building, to exclaim, as did the wondering Queen of Sheba: "A Most Excellent Master must have done all this!"

The usage in many jurisdictions of the United States, when the question is asked in the ritual whether the candidate has made suitable proficiency in his preceding degree, is to reply, "Such as time and circumstances would permit." We have no doubt that this was an innovation originally invented to evade the law, which has always required a due proficiency. To such a question no other answer ought to be given than the positive and unequivocal one that "he has." Neither "time nor circumstances" should be permitted to interfere with his attainment of the necessary knowledge, or excuse its absence. This, with the wholesome rule, very generally existing, which requires an interval between the conferring of the degrees, would go far to remedy the evil

of too hurried and unqualified advancement, of which all intelligent Masons are now complaining.

*From: An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences, by Albert G. Mackey, M.D., 33°, The*

*Masonic History Co., New York, 1913.*

**C**losing Thoughts: "One-Day Class" versus "Advancement Hurried": During the Grand Master's visits to the constituent lodges in the Grand Lodge of Alaska this year, he was heard to remark that, in the twenty year history of the Grand Lodge, membership increased only during one year. The rest of the time, membership decreased steadily through death and demits. The Grand Master stated that, during the one year in which there was a noted increase in membership, there was a one-day ritual class where brothers were initiated, passed, and raised in one day. The only proficiency required of these brothers was the modes of recognition (step, due guard and sign, grip and word) of each Degree. Many have stated that times are changing and Masonry must also change if it wants to continue to attract membership.

This attitude contradicts Mackey who states, ". . . the candidate who hurriedly passes through his degrees without a due examination of the moral and intellectual purpose of each . . . becomes either a useless drone in our hive, or speedily retires in disgust from all participation in our labors." This cannot be good, for, if Mackey is right, instead of increasing the numbers of enlightened masons, we may actually be diluting our order and hastening its demise.

What can we do then to increase our numbers, while at the same time ensuring that our new initiates become well versed in the ancient mysteries of our order? What has worked over the past several hundreds of years doesn't seem to be working now, and we find that we must change in order for Masonry to survive. However, let us not change for change sake. Let us take a long and reasoned look at our order and propose those changes, which will enhance and improve it instead of merely making it more accessible.

W John "Bo" Cline, editor

*There is no national or international Masonic authority. Freemasonry in North America is governed by independent legislative bodies known as Grand Lodges who exercise absolute Masonic authority within a state or province.*

*Writers may express their opinions about the Fraternity, but their statements are not authoritative. Only Grand Lodges can make authoritative statements, and these apply only to their members.*

