



Light Of The Great Land

Volume 2, Issue 1

January 2010

Grand Master's Message Stewardship

My tenure as Grand Master of Masons in Alaska is quickly drawing to a close. This has been a truly wonderful and rewarding experience, and I have thoroughly enjoyed the time I have spent traveling throughout our jurisdiction and sharing fellowship with all of the brethren. That's not to say that it hasn't had its challenges and been a lot of hard work. When I was installed as your Grand Master, I promised you that I would work hard to earn your trust. You see, I felt that by the confidence you reposed in me, it was my duty to assume the stewardship of Grand Lodge; it was my responsibility to properly utilize and develop Grand Lodge's resources, including its officers and members, its property and its financial assets to assure its long term prosperity. I accepted this responsibility willingly, for I knew I would not have to accomplish it alone. I knew that by your wisdom, you had elected talented and well qualified officers to assist me in my tasks. I, also, knew that I had appointed brethren with the necessary skills as officers and committeemen of Grand Lodge to manage our various programs. Your confidence and mine have been well placed, for together we have accomplished some great things this year.

The stewardship of Grand Lodge is something I take seriously, but stewardship is not my burden alone. Every Mason has a responsibility to look after our fraternity, both for themselves and for future generations.

The Grand Lodge of Alaska is made up of all of the constituent Lodges it represents; it is made up of all Alaska Masons (EAs, FCs, and MMs) who reside in those Lodges;

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The Mystical Tie That Binds Us All (Part 3)

A Research Paper

By VWB Roger Hansen

Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Alaska

CONCLUSIONS

If you look at the earlier years when comparatively few people had any degree of education, one of the few means of conveying information, ideas, emotions, and feelings was through the use of symbols. The crown would be of royalty, the scepter of power, the level of equality, the plumb of uprightness, and the square of rectitude. Even our numbering system, when combined in different ways, conveys different meanings.

If we try to define the cable tow, we find that either many dictionaries are missing this term, or try to explain it as a Masonic term only and not very accurately at all. Masonry has its own vocabulary and our words are not always defined for the benefit of the profane.

Even though there is no consensus as to the exact country of origin and definition of the term, it is generally accepted to mean some kind of rope used for drawing or leading something.

In nearly all of the mythological occurrences, secret religions, and fraternities of the ancient medieval world, the cable tow was used for a more or less practical purpose which inevitably came to be associated with symbolical meanings.

Freemasonry is much like the composition of a rope composed of many fibers to make a strong rope. This is symbolical of the Latin phrase "E Pluribus Unum"- out of many, one.

At our first glance, at the beginning of our Masonic journey,

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and to state it plainly, the Grand Lodge of Alaska is you. Although elevated to the leadership role for a short period, I serve at your will, as does every elected and appointed officer and committeeman within Grand Lodge. The selection of those who will lead this jurisdiction is your awesome responsibility. You have a duty, nay an obligation to select those that have the necessary knowledge, skills, and ability to lead Grand Lodge forward. You should seek out those among you who have the necessary ability, and encourage them to make themselves available. You should help support them, both expressively and financially, when they choose to do so. These obligations extend further, for you have a duty to support your Lodge to the greatest of your ability; a responsibility to elect those who are best qualified to lead your Lodge toward a prosperous future.

Stewardship of the Craft is an obligation of all Masons. The quality and nature of Freemasonry is the responsibility of every man who has knelt before our altars. I ask, therefore, that you look to your obligations and to become stewards of this great fraternity. ∞

The Mystical Tie... *Continued from page 1*

the cable tow was a mere means of removing a candidate if a certain condition was not met or if he did not want to advance any further. We find as we journey further into this Masonic profession that it is more than that. The release of the cable tow binds us to the Masonic institution and the release from darkness.

The cable tow is emblematical of the umbilical cord uniting all of us to our Masonic Lodge with no means of ever severing our Masonic obligations. It is a symbol of all those forces and compulsions which regulate a man's conduct from without and is not removed until the man is able to control and govern himself from within. It is also the sign of the pledge of the life of a man. He pledges his life to the service of the Craft and to the aid of his brother using all his power within his capabilities. It is that special cord running through our lives uniting with all the truth seekers and righteous lovers and all (you and me) servants of GOD and man.

WHAT IS THE LENGTH OF YOUR CABLE-TOW?
WHO KNOWS HOW FAR IT REACHES? ∞

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For her editorial reading, commenting, and punctuation correcting, I thank Margaret Coffman.

For his editorial reading, commenting, and punctuation correcting, I thank Bro. Eugene Mockerman.

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Junior Grand Wardens Message

By RW Jerry W. Pinion

I bring you Greetings from the South Brethren. We are approaching the time of year when we begin our trek to the Installation of Officers of our lodge as well as many of the other lodges that are within the length of our cable tow. I encourage every one of the Brethren to attend as many Lodge Installations as you can. By our attendance, we show our support to the Officers being installed and offer encouragement to those taking the responsibility of governing their lodge. For most Worshipful Masters and Wardens, this is their first time at leading a lodge and can be an awesome undertaking. For those of us who have sat in the Oriental Chair, it doesn't seem as overwhelming as it did when we first sat in the East. But, to the Master in the east for the first time, it can be a challenge.

I ask all of the Brethren to give the Worshipful Master, Wardens, and other officers of the lodge your full support, guidance, and encouragement.

I had the pleasure to be the Installing Marshall for my lodge Installation. I now have a deep appreciation for all of the Installing Officers, past and present, who have taken the time to assist their lodge and numerous others in installing lodge officers. The Installing Officers do a wonderful job and show how much they love this great fraternity by learning their parts to make each of our Installations a wonderful event that will be remembered for many years. Please tell them, Thank You for a job well done.

To all of the Worshipful Masters who have been or are being installed over the next month, cherish your year as Master of your Lodge. Make the meetings interesting. Try something different to make your Brethren want to come to lodge and bring another brother with them. Finally my Brethren, be ye all of one mind; live in peace; and may the God of Love and Peace delight to dwell with you and bless you. ∞

Masonic Charges

By John Bishop Grand Lecturer

We all are familiar with the various charges in our Masonic ritual, in each degree we give a charge to the candidate, and we close each meeting with a charge. So what is a charge? Do you give any thought to its meaning and instruction to you.

A charge; to impute; ascribe the responsibility for, to instruct authoritatively, to lay a command or injunction upon.

The charges in each degree first instruct the candidate in his conduct and obligations as a Mason, and do lay an injunction upon him. This holds true in both the Scottish and York Rite degrees as well. Additionally we close each meeting with a charge to all the Brothers. So let's take a look at the charges of the first three degrees, and closing charge.

In the first degree it is instructional in the social and moral virtues, in your duties to God, your neighbor and yourself. Your obligations as a citizen of your community and as an individual. It commands you as a Mason to "be faithful to your trust", "by adhering to the Ancient Landmarks", "and by refusing to recommend any one to a participation in our privileges unless you have strong reason to believe that, by similar fidelity he reflect honor upon our Ancient Institution". All of this instruction are reason for serious reflection by all of us, particularly the last when recommending or investigating a candidate for initiation into our ancient craft!

In the second degree the charge lays out a little background while encouraging the candidate in his Masonic character. It ascribes responsibility to our Laws, and our relations with our Brothers. It instructs in his duty and observance of our ancient usages and customs, and to be an example to others.

In the third degree, we again compliment and encourage the Brother with the trust we have placed in him. As a Master Mason he is authorized to correct, ("in the most tender manner") the irregularities of a Brother. To preserve the reputation of the Fraternity, and to respect his brothers and superiors. It commands him to remember his vows and not to betray his trusts!

The closing ritual in our Lodges in the most meaningful part of all our ritual, and the closing charge and benediction should leave us inspired in our Masonic character as we leave the Lodge. In the charge we reflect that the Lodge is a sacred retreat of friendship and virtue.

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Meaning that which happens there should not be shared with the outside world. We are reminded of our duties, and to remember a Brothers well fare, and do good unto all. This charge admonishes us to be tolerant of others and to live in peace!

The closing charge is recommended at the closing of the third degree, but being monitorial is appropriate to be used after any degree. Done well this charge should be inspirational and encourage all of us in our daily lives.

My Brothers; reflect on your charges and look well to your obligations.

Have a happy New Year and please remember our service personnel in your prayers!∞

Mystical Tie... Continued from page 2

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-- Found on a cup in a Lodge in Ireland:

"OLD MASONS NEVER DIE, BUT YOU'LL
HAVE TO JOIN TO FIND OUT WHY

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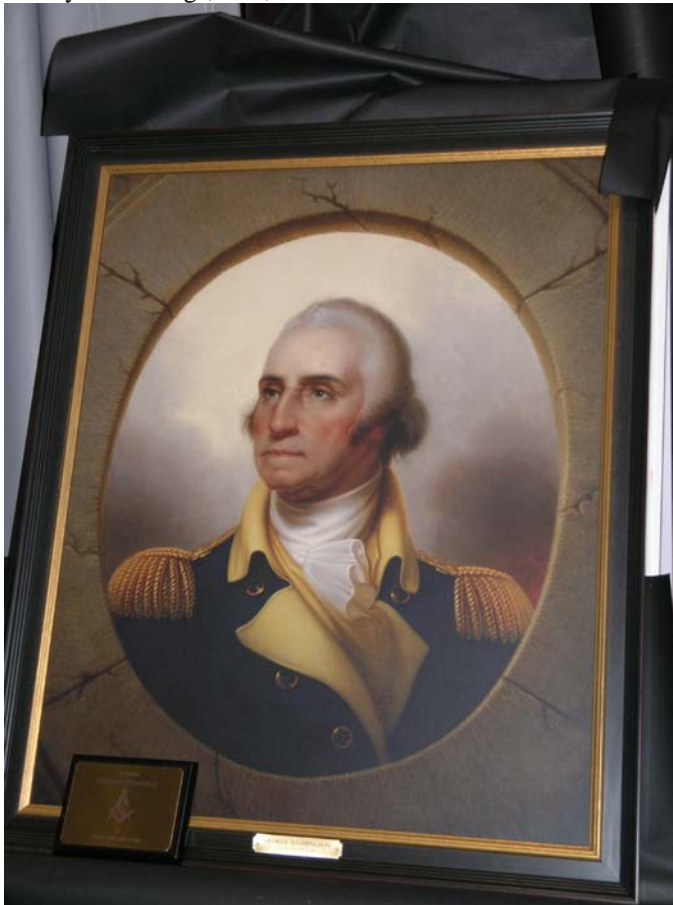
On Veterans Day November 11, 2009, Aurora Lodge # 15 Presented a portrait of George Washington to Bayshore Elementary School

In the February issue of "The Messenger" the newsletter of the "George Washington Memorial", they announced a program to place portraits of Brother Washington in our public schools. They were joining with Mount Vernon and soliciting for Masonic Lodges throughout the country to take part in this effort.

First Lady Laura Bush launched Mt Vernon's program to distribute portraits to every school in America saying, "You can honor George Washington by following his good example of good citizenship. I hope that each one of you will be a leader, set a good example for others in your school and community and as President Washington reminds us, all it takes is one citizen who loves his country to change America for the better."

The portrait is by Rembrandt Peale, and is called the "Portal Portrait", and is a beautiful rendition of our Brother Mason and first president. Along with the portrait came a US Flag which flew over Mt. Vernon, and a teacher's guide. Mt. Vernon received over 4000 orders for the portrait, which far exceeded their expectations. Consequently the Portrait only arrived in Anchorage the last day of School last spring. It was mutually decided that Veteran's day would be a good time to present it to the school. It will be displayed in the school's library, along with the flag from Mt. Vernon. The students and staff were very enthusiastic in the appreciation and acceptance of the portrait.

Members of Aurora Lodge making the presentation are; WB Paul Gabbert, WB John Bishop, WB Al Schuerger, and Bro. Dave Oaks. Assisting in the presentation were members of the Sojourners, Brothers MW. Henry Dunbar explained the history of our flags, WB, with the assistance of Brothers Al Kelly, and Ken Krasselt.



On the following pages are additional photographs of the event and the participating brothers.



Darkness to Light - Physical darkness is symbolic of ignorance and of spiritual blindness. Applicants for the enlightenment of Freemasonry are, of course, in total ignorance of the rituals and symbolisms of the Order. They are, hence, required to enter the Lodge in complete darkness. They are in search of Light, and this is given to them as they advance through the several Degrees of Masonry.∞

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Apron - The use of an apron or some equivalent investiture, as a mystic symbol, was common among Ancient Masons. Hence, in the First Degree of Freemasonry, the initiate is presented with the pure white lambskin apron as a reminder of that purity of life and rectitude of conduct which is so essentially necessary to his gaining admission into the Celestial Lodge above where the Supreme Architect of the Universe resides forever. This apron becomes his permanent property as the "badge of a Freemason." As he advances in Masonry, he may receive other aprons of varying types, but never one that equals this first one in emblematic significance and Masonic value. The badge of a Mason. Originally among priesthoods as a badge of office and a means of ornamentation. The Masonic apron should be white lambskin, fourteen inches wide and twelve inches deep. It should be presented to the candidate at his initiation and not at some subsequent time. No substitute should be used.∞

THE EDUCATOR

(Based on the concept, that if you know **WHY** you will always be able to determine and understand **HOW**)

Presented by V.W.Bro. Norman McEvoy Volume No 7 Number 3 March 2009

Fraternal Greetings Brethren

In the fall of 2008, I introduced the subject of "**Symbolism**" and noted that I had recently acquired a book titled "**Symbolism in Craft Freemasonry**" and written by Colin Dyer.

Over the past several months I have had the opportunity to read this book in full and have found it to be one of the very best, on this topic, that I have located to this point.

In his book Dyer gives many quotes, made by earlier Masonic Educators, and, in that I have found those quotes and explanations very valuable, it is my intention to share some of this information with you.

The first subject will be that of "**Geometry**" and while, to some, this may be somewhat heavy reading, may I suggest that you each take the time to reflect on what has been written as it is basic to our Craft, and fundamental to the education and advancement of each and every Mason.

GEOMETRY

Comment

Some of you, including myself until lately, may not be aware that at our initiation we referred to our Supreme Being as the *Great Architect of the Universe*, however at our passing we then refer to him as The *Great Geometrician of the Universe* and at the close of the Tracing Board Lecture we are introduced to the Letter "**G**" which is so prominently displayed in all our Lodges.

Dyer explains that the letter "**G**", (usually depicted on a blazing sun), is generally seen to be the symbol of the Fellowcraft Degree and, while the "**G**" (usually suspended over the altar or center of the Lodge Room) is generally seen to be symbol for God.

For me personally, provides the reason why, in my own Lodge Room, both of these symbols are present with the "G on a Blazing Sun situated over the Master Chair in the East, while the simple letter "G" is suspended above the altar.

From these readings I now see WHY and after all that is WHAT the Educator is all about.

From Preston's "Illustrations of Masonry"

Geometry, the first and noblest of sciences, is the basis on which the superstructure of Masonry is erected. By Geometry, may we curiously trace Nature through her various windings, to the most concealed recesses.

By it we may discover the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of the grand Artificer of the Universe, and view with amazing delight the beautiful proportions which connect and grace this vast machine.

By it we may discover how the planets move in their different orbs, and mathematically demonstrate their various revolutions.

By it we may rationally account for the return of the seasons, and the mixed variety of scenes which they display to the discerning eye.

Numberless worlds are around us, all framed by the same Divine Artist, which roll through the vast expanse, and are all conducted by the same unerring law of nature.

How must we then improve?

With what grand ideas must such knowledge fill our minds; and how worthy is it of the attention of all rational beings.

A survey of Nature, and the observation of its beautiful proportions first determined man to imitate the divine plan, and to study symmetry and order.

This gave rise to societies, and birth to every useful art.

The architect began to design, and the plans which he laid down, improved by experience and time, produced some of those excellent works which will be the admiration of future ages. Thus, from the commencement of the world, we may trace the foundation of Masonry.

Ever since order began, and harmony displayed her charms, it has flourished. No art, no science preceded it. In the dark periods of antiquity, when literature was in a low state, and the rude manners of our forefathers withheld from them the knowledge we now so amply share, Masonry began to diffuse her influence. The mysteries of this science unveiled, arts instantly arose, civilization took place, and the progress of knowledge and philosophy gradually dispelled the gloom of ignorance and barbarism. Government being settled, authority was given to laws, and the assemblies of the fraternity acquired the patronage of the great and good, while the tenets of the profession were attended with general and unbounded utility.

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Now Geometry was one of the "seven noble arts and sciences" of ancient philosophy. It means literally the science of earth measurement. But the "earth" of the ancients did not mean, as it does to us, this physical planet.

It meant the primordial substance, or undifferentiated soul-stuff out of which we human beings have been created, the "mother earth" from which we have all sprung and to which we must all undoubtedly return.

Man was made, the Scriptures teach, out of the dust of the ground, that earth or fundamental substance of his being, which requires to be "measured" in the sense of investigating and understanding its nature and properties.

No competent builder erects a structure without first satisfying himself about the nature of the materials with which he proposes to build, and in the speculative and spiritual or "Royal" art of Masonry, no Mason can properly build the Temple of his soul without first understanding the nature of the raw material he has to work upon.

Geometry, therefore, is synonymous with self-knowledge, the understanding of the basic substance of our being, its properties and potentialities.

Over the ancient temples of initiation was inscribed the sentence "*Know Thyself and thou shalt know the Universe & God*" a phrase which implies in the first place that the uninitiated man is without knowledge of himself, and in the second place that when he attains that knowledge he will realize himself to be no longer the separate distinctified individual he now supposes himself to be, but to be a microcosm or summary of all that is to be identified with the Being of God.

Masonry is the science of the attainment of that supreme knowledge and is, therefore, rightly said to be founded on the principles of Geometry as thus defined.

Comment

I find it impossible to ignore that over and over again we, as Masons, are admonished to "**Know Ourselves**" for, until we do, we will not have that **SOLID** foundation on which to grow & develop.

In the coming months, God Willing, it is my intention to share with you more insights into the Symbolism used in our Craft and hopefully we will all grow and develop as a result of same.

On Friendship

"Friendship is unnecessary, like philosophy, like art....It has no survival value; rather it is one of those things that GIVE value to survival. C.S. Lewis (1898-1963)

"Friendship's the wine of Life" (I like this one!!!!!!) Edward Young (1683-1765)

Have a wonderful day & God Bless You and Yours

Norm