



Light Of The Great Land

Volume 1, Issue 3

September 2009

Grand Master's Message

Brethren,

Beth and I have been very busy these past six months, what with traveling throughout Alaska visiting with Alaskan Masons, their families, and friends. We have also carried the Alaska Masonic flag to other jurisdictions around the country; more especially we have visited our sister Grand Lodges along the Pacific Coast. Behind the scenes, we have worked hard to keep enthusiasm for the various Grand Lodge initiatives high. I would like to extend my gratitude to all of the hard working Masons who are making this year a special time for me. I would especially like to thank VWB Roger Hansen, Brothers Stephen Wright and Jeff Polizzotto, MWB Chuck Corbin and MWB Jared Decker, WB John Bishop, and all of my District Deputies for their loyalty, diligence, and reliability. I also send my special thanks to all Alaskan Masons who provided their financial support to our direct appeal for contributions to the Alaska Masonic Visual Arts and Music Scholarship.

To read more about what's going on in Grand

continued on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1. GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE
- 1. THE MYSTICAL TIE
- 4. DDGM'S MESSAGE
- 4. JGW'S MESSAGE
- 7. FREEMASONRY A PRECIOUS THING
- 9. SGW'S REPORT
- 9. DISTRICT #3 REPORT
- 10. DISTRICT #5 REPORT
- 11. REPORT FROM THE GRAND LECTURER
- 12. OUT AND ABOUT JUNEAU
- 14. JUNEAU OUTDOOR DEGREE

The Mystical Tie That Binds Us All (Part 2)

A Research Paper

By VWB Roger Hansen
Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Alaska

ORIGIN

In order to understand the meaning and symbolism of the term "cable tow" one must first delve into its origin to aid in tracing the history of its use by the Fraternity. The origin of the term "cable tow" has been disputed among scholars throughout the ages. Some believe it had its origins from the French or that it came from the Dutch word "cabel.", and still others believe "Cableteau", "Kable Tau", or "Kabeltauw" came from Germany meaning cable, rope, or a pledge of the body. Some trace it to the Hebrew words "Chebel" or "Khabel", having various meanings. When used as a noun, it denotes an anchor-chain, anklet, cable, chain, cord, fetter, rope, a measuring-line or cord; meaning a field measured, inheritance or possession and a pledge, received as a pledge, or in pledge. When used as a verb the same word means to tie a rope or to bind someone by a pledge.

Another scholar believes that the origin of the term is from the Gothic period where a piece of yarn, spun fiber, string, or tool was called a tau or taw. If a person took several pieces of tau and twisted or wove them into a rope, the process was called cabling and the resulting rope was a cabled-taw. According to another scholar, "Cabill-tow" or "Kabilltow" are very old terms used in Scotland for describing a cable-rope or a cable. Thus far, there is no general agreement among scholars, except that the term signifies some kind of rope to draw or pull something as a tugboat pulls a barge.

Continued on Page 5

Lodge this year, please see my journal on the Internet at <http://clinebo.blogspot.com>.

As I have been traveling around Alaska, I have been contemplating the concept of the “Stated Communication”. I have asked myself, what is the purpose of this meeting and what keeps brethren coming to them month after month and year after year? The Alaska Masonic Code requires that each lodge meet at least once in six months, and the bylaws of most of our constituent lodges require the lodge to meet at least monthly in a Stated Communication. But again I ask, what is the purpose of this meeting?

According to Mackey (An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences),

“ . . . the meetings of Masonic Lodges are called communications, to signify that it is not simply the ordinary meeting of a society for transaction of business, but that such meeting is the fellowship of men engaged in a common pursuit, and governed by a common principle, and that there is therein a communication or participation of those feelings and sentiments that constitute a true brotherhood.”

Bernard E. Jones in his “Freemasons’ Guide and Compendium” states that,

“ . . . late in the seventeenth and early in the eighteenth centuries Masonic gatherings could certainly be described as convivial affairs. . . Of course the lodges met in taverns, for there was nowhere else to go, the taverns being the customary meeting-places of the day. In them, and in the coffee-houses and chocolate-houses, clubs were born (in great numbers following 1717), and the early lodges, undoubtedly club-like in their ways, had perforce to meet there also.”

As I have traveled to our lodges this year, I have not always experienced what I might call a truly convivial affair or even the fellowship of men engaged in a common pursuit, and governed by a common principle. What I have usually experienced are business meetings which follow the “Order of Business” suggested in the Grand Lodge of Alaska’s Lodge Officers Handbook. That “Order of Business” is recommend for lodges that have no standard order of business specifically stated in the lodge bylaws and suggest the following:

- Ritual Opening with Flag Ceremony
- Introductions
- Sickness and Distress
- Reading of Previous Minutes
- Approval of Bills for payment
- Communications
- Reports of Committees continued from page 1
- Reading of Petitions
- Balloting
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Degree Work or other special business
- Announcements
- Good of the Order
- Reading of Minutes of Current Meeting
- Ritual Closing (Retire Flag)

Unfortunately, this less than enlightening “Order of Business” has become the rule rather than the exception for most of our lodges. In fact, it has even pervaded our Concordant Bodies (York Rite, Scottish Rite, and Shrine), where Masons who have learned this model in their Blue Lodges have carried it with them when they advance through the chairs in those organizations. Worse yet, it provides an even more disappointing experience to our initiates who are extended the opportunity of sitting in on Stated Communications as a carrot for learning their proficiencies and quickly advancing through the degrees. When they are finally allowed to attend a Stated Communication, they are faced with this tiresome order of business rather than the **further light in Masonry** they are led to expect.

I wish to propose a different model for the conduct of Stated Communications, one that will hopefully add value to these meetings, and will provide experiences that our members will look forward to participating in month after month and year after year.

First and foremost, I propose that Stated Communications **be planned in advance**. I suggest that each lodge form an executive committee consisting of the Worshipful Master, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Treasurer, and Secretary. The executive committee should meet prior to the Stated Communication (about one week) to

- Review the information they wish to share with the lodge;
- Discuss the issues and concerns that are before the lodge and how they might be presented to the members;
- Discuss the banquet, festive board, or table lodge that will occur either before or after the Stated Communication; and
- Discuss the program feature that will provide information, education, and/or entertainment to the lodge.

Suggested “Order of Business”:

1. Ritual Opening with Flag Ceremony
2. Introductions – consider what introductions are meant to be, “an introduction of visitors not known to the lodge”. Save the introductions of people we know for special nights honoring them.
3. Sickness and Distress
4. Report of Executive Committee – including
 - a. information from previous meeting(s),
 - b. communications received by the lodge,
 - c. bills requiring payment and approval, etc.

The WM should entertain motions for those items requiring approval, however items requiring discussion should not be debated but tabled and referred to a committee for presentation and recommendations at a future Stated Communication.

5. Reports of committees – as with the Executive

Committee, anything requiring debate should be referred back to the committees for information sharing at future Stated Communications.

Committee recommendations may be discussed and balloted on.

6. Reading of Petitions
7. Balloting on Petitions
8. Business – issues and concerns should be referred to committee (usually consisting of members who are most concerned or interested) and reported back at a future Stated Communication.
9. Degree Work or other special business – this is usually reserved for a Special Communication unless it is included as part of a program feature.
10. Announcements
11. Reading of Minutes of current meeting (required by AMC)
12. Ritual Closing (Retiring the Flag)

This model for an “Order of Business”, if planned in advance and well executed, should provide the information the members require, with no contention, and can be conducted in less than a half an hour. I further suggest the following additions to this “Order of Business”:

13. Program Feature – presentation of Masonic education consisting of symbolism, philosophy, history, or organization; and/or presentation of a non-Masonic nature but of general interest to the brethren; and/or entertainment. As this may be presented in an un-tiled setting, consider inviting lodge candidates and non-Masons (if appropriate).

14. Fellowship – Have a formal banquet, festive board, or table lodge. This may be conducted before the Stated Communication, however having it afterward gives the brethren an opportunity to continue to discuss aspects of the program in a less formal setting. This activity may be catered and held within the lodge building, however consider relocating to a formal banqueting facility off-site.

Continued from Page 3

Today, Freemasonry is experiencing a reissuance. We are witnessing more and more men who are seeking the fellowship and character building aspects of our fraternity than we have seen in the last 30 or 40 years. But, these men, also, have many other demands upon their time from family, work, church, and other social commitments, and asking them to participate in a single monthly meeting may be the best we can expect. Their commitment to our fraternity is directly proportional to the value they receive from it. It is essential, therefore, that we give them the **further light in Masonry** they are looking for. We can no longer present them the same old meetings that have caused a mass exodus through failure to complete the degrees, demit, and suspensions for non-payment of dues. We need to move back to the future and give our brethren *convivial affairs and the fellowship of men engaged in a common pursuit, and governed by a common principle.*

Bo Cline
Grand Master

Deputy Grand Master's message

What a wonderful Summer we have had, Fall is upon us and soon the Snow will cover our great State, all this change seems to happen too fast. The events we attend as Grand Lodge Officers also seem to happen too fast.. Since our last news letter, much has happened. We have attended several Grand Lodge Communication's and local Alaskan Lodges meetings.

Saturday August 9th. The Grand Lodge elected officers met with nine of our Past Grand Master's for the Grand Master's update on current events. After lunch the elected officers met to discuss the Strategic plan and Grand Lodge Corporation business.

Al ASKA Shrine provided Two speakers from Imperial Council on August 15th. to present a plan on recruitment, retention and restoration of

members. The session was open to all members of all bodies and was attended by members from all over the State. The information provided was very well received, leaving us much to think about and do. A Special Thanks to Chief Rabban Noble Dave Worel who made it all happen.

I am looking forward to the joint meeting of the Lodges in the Fairbanks area, Tanana lodge No. 3, Fairbanks lodge No. 12, and North Pole lodge No. 16, which will meet on September 2. We then travel to Dawson City, Yukon Territory for International Days on September 4th thru the 6th. We are looking forward to a wonderful weekend in Dawson.

Something new will be coming your way soon. We are in the process of developing an Alaska Family Masonic Calendar on our web site. The calendar is being developed as a Google calendar by Brother David Prentice. The calendar will contain important events held by all the Masonic Bodies through out the State, with the hope that when planning an event the calendar will be used to prevent conflicts with other events.

Junior Grand Wardens Message

By RW Jerry W. Pinion

The lessons learned during membership in our Masonic Youth Organizations can last a lifetime. I found this out while talking with a past Rainbow Girl at my office building. She related to me experiences in Rainbow that she still remembers and cherishes.

Since I work for the Department of Transportation, State of Alaska, I went to her office to discuss some business and after we finished our discussion, she asked me what I was going to do this weekend. I said that I was going to work at the Scottish Rite Fair Booth on the Ice Cream side. She wanted to know where the booth was located

Continued on Page 7

In mythology, the many stories of the help of the gods is symbolized by a thread, cord, or rope which aids the hero to pass safely through storm and danger and to find a way out of darkness. For example in Greek mythology, Theseus is given a thread to guide him out of the Labyrinth after he slays the Cretan Minotaur. In the Sumerian-Babylonian story of Gilgamesh and Enkidu, there is reference to a "three-stranded tow rope" used to help them slay the ferocious giant, Humbaba.

Approximately 2,000 years ago the Zoroastrian System believed that every person was thought to have a cable tow or noose falling off at death of those who were righteous, but dragging down the wicked into hell. The cable tow or noose was also a means by which distinguished captives were led through the streets by the victorious Caesars in Roman times. Also, in Roman times, citizens, to show their loyalty to their monarch, would appear before him with cable tows or nooses around their necks. On some pieces of pottery found in the Yucatan, reputed to belong to the Mayan civilization, there is a design showing a group of figures in a class, apparently receiving instruction from a priest or leader, and each is shown wearing the cable tow.

In 1347, some of the population of Calais appeared before Edward III with a cable tow around their necks in full admission of being at his mercy. In 1517, some citizens of London were taken prisoner for doing wrong and appeared before the King and members of the Commons, bound with halters around their necks and pled for mercy, which was granted. In 1641, the Magistrates and Burghers wore hemp ropes around their necks in full submission and penance for a previous rebellion. Interestingly, hemp was later changed to a blue ribbon. In 1730, Pritchard indicated in a publication that the cable tow is called a "Cable-Rope" and in another edition a "Tow-Line." The same word is used in *A Defense of Masonry*, a pamphlet written by Anderson. In neither publications is the word used in exactly the same form and sense as it is used today.

Freemasonry of today appears to have a strong resemblance to the old Guilds of the Middle Ages, and adopted their symbolism of trade customs, as well as their moral instructions. If an employer went out of business and could not place his apprentice(s) with

another employer within a cables length of three miles, the indenture of the apprentice(s) could be cancelled. The significance and derivation of three miles in this case is not known. In construction, when the height of the building required climbing, workers carried a cable tow for hauling their tools up to their work areas. The length of a worker's cable tow determined how high he could climb before hauling up his tools. Only the most experienced workers were given long cable tows. This effectively limited the height to which a worker could be asked to climb. Thus, something beyond the length of one's cable tow was therefore beyond a reasonable request.

According to the ancient laws of Freemasonry, every brother must attend his Lodge if he is within the length of his cable tow. It is generally understood that the length of this cable tow, sometimes referred to as "a cable's length," to be three miles. Why three miles?

Since a "cable's length", in some instances has the appearance of a nautical origin, a presumption has occurred that it relates to the territorial limits of coastal countries. The territorial limits of those countries bordering the seas was instituted by Cornelius van Bynkershoek (1673-1743), a Dutch judge, who defined the three mile limit as far as a canon could shoot in his 1721 treatise, *De Domino Marius*. There is no evidence that Bynkershoek was a brother Mason.

Since many Lodges were not located near coastal settings, it is therefore assumed that the length of the cable tow was generally regarded as the length of which an able brother could walk in one hour. In some areas it is any reasonable distance from which a summons may be answered, health and business permitting. This symbolic expression was defined by the Baltimore Convention of 1842 (some sources indicate 1843) to mean the scope of a man's reasonable ability to aid in the relief of a brother in need. A Mason is not asked to come any distance, however small, if in doing so it would be a hardship or inconvenience to him, nor to perform any duty that is not reasonable within his ability to perform. Each Mason is bound to all other Masons by a tie as long and as strong as he determines his ability will

permit, as indicated in the following except from Memorial Lodge No. 1298, A. F. & A. M. Houston, Texas:

What is the length of my cable tow?
A Fellow Craft Mason wanted to know.
An aged Mason with snow-white hair
Pointed and said, "It's there and there.
From morning's early light, 'till setting sun,
Signals that the day is done.
Deed of Kindness and a Helping Hand,
Doing God's will and being a Man.
Remember young man and keep it so,
For that is the length of your Cable Tow."

An unknown American brother summed it briefly in the following words:

It is as long as the arm that stretches out to a helping hand.
It reaches as far as a Brothers' cheering voice.
It goes as far as Charity's dollar can go.
It can travel as far as goodwill can travel.
Wherever the mails can carry a letter, it can be carried.

It is interesting to note that the cable tow in the English system of Freemasonry only occurs in the First Degree. In the American system, it not only occurs in the same way as the English system but also in the second and third degrees in which it is given different symbolical meanings, that of guiding or assisting us along our way and that of the "silver cord" in the well-known passage as recorded in the Holy Bible (Ecclesiastes 12:6 and 7) "Or ever the silver cord be loosed or the golden bowl be broken or the pitcher broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." It is this human cable tow symbolizing the umbilical cord connecting a child to its mother or the umbilical cord between God and man. This appears to indicate that the cable tow grew up among American lodges.

SYMBOLOLOGY

Freemasonry is a system of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols. The Lodge itself is a symbol and every object and act within

the confines of the Lodge is symbolical. Masonry is therefore a chamber of imagery. The symbols that we use in Freemasonry today have their bases in real terms and penalties. That gives both a strength and sense of purpose to anyone who understands their origins. Just as the origin and meaning of the term "cable tow" varies greatly, so does the symbolical meaning of the term.

The cable is composed of individual fibers which are worked together to form strands. These strands are put together to make up ropes and the ropes formed together to comprise a cable. As separate entities, the fibers have little strength, but when organized into a cable, their strength is immense. The weaving of many weak strands into a strong cable is a symbol of a truth dating back to antiquity and is revered by all of Freemasonry, in which the weakness of an individual is magnified by the strength of many. A cable gains its strength from ropes of equal strength laid together and each rope is as important to the whole as the other. There is no Biblical reference in this but an allusion to this occurs in Ecclesiastes 4:12:

"And though one might prevail
against another, two will withstand
one. A three-fold cord is not quickly
broken."

So it is with Freemasonry, where a Masonic cable is made from individuals forming a Lodge and several Lodges form a District, and several Districts form a Grand Lodge. As three ropes wound together produce a strong cable, so too does Virtue, Morality, and Brotherly Love give strength to Freemasonry. As a strong cable is composed of three ropes entwined, the strength of a Lodge comes from the Three Great Lights, the Three Lesser Lights, the three principal officers of the Lodge, and the three pillars which denote Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty. Bro. Carlos Cabalar has stated that "... when the cable tow of each Mason is joined with that of every other Mason, and all are united in one 'Cable of Kindness,' it makes a bond of brotherhood the might of which no mortal can measure. It helps to hold the world together. It holds when other ties break. It is one of the holiest assets of humanity — a far-stretching tie,

Continued from Page 4

and I told her that it was down the Red Gate Trail to where it forks and the Scottish Rite Booth is in between the forks of the trail.

She (I will not reveal her name) said that she knew about the Masonic Lodges but didn't know that Scottish Rite were masons too. I asked her if she knew that Shriners were also masons and of course she didn't. She said that she knew that the Scottish Rite and Shriners were both a charitable organization that helped all kids.

She said she belonged to Rainbow Girls when she was much younger and remembers the wonderful lessons that Rainbow taught and how much she was able to gain from those teachings. Being able to memorize her Rainbow Bow Station Ritual and present it when the Assembly had Candidates for Initiation gave her and all of the girls a feeling of pride to do their very best.

She remained a Rainbow Girl for several years and attended meetings religiously. She also attended her church almost as religiously. One Sunday while attending her church, one of the church ladies told her that she shouldn't belong to the Rainbow Girls: That Rainbow didn't teach the Bible and that Rainbow wasn't an organization that young girls should belong to. She immediately felt hurt and being hurt responded by telling the church lady that she had learned more about the bible, how to make friends, speak in public, poise, dress, and sisterly love and kindness than the church had ever taught her. She never went back to that church but found another church to attend.

She says she misses Rainbow. She especially remembers the Mother Advisor who taught her how to be a young lady. She affectionately mentioned her Mother Advisors name and that her Mother Advisor died from Cancer several years later. I tell you this story to show how our Masonic Youth Organizations can be a life changing experience for young people. Many of you have children and grandchildren who are of the age to join Rainbow Girls, Job's Daughters, or DeMolay. You can enrich their lives by encouraging them to join one of these great organizations.

See you in lodge brethren.
In Brotherly Love
RW Jerry W. Pinion

"If you will not fight for the right when you can easily win without bloodshed; if you will not fight when your victory will be sure and not too costly; you may come to the moment when you will have to fight with all the odds against you and only a small chance of survival. There may even be a worse case; you may have to fight when there is no hope of victory, because it is better to perish than to live as slaves." Brother Winston Churchill

FREEMASONRY: A PRECIOUS THING

It is important to appreciate that being a Freemason is a very precious thing. To belong to an organization that removes misunderstandings between men, makes them friends and teaches them to love one another, is to possess something that cannot be measured in understandable terms. We should encompass it, savor it, and protect it.

Our great fraternity is the oldest and largest in the world. It has drawn men to it across the centuries from every culture. It is a mine of wealth containing a distillation of the wisdom of the ages and a legacy of teachings to assist us to come to terms with moral order and design within a potentially cold and heartless universe. It provides the path toward moral and spiritual progress, knowledge and service of God and our fellow men. It causes us to stand apart from all other fraternal orders. We have every reason to be optimistic that our Craft will be just as viable 100 years from now as it was 100 years ago, and that, eventually, all men the world over will learn to know and love each other at the altar of Freemasonry.

It is up to each of us to energize ourselves and to exemplify the faith of Freemasonry, so that others might look to us for example and inspiration, and thus spread Freemasonry's pleas for universal friendship and its concern for human progress. Let us above all live in a manner befitting the dignity and worth of the Soul, remembering, as Emerson said, that "what lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared with what lies within us."

Jack R. Levitt PGM (CA)



mystical and unseen, yet more unbreakable than bands of steel, in which the obligation and loyalty and love of each of us is a strand." Carl Claudy, from his *Old Tiler Talks*, indicated that it is the long cable tow of God, running from heart to heart where the heart of Freemasonry by which all manner of men are attracted and held, is the longing for communion with God. Even though they are not seen or not heard, the cable tows that reach the longest and hold the strongest are invisible, and formed of forces which men do not understand. Yet, according to Putnam, in Albert G. Mackey's *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, the term is called a "purely Masonic word". One author indicates that Albert Pike is also in agreement with Mackey as he sees no meaning in the cable tow beyond its use in ceremonies.

However, this is strange as Albert Pike, in his *Morals and Dogma* states "Prone to evil, the human race staggered blindly onward into the thick darkness of unbelief, bound fast by the strong cable tow of the natural and sinful will."

According to the Short Talk Bulletin of March 1926 "... that in nearly all the secret religions and fraternities of the ancient and medieval world, the rope was used for a more or less practical purpose, though that practical use inevitably came to be associated with symbolical meanings. Initiation has always been an ordeal, and must be, and consequently it has usually been necessary to keep the candidate under absolute control." One of our first thoughts in Masonry of the cable tow is that it is just a means by which to remove the candidate during the ceremony, if a certain condition is not met or the candidate is not willing to advance any further. In one of the most impressive moments of initiation, when the cable tow is removed, after the brother has taken his oath at the Altar, he is bound by tie stronger than any physical cable. According to a Canadian brother, when the cable tow is removed the candidate is free from the bonds of sin, and even death, through the power of spiritual truth contained therein. One scholar indicated that the cable tow symbolizes the bond by which he is attached to the state of darkness. When the cable tow is removed it signifies the end of the bondage of darkness.

To some, it is emblematical of the umbilical cord, which is necessary to begin life, but love and care replace it when it is severed, and the individual grows by himself. Carl Claudy, in his Introduction to

Freemasonry states that "It is symbolic of the life cord by which the embryo receives life from the mother. It is the Masonic cord by which the Masonic infant is attached to his Mother Lodge. As soon as the infant is born the physical cord is severed, but never the knife was ground which cut the spiritual cord which ties a man to his mother" can be explained as such, in the first degree of Masonry the physical restraint of the cable tow is removed as soon as candidate has been obligated and there is no means after which to cut the obligation which binds a man to his Mother Lodge and the Craft.

From the Grand Lodge of Wisconsin, the cable tow is recognized as "a symbol of those external restraints by which a man is controlled by others or by forces outside himself. If a man does not keep the law of his own free will, he must be compelled to keep it. The removal of the cable tow signifies that when a man becomes master of himself, he will keep the law instinctively, by his own character." In Brahminical ceremonies the removal of the noose signified an escape from death and freedom attained

The cable tow in Freemasonry symbolizes a kind of pledge or vow in which a man pledges his life or has pledged himself to save another life at the risk of his own. It is indeed this great symbol of the "Mystic Tie" which this brotherhood of man spins and weaves between men, making them Brothers and helpers of one another.

A Biblical act, which is almost Masonic (to some Freemasons the use of the following verses prove the existence of our Fraternity in those days) is recorded in the Holy Bible (I Kings 20: 30-34):

"...Ben-hadad also fled, and entered the city to hide. His servants said to Him, "Look , we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings; let us put sackcloth around our waists and ropes on our heads, and go out to the king of Israel; perhaps he will spare your life." So they tied sackcloth around their waists, put ropes on their heads, went to the king of Israel, and said, "Your servant Ben-hadad says, 'Please let me live.' "And he said, "Is he still alive? He is my brother." Now the men were watching for an omen; they quickly took it up from him and

Grand Lodge = Grand Friendships

This year is flying by and it's not too early to start thinking about attending Grand Lodge in February. What better place to learn about the programs and advancements that other Lodges are doing. What better group to discuss the challenges with your Lodge than with other Masons that have dealt with those same, or similar, challenges. What better time to get to know your brothers and make lifelong friendships. Grand Lodge is an opportunity to bring a positive change for the betterment of our Fraternity.

There are two ways you can present a change; you can write it down, in proper form, and bring it to Grand Lodge yourself. This allows you to learn the process and see how Grand Lodge works. I think this is the best way all around. Yes, I know the time and cost for some of us is a lot to ask but you get out, of Masonry, what you put in.

Remember, no changes can be made overnight. It takes time, effort, and support from your brothers. The other way to submit a change is to write it down and let someone else do the presenting but then you will miss out on the camaraderie, fellowship and FOOD.

I can only speak for myself, but I like attending Grand Lodge and seeing the work we do. It takes a lot of people to keep our Fraternity working. I ask you to think about your choices and the opportunity that is open to all brothers in Alaska and I hope I will have the pleasure of seeing and talking with you at Grand Lodge in February.

Fraternally,

Ron Ackerman, SGW

(Ed Note. I apologize to the Senior Grand Warden for regulating his article so far back in the newsletter. However the letter was about 90% completed by the time I received his input, I could not go back and reconstruct it to make room for it earlier.)

As memory may be a paradise from which we cannot be driven, it may also be a hell from which we cannot escape.” — John Lancaster Spalding

District Deputy District #3

The lodges of District No. 3 will start meeting on a regular basis after the Stated Communication the second week of September. Although the lodges have been "dark" for the summer, Aurora Lodge No. 15 and Glacier Lodge No. 10 have conferred degrees during the summer.

The Junior Warden's picnic was held on June 6th with a great turn out. Everyone enjoyed the good BBQ and fellowship.

Anchorage 17 will be having their annual Past Master's Dinner at the Millennium Hotel on October 10th. This dinner is open to members of Anchorage 17 and elected Grand Lodge officers and their wives.

All three lodges have candidates waiting in the wings for their degrees and I know this will be a very productive and rewarding fall.

Tom Schram



New Juneau Entered Apprentices: L-R: Joseph Winders, Paulo Vidal, & Larry White – Congratulations to our new Brothers. ED.

said, "Yes, Ben-hadad is your brother." Then he said, "Go and bring him. -So Ben-hadad came out to him; and he had him come up into the chariot. Ben-hadad said to him, "I will restore the towns that my father took from your Father; and you may establish bazaars for yourself in Damascus, as my father did in Samaria." The king of Israel responded. "I will let you on those terms." So he made a treaty with him and let him go,"

Besides providing a symbolic expression of pledging oneself to another, a second symbolic act occurs in the above passage whereby the act of submission is symbolized when ropes were placed on their heads. In many of the courts in ancient times, a cord, cable tow, or noose around the neck symbolically denoted that the accused submitted his life in the judgment of the court. When placed upon a freeman, it signified a slight degree of subjection or servitude as also can be seen when a candidate has a cable tow placed on him when he submits himself for the mysteries of Freemasonry.

Another symbolic reminder of the covenant by which all of us are tied - or bound - can be found in the Holy Bible (Hosea 11:4) "I led them with cords of human kindness..." The cable tow is generally regarded as the symbol of the voluntary and complete acceptance of, and pledged compliance with, whatever Freemasonry may have in store

In an article written some years ago, Brother Rabbi Geffen expressed his opinion that the cable tow symbolized "Peace" when Jeremiah had tried to warn the people that the city would be captured by the Babylonians by wearing a yoke or cable tow and prophesying to the people. However, the people failed to listen.

To some, the cable tow is symbolized by control, obedience, and direction or guidance. It controls us by shaping us to its human touch and moral nobility. It wins obedience and gives guidance and direction to our lives. At the Altar, Masons take vows, which are not empty promises, but in which a man pledges his life and sacred honor.

Even though we only see that the cable tow is an entity by itself, we must remember that there are two ends to it. If the cable tow binds a Mason to the

Craft, by the same fact, the Craft to the each man in it. The other side of the obligation is that the Craft is also under the vow to its members to guide, instruct, and train them, not only as an effective service to the Fraternity, but also to humanity. The two ends of the cable tow are symbolic of the competing responsibilities; how long is our cable tow, and the conflict that each Mason must come to reconcile within himself. We often find ourselves in positions where we must measure one end against the other. Do we volunteer or not; contribute or not; speak or stay silent? These conflicts go on and on. That's the dual symbolism of the cable tow in our work. The distance from one end to the other is entirely our own construction. The constant tug and pull of competing responsibilities and the response to that, whether internal or external, is the cable tow dilemma of each Mason.

To be concluded in the next issue of LOTGI.

District # 5

District #5 is well and doing great. During the last few months, the 3 Lodges have had some activity that is worth mentioning. As a district, The Grand Master held a picnic at his residence in appreciation for our support during his term as Grand Master. The food was wonderful and the turnout was great. I don't know how many attended but the Grand Master needed a bigger driveway to park all the vehicles. I am sad to report that we did have two Brothers pass away, Bro Mikell of Mat #7 and Bro Roetman of Iditarod #20. Our prayers are with their families.

Eagle River Lodge #13 set up their hamburger stand at the Scottish Highland Games and sold a lot of hamburgers. It was a beautiful day and we got to meet a lot of people. I believe we sold somewhere in the neighborhood of 600 hamburgers. The lodge gave out two scholarships to the one seniors of each of the two high schools here in Eagle River. The lodge was honored recognized the teacher of the year for Chugiak High School. The Lodge participated in the Bear Paw parade held her in Eagle River. The lodge has

Continued on Page 11

also performed several degrees during the last few months and raised one Brother to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason.

Mat #7 has also been busy. They participated in the 4th of July parade held in Wasilla. They had a great turnout and the weather was beautiful. The Lodge also joined in with Eagle River Lodge #13 during the Bear Paw parade in Eagle River. Their presence was greatly appreciated by Eagle River Lodge #13. Mat #7 has been doing some fine degree work. During the last several months they raised two brothers to the Sublime degree of Master Mason. Their work was some of the finest I've seen. They spearheaded the booth at the State Fair. This year there were enough different groups that wanted to participate that we only were able to have two days assigned to us. I was out there on the 6th of Sept and there were 3 pages of names interested in obtaining more information about our extended family of Mason, Scottish Rite, Eastern Star, etc.

Iditarod #20 hasn't let the grass grow under their feet either. They have continually supported the schools in their community by providing scholarships and school supplies. They also participated in the 4th of July parade in Palmer and the Bear Paw parade in Eagle River. I know they obtained a few new members during the summer months. But I don't have the correct number to report at this time. They also have received an application for the degrees of Masonry. They will act upon that at their stated meeting in Sept.

I would like to say that I am very proud of our District. All three Lodges are ready to step up and help out with degree work or other problems when asked. The Masters of each lodge stay in contact with each other by use of e-mail and let each other know what is going on and what help is needed. If the Master of your district are not doing this, I would strongly recommend that you try it. Just remember "Who Best Can Work And Best Agree"

VW James R. Herrington
District Deputy of the Grand Master

Ritual; its meaning and Importance to our craft

By: John Bishop Grand Lecturer

As Grand Lecturer it is my province to oversee the "Standard Work" and Lectures as per the Masonic Code of our Grand Jurisdiction. Section 8 of the Code defines the Standard Work and cipher. It therefore falls on the Grand Lecturer to impart the Standard Work and give such instruction as is appropriate. I have visited many of our Lodges in the first half of this year and presented a workshop on our ritual and have been warmly received by all. Thank you for your hospitality!

So why ritual, what does it accomplish, and why is it important? Our ritual is a large part of our heritage and pedigree. It has come down through the ages and incorporates deep lessons on who we are and how we should address our brothers and all our fellow men. Further it is really the cement that holds the foundation of our Craft together. If you take the time to not only learn the ritual, (rote) but to study and understand it you will find greater meanings and understand better the philosophy on which we stand. Realizing that not all are ritualist, we can all study and endeavor to understand its meaning. As you observe our ritual; do you sometimes ask yourself; why is that, or how come, or what is the meaning? I invite you to give the questions consideration and maybe even do a little research on the subject? I think you find some enjoyable enlightenment.

Our ritual is important for a number of reasons. Do you remember when you first entered the Lodge, did it not impress you how knowledgeable the Brothers were? Did it not impress you how dedicated they must be to have put forth so much effort to do this so well from memory? I expect it inspired you to work on your proficiency and become a worthy Brother among them. When the lecture was delivered were you not a little awe

Continued from Page 11

struck by the way it was delivered? And all this for you my Brother to make you one of us. That first impression, and the impression left by the following degrees should have left a deep mark on you. By doing good work, we build pride in our Lodge. We attract our members to attend Lodge, we attract new members, and our Lodge will prosper and grow. New brothers will look forward to attending meetings, take an active part, and look forward to entering the officer line. Brothers, all of us grow personally in our own ways by learning the ritual, and going through the officer line. Look around at your Brothers, and reflect on the growth you have seen among them? Now look in the mirror, where have you grown? Where can you still grow? What can you do for our beloved Craft?

The moral lessons of the Working Tools, the Apron, and the North East Corner are reinforced in the opening closing ritual of each degree. How do we meet, act, and part? We meet upon the Level, Act upon the plumb, and Part upon the Square! Take a minute think about the meaning of that one little part of our ritual? How deep is the meaning? And then give some thought to the “Closing Charge”

My Brothers, our country was founded on the principals of our Craft. Our ritual is an important part of that foundation. We by obligation have a duty to “The Great Architect” to our Country, and our Communities! So my Brothers; do good work, adhere to the Standard Work, and inspire, encourage, and include our new Brothers. Lead by example, and look well to your obligations!

**Brother, I, too own a television set, but that does not keep me home on Lodge night. I have never yet had one of the characters on television come off the screen and shake my hand. They have never offered me the warm friendship that my Lodge Brothers do. They have never handed me a cup of coffee or a doughnut.
NO! NEVER!
(Author Unknown)**

Juneau Masonic Center Update — 2 June 2009 from John Barnett & Jeff DeFreest

Project Overview

The original Scottish Rite Temple Board sold the former Scottish Rite Temple to the City of Juneau several years ago and purchased the current property comprised of a former day-care center and a rental house. The Scottish Rite Temple Board was reorganized and renamed in 2009 to become the Juneau Masonic Center Association. The Juneau Masonic Center Association (JMCA) consists of members of each of the four major Juneau Masonic organizations; the Scottish Rite, Blue Lodge, Order of Eastern Star, and the Juneau Shrine Club.

The primary goal of the Juneau Masonic Center Association is to plan, design, build and eventually manage a new building to house the various Juneau Masonic bodies, and to provide sufficient private party lease and rental space to generate sufficient revenue to allow the new building to become self-sufficient.

After consultation with all the various bodies, email surveys, and weeks of well attended meetings, the JMCA elected to pursue the construction of a three-story structure that would provide for ground floor retail or professional office space, a second floor containing a Lodge room, Masonic museum and sufficient storage for the various Masonic bodies, with the third floor housing a conference room, dining room and kitchen suitable for public rental as well as the JMCA office and library. It was also determined that the building should be a “100-year” building constructed of brick or stone and that the existing day-care center would be retained as an additional rental opportunity.

The JMCA subsequently met with several architects and contractors, outlined the JMCA’s needs and goals, and allowed them to make presentations to the JMCA complete with conceptual drawings, timelines and generalized

Continued on Page 13

cost estimates. A General Contractor was selected, Dirk Lovig of Alaska Stone and Concrete, and after two rounds of presentations by architects, James Bibb of Northwind Architects was chosen as the building's architect. Additional meetings were conducted to finalize basic design criteria and building layout parameters resulting in a proposed 9000 square-foot three story building that would have an approximate footprint of 40 feet by 75 feet.

The cost estimates for the new building range from \$1.4 million to \$1.8 million but the architect and general contractor have been given instructions to design and phase the building process to provide usable rental space and a lodge room prior to finishing in the event immediate funds are unavailable to fully complete the building. It is anticipated the building will be completed in phases, of which more details will be available in the next update.

Project Status

At this time, building cost estimates, a financial statement, business plan and pro forma are being developed by the financial committee and John Barnett, the JMCA Secretary, is drafting the necessary permits to allow fill to be placed adjacent to the existing parking lot. The permits are anticipated to be submitted to the various City, State and Federal agencies on or about May 18, 2009 with most permits expected first week of July. Following the receipt of the required permits, a final decision will be made by JMCA on how to proceed, make formal commitments with the builders, and plan to break ground in August.



FIRST EVER JUNEAU OUTDOOR DEGREE



Cowens, Eavesdroppers and Bruins, the Tyler must always be prepared to repel them accordingly. Especially when lodge is being held on a remote Southeast Alaska Island where Bruins are known to prevail.

The newly raised brother (center) and the degree team (below).

