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THE BEACON

The monthly Trestleboard of Union Lodge #3, A.F. & A.M

October 2016

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Tidings From the East

“It is paradoxical, yet true, to say, that the more we know, the more ignorant we become in the absolute sense, for it is only

through enlightenment that we become conscious of our limitations. Precisely one of the most gratifying results of intellectual evolution is the continuous opening up of new and greater prospects.”

-Nikola Tesla, Serbian-American inventor, engineer, physicist, and futurist.

Good day Ancient Craftsmen!

Fall has begun, my Brothers. Mornings are darker for longer now, and each day that passes on brings a faster sunset and an earlier night. The social dynamics from the summer will soon quickly be replaced by appropriate fall and winter activities. Many of us look forward to this time of year as an opportunity to spend time with our loved ones, our friends, Brothers, and the incoming holidays. For some of us, the colder seasons bring about a time of decreased productivity in our work places, or our daily responsibilities. Time and our avenues for investing how we spend it has been a topic discussed heavily this year, and that investment looks different for each one of us. As we venture to the close of the year, have you taken a moment for self-evaluation?

If you have not, pause for a moment and think of your progression over this last nine months. What challenges or obstacles have you overcome? What personal growth have you experienced? Are you satisfied with where you are today and with the progress you've made?

The environment we live in is far more malleable than most people realize. We as Ancient Free and Accepted Masons have an array of working tools that we can apply to the work that is laid out ahead of us. Each Masonic degree showcases these lessons and instructs the Brother on how to succeed in his endeavors. These lessons can be applied equally to the smallest of task, or the largest, and when properly utilized you will have the necessary tools for the job at hand.

Be as diligent in your progress as you are conscious with what your goals are. Always look for opportunities and methods of growth. Challenge yourself and strive for being the best that you can be. Impact the environment around you in a positive way and be the Beacon that illuminates and clears away the darkness.

Ever remember my Brothers that even as we move into darker seasons, the inner flame of your Light shines true and strong.

I would like to recognize and thank Worshipful Brother Frank Blair for his presentation last month on Lodge Finances. He and I discussed this as the close of 2015 as an important and necessary presentation to show the Lodge. As WB Frank noted, his presentation was given also in 2013. We feel that this presentation should be given regularly to keep all of the Brothers up to date on how these finances work. There has been a downplay of the 'regular business matters' this year, as we have been focusing more heavily on enlightenment and growth, however finances are a very important facet of Lodge management, and having a strong comprehension of what that means and looks like is enlightening and helpful all in its own degree. Again, thank you WB Frank.

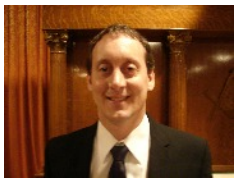
Additionally, I would like to remind the Brothers that the Beacon is a place where we are always looking for fresh and interesting material to print. Book reviews, poems, original works, excerpts from published material that you wish to share – we are interested in seeing it all. If there is an article that you wish to submit, reach out to myself or WB Tom Gardner and we will get you taken care of.

Officer meetings will continue to be the last Tuesday of each month, following the Trustees meeting and beginning promptly at 7:30 PM. Any Brothers who have comments or concerns are welcomed and encouraged to attend. Let your voice be heard!

The next meeting is scheduled for October 25th, 2016.

Remember if you need a ride to Lodge for a Special or Stated Communication, please contact the Lodge office and we shall make the appropriate accommodations.

Sincerely and Fraternally,
WB William D. MacRae
Worshipful Master
Union Lodge #3 A.F. &A.M.



Tidings from the West

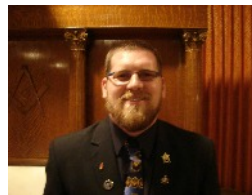
One of the most fascinating things about Freemasonry is that it pulls from a wide range of symbolism and philosophies from

throughout human history. Of these various influences on Masonic thought, Alchemy and Hermeticism have played very prominent roles. However, understanding alchemical symbolism is rarely possible without some amount of study.

The language and symbolism of Alchemy have been veiled in secrecy since its beginnings in ancient Egypt. The priests of alchemy from long ago believed that these special teachings were so powerful that they should not be shared with the general public, for fear that the knowledge could be abused. The meaning of these symbols was often so well concealed that misunderstandings of Alchemical symbols have spawned countless books of complete nonsense by authors who were either intentionally or unintentionally misleading their readers.

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Alchemy by Dennis Hauck does an excellent job of lifting this veil of secrecy and providing clear, detailed information. Hauck starts with an overview of Alchemy's origins in Egypt and goes on give well thought out and explained information related to spiritual Alchemy and laboratory Alchemy. I would highly recommend this book as a starting point for anyone interested in Alchemy or Hermeticism.

Fraternally,
Matt Gerbrandt
Senior Warden, Union Lodge #3



Tidings from the South

Greetings to all who are Reading this issue of the Beacon,

I would like to give a big thank you to Freemasonry for giving me the opportunity to become very close friends with my brother in-law. We knew of each other's existence but never really talked to one another. He found out that I was a Mason through the family channel. He gave me a call one day to ask how I liked being a Mason and that he was thinking about signing up. We hit it off after that. We became very close, spending lots of time together. I helped him through the degrees and I got to raise him to the Master Mason he is today. I couldn't have been more proud to be a Freemason at that very point in my Masonic Career. So thank you all my fellow Freemasons.

Sincerely,
Michael Persons
Junior Warden, Union Lodge # 3



From the Secretary's Desk

"Never forget that you must die; that death will come sooner than you expect... God has written the letters of death upon your hands. In the inside of your hands you will see the letters M.M. It means 'Memento Mori' - remember you must die." – Fr. John Furniss, C.Ss.R. (1809-1865)

Modern people live a life of luxury compared to our forebears. I think most of us would agree. We have access to air conditioning, running water, indoor "automagical" plumbing that keeps sanitation and the diseases that are related to it at bay.

We have automobiles and aeroplanes to get places quickly. We have telephone, telegraph, television, and the internet for near-instant communications. (While the relative merits of that are debatable at times, it is a luxury.) Modern medicine and a more sophisticated understanding of the natural world keeps us running longer, in better shape, and enjoying more of the journey through the various stages of life. Another luxury, not often discussed, because it tends to make modern people uncomfortable, is the luxury of having a somewhat “detached” relationship with death and the related disposition of mortal remains.

For our ancestors, death was more present in their daily lives. The causes of death haven’t really changed much; the usual suspects contributed to mortality: advanced age, accident, famine, war, and disease are all at fault, much as they are today. But in the past, many more accidents resulted in systemic infection which led to death. Certain diseases would lead to inevitable death, rather than possible cure. Famine and war occurred with monotonous regularity. People of those times, however, often didn’t have the luxury of having someone else prepare the bodies of the dead, “do we all holy rites”, transport them to the final resting place, or bury them. Very often, the family was responsible for preparing and wrapping the body. The wake and funeral would be managed at home. Members of the family and friends of the deceased would prepare the grave and transport the body to be laid to rest.

That being said, a grave has not always been a foregone conclusion to the process. At various times and in various places, cremation was preferred to burial. The Romans, Vikings, and Anglo-Saxons in particular, at different stages, were more likely to cremate their dead. Cremation became a more attractive option in the United States after the carnage and public health risks of large-scale battlefields and field hospitals that were a result of the Civil War engagements became concerns. Christianity and the belief that an intact body was necessary for full resurrection made burial much more common in Europe. But, even then, “intact body” came to mean different things as space became an issue – Europe, especially, is not that large, land mass-wise. European grave-diggers would very often bury a body for a period of time – just long enough for the flesh to decay – at which time the bones would be recovered, cleaned, and moved to

an ossuary. The grave would then be re-used. The gravedigger or cemetery sexton would have sections that they would rotate, knowing exactly how long to leave a body buried for the process to complete. The average was 5-7 years, depending on soil conditions. Markers would be temporary, at best, and often replaced with a plaque, describing the bones of relatively important people, or, in the case the more common folk, nothing to denote whose bones belonged to whom in the giant pile.

In the United States, we haven’t been at a loss for land, in most cases, so permanent burial with an associated marker is much more common. Several movements or schools of thought about the role of a cemetery in a community and how it should be managed have arisen. Almost all of them continue to be represented across the country. Churchyard graveyards are not uncommon in the middle and Western States; for most European communities in New England and the Northeast (and their derivatives) continues to be the most common practice. Community burial grounds and small family plots associated with farms and ranches are also sprinkled through the country.

Starting in the early nineteenth century, a movement started that would make cemeteries almost “park-like” in both design and intent. Called the “rural cemetery” movement or the “park movement”, the practitioners of this style of cemetery design were drawn to the ideals of nature, beauty, art, and relationship to death that were espoused by the Romantics. Cemeteries became situated on high places overlooking beautiful scenery, landscaped to accentuate natural features as much as possible and introduce bucolic elements that would please visitors. The intent was, in fact, to encourage visitors and it is no coincidence that many of the cemeteries designed in this way are more like parks than the burial ground or church-side graveyard. Nor that the pre-eminent designers of the period also designed parks and formal gardens, such as Lancelot “Capability” Brown (English gardens) and Frederick Law Olmstead (Central Park, Manhattan.) While the concept may seem a bit strange to us, today, cemeteries designed in this model were intended to be places where families could come for a buggy ride, perhaps to picnic, on a Sunday afternoon and pay their respects at the same time.

Our primary cemetery, McMinnville Masonic, conforms to some of the characteristics of a rural movement design, although it's unclear how much of that was intentional and how much was a happenstance of geography and available land parcels. We are on a high point, overlooking much of this part of the valley. Many large trees were kept (and many more allowed to grow as "volunteers") and the site is bucolic. Unfortunately, we don't get the visitor traffic that Olmstead and Brown might have envisioned – certainly no picnics that I'm aware of, but that would be a neat thing to see if people were comfortable with it. Lafayette Masonic also conforms with many of these forms, although it is shrouded by the tree-ring around the hilltop upon which it sits and is closed most of the time.

Over time, a shift occurred in terms of maintenance and upkeep. As cemeteries and graveyards became more associated with communities-writ-large and people became more dispersed (and to some extent, more affluent) the care and maintenance of grave sites became more the purview of the cemetery association or corporation. Where families would once care for their ancestor's graves, employees and volunteers with the cemetery took over that responsibility. "Perpetual Care" became more common and, with it, a move towards limiting both top-side markers and plot-defining features such as concrete curbing, both of which made large-scale, mechanized landscape maintenance both difficult and costly.

While we specifically sold "perpetual care" arrangements up to a point, now all of the graves are, for all intents and purposes, perpetual care. In the next several years (because it will likely take that long) we will be making some changes to the cemetery. Several years ago the Trustees started to preference flush-mounted markers in the 3rd Addition, primarily to make it easier to maintain with fewer people. We now have to start working on making other changes as the number of volunteers and our ability to pay for maintenance diminishes. The next phase of that will be removing concrete curbing to make more graves more accessible with the mowers and less man-power intensive and therefore less costly, both in time and treasure.

To that end, we'll be having a work-day at the cemetery on October 1st, 2016 from 9:00am to 1:00pm to start the process of removing some of the curbing that is in really bad shape, making it both a maintenance and safety problem. We'll be meeting

outside the maintenance shed and I'll be providing coffee and doughnuts at 8:30 am. If you'd like to RSVP, send me an email at unionlodge@onlinenw.com or call the Lodge office at 503-472-2341 and leave a message. We'd love to have you out. Besides helping with the routine maintenance, you may find a deeper connection by spending a little time amongst our metaphorical ancestors, by blood or association.

If you'd like to read more about any of the topics mentioned in this article, here are some suggestions:

- Sloane, David C. – "The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History"
- Laqueur, Thomas – "The Work of the Dead: A Cultural History of Mortal Remains"
- Aries, Phillippe and Helen Weaver – "The Hour of our Death: The Classic History of Western Attitudes Toward Death over the Last One Thousand Years"
- Koudounaris, Paul – "The Empire of Death: A Cultural History of Ossuaries and Charnel Houses"
- Brandt, J. Rasmus, Hakkon Roland, and Marina Prusac (Editors) – "Death and Changing Rituals: Function and meaning in ancient funerary practices"
- Yolam, Marilyn and Reid S. Yolam – "The American Resting Place: 400 Years of History Through Our Cemeteries and Burial Grounds"

Fraternally,
Frank Blair
Secretary

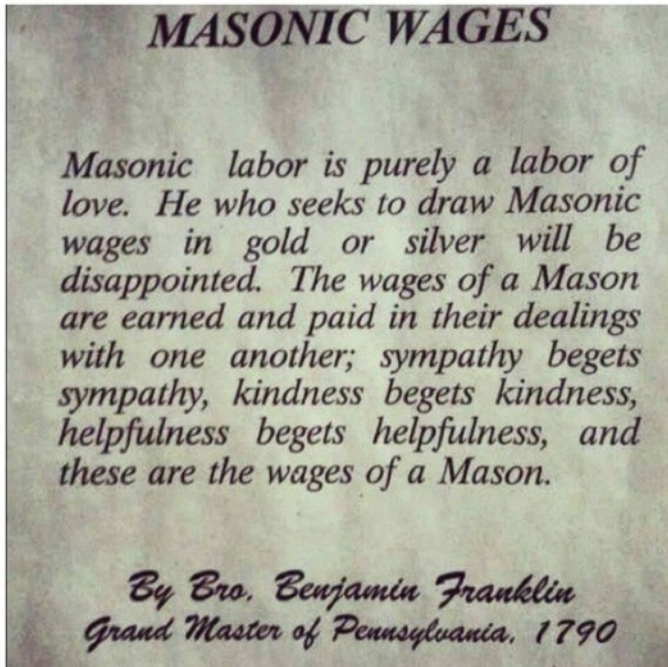


Some Thoughts from WB Johnny Edwards

We have added three slide-shows to the Lodge website showing before, during and after renovation photos of the Library or Fireplace Room. Click on the link below to view the shows.

www.unionlodge3.com/pictures.html

Here is a tidbit for your consideration:



Keep the Faith.

October 2016 Calendar

Oct 1 - Tuality # 7 - Stated 10:00 am
Oct 4 - Union # 3 - Stated 7:30 pm
Oct 4 - Holbrook # 30 - Stated 7:30 pm
Oct 5 - Rickreall # 110 - Stated 7:30 pm
Oct 6 - Newberg # 104 - Stated 7:30 pm
Oct 12 - Sheridan-Dayton # 64 - Stated 7:00 pm
Oct 25 - Union # 3 Trustees meeting 6:30 pm
 Officers meeting 7:30 pm

The Brothers of Union Lodge are encouraged to submit articles for the The Beacon. Submissions should be in Microsoft Word documents. Please email your articles to Tom Gardner at gardner_t@onlinew.com by the 15th of the month for inclusion in the following month's edition of The Beacon.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING MINUTES OF LODGE COMMUNICATIONS

To speed up our Stated and Special Communications, and to provide all brothers with the opportunity to review the minutes of the previous month's meeting(s) before the next meeting, WB Blair has made them available on the Union Lodge website. To have access to these documents you will need to obtain a password from WB Frank. Email him at unionlodge@onlinew.com and he will contact you with the password.

After you receive the password, please do the following:

1. On the menu bar on any page of the Lodge website, click on "Meeting Minutes."
2. Click on the red & white button labeled "Meeting Minutes."
3. In the Login box on the left side of the page, click on "Sign up."
4. You will be asked for your email address, a screen name (your name for example), the password provided by WB Frank, your location and your date of birth. NOTE: The date must be entered in dd/mm/yyyy format, or simple select the month, year and date from the calendar display.
5. Click the "Agree" box and then click "Submit."

You will receive an email from "server@serifwebresources.com" that contains a link to click to activate your account.

From then on you can view the minutes by simply logging in with you email address or screen name along with the magic password. The Brothers of Union Lodge are encouraged to submit articles for the The Beacon. Submissions should be in Microsoft Word documents. Please email your articles to Tom Gardner at gardner_t@onlinew.com by the 15th of the month for inclusion in the following month's edition of The Beacon.

Be sure to keep up with Lodge activities between editions of the Beacon by checking our website <http://www.unionlodge3.com>

or



Visit Union Lodge # 3 on Facebook and be sure to Like us.



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