



UNION LODGE # 3 A. F. & A. M. OF OREGON

PO Box 453 McMinnville, OR 97128

MASONIC NEWS & TRESTLEBOARD July 2015

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Greetings from the East!

We are now past our Annual Communications, and most of us will be preparing for or enjoying the Fourth of July weekend by the time we read this. Please have a Safe and Happy Fourth of July. The details for our picnic/barbeque are now firmed up, so please make plans for joining us in what could become a new summer tradition, and let our Secretary know how many of your friends or family will be there. It is a great opportunity to host someone who is curious about Masonry. Our Lodge uniform remains summer casual through July and August.

The last couple of months I have been talking about the William Morgan Affair. Here's the third part...

The events that occurred around William Morgan's disappearance are just as clouded in mystery as his claims to being a Mason were. We know that there was a mysterious fire set at Miller's print shop, where the upcoming book was to be published. Miller blamed this on the local Masons, who in turn blamed Miller himself for setting it as a move to raise interest in the upcoming book. We know that William Morgan was released from jail after his bond was paid by a group of Masons. By most accounts, he then left quietly in their wagon. We also know that he never returned home. Everything else surrounding his disappearance has been so hotly debated as to make it impossible to separate fact from fancy.

A local politician named Thurlow Weed was to figure prominently in what followed. He was the owner of the *Evening Journal*, a local Rochester newspaper which would become the main newspaper of the Anti-Masonic movement. He became the driving force behind an inquest into the disappearance, and a major accuser of the Masons involved. He would go on to become influential in national politics, trading on the notoriety this incident brought him to advance to a position of high political importance that would last for years in New York.

The local Masons held that they had paid William Morgan's fine, and given him money to walk away from his publication and return to Canada. The local anti-Masons, led by Weed,

sought to prove in any way possible that something much more dire had occurred. In the end, 54 Masons would be charged in 15 separate trials over the incident. As Morgan's death could not be confirmed, murder charges were never brought, and 10 men were convicted of kidnapping Morgan and given sentences ranging from 30 days to 28 months. Among those sentenced was Eli Bruce, Sheriff of Niagara County, and John Whitney, a confidant of then New York Governor and PGM William Clinton. The sentences were seen as overly light, and thus evidence of Masonic influence and control over the court system.

One of the more curious chapters of the incident surrounded a body which had washed up on the shores of Lake Ontario in late 1827. In the initial investigation, the body was noted as "unidentified" and buried. The wife of William Morgan had seen the body, and stated that it was not her husband. After Thurlow Weed became involved, another inquest was ordered and the body was identified as William Morgan, with Mrs. Morgan reversing her previous testimony. Thurlow Weed was later accused of mutilating the body to match Morgan's. When the wife of a local fisherman named Timothy Monroe came looking for her missing husband, the body was once again dug up and Mrs. Monroe positively identified it as her husband, noting that someone had shaved his beard. This was the ruling that stood, and the body was turned over to Mrs. Monroe to be re-interred (making, oddly enough, three times that the body was buried).

Continued on page 2

Union Lodge # 3 Masonic Family BBQ Picnic

Saturday, July 25th - 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Ed Grenfell Park Picnic Shelter

(To get to the park, turn North from Hwy 99W onto Baker Creed Rd. and proceed 4.4 miles to the park.)

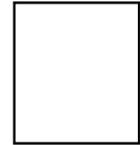
Brothers and their families are invited to join us for what we hope will become an annual summer event for our Lodge.

Menu: Hawaiian kalua roast pork,
roasted salmon,
roasted turkey
Assorted side dishes
Soda, Tea, Water

Plates, forks, etc. will be provided by the Lodge

**Please RSVP to WB Frank Blair at
unionlodge@onlinenw.com no later than July 19th.**

A free-will donation will be appreciated to defray costs.



MASONIC NEWS & TRESTLEBOARD **Page 2**

Published monthly when possible by Union Lodge # 3 A.F. & A.M. You are encouraged to submit articles for publication. Deadline for copy is the 15th of the month preceding publication date. All rights reserved to edit submitted copy.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

- July 1** Rickreall # 110 Stated 7:30 pm
- July 2** Newberg # 104 Stated, 7:30 pm
- July 4** Tuality # 6 Stated 10:00 am
- July 7** Union Lodge # 3 Stated 7:30 pm
- July 7** Holbrook #30 Stated 7:30 pm
- July 8** Sheridan-Dayton # 64 Dinner 6:00 pm
Lodge 7:00 pm
- July 28** Union Lodge Trustees 6:30 pm - Officers 7:30pm

Continued from page 1

In later years, Thurlow Weed would state that John Whitney, one of the men sentenced for the kidnapping, had given him a death-bed promise to write a confession to the murder but had died before he could do so. We know that this is a fabrication because John Whitney was actually very much alive at the time, and would not die for another nine years. Mr. Whitney, however, told a very different story. He stated that he had talked with Governor Clinton about the upcoming publication, and been advised to attempt to “purchase” the publication. One thousand dollars was made available for the offer, and Whitney had offered five hundred dollars to William Morgan in exchange for the promise to move to Canada and never return without permission. He stated that the kidnapping had actually been staged with Morgan’s assistance in order to get Morgan out of a legal contact with his partners in the upcoming publication, and that Morgan has been released just outside Hamilton, Ontario.

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Whatever the truth actually was, we know that the Governor of New York, William Clinton, offered a reward of \$1,000 dollars for information proving that Morgan was alive. Alive or not, the reward was never collected.

During normal times, all this would have been seen as the political skullduggery that it obviously was and in the end would have amounted to no more than a historical footnote. But in the highly-charged political and religious climate of the 1820’s, it would become much more. And its impact on Masonry would be nothing short of catastrophic.

Continued next month

Reminder

For our July and August Stated meetings we will dressing in our **summer uniform**. So put away the suit and tie and relax in slacks and a sport shirt. Call it “business casual” if you please.

Just remember, jeans and shorts are not considered “business casual.”



Keep up with current happenings in Union Lodge # 3 on Facebook, and be sure to Like us.