

TROWEL



GRAND LODGE OF MASONS IN MASSACHUSETTS SPRING 2018

**Greet Your
New
Brother**

**Fun For Charity With the
Brothers of the
White Ash**



From the East of Grand Lodge

PAUL F. GLEASON

Brethren,

Spring at last! I've read many lodge newsletters that show May and June will see a marked increase in newly minted Master Masons. Good news!

Looking ahead, our Membership Committee has planned several exciting events for the Craft to enjoy. On October 27th, there will be a Bow Tie Benefit, a gala banquet at Grand Lodge in Boston. Attendees will receive a specially-designed bow tie which they may wear as part of official regalia throughout the remainder of my term.

You've heard of the Golden Globe Awards, but what about the Golden Gavels? On January 26th, I will be hosting the inaugural Golden Gavel Awards at the Scottish Rite Museum in Lexington. We will be honoring Lodges and individuals that excel in different parts of the Craft at this new, prestigious, black-tie event. Five nominees, and their spouses/partners, for each category will be invited to the event and recognized for their achievements. "The Academy" will determine the winners, who will be announced and provided with a Golden Gavel they can truly be proud of. Information on the available categories, and how to submit nominations, will be available in the near future, so keep your eyes peeled. You don't want to miss this!

I am pleased to share that we are already deep into the planning of our One Day Class, to be held on March 9, 2019. This is a venue for potential candidates who cannot commit to regularly scheduled degrees, but still want to join our Craft. Promote this event to friends and acquaintances you know who could benefit from membership! It could be the closer that convinces them to ask for an application.

So there you have what Grand Lodge is doing for membership growth. But there are other, and more important, contributors - you and your lodge! Yes, recruitment and retention need to happen at your lodge! Your lodge's Membership Committee members are the key players who must publish articles, contact members, recognize birthdays and anniversaries, and organize other special events that make everyone glad they belong to their Masonic lodge. Make it happen in your lodge!

Cordially & Fraternally,

Paul F. Gleason

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Grand Master of Masons in Massachusetts
MW Paul F. Gleason



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How Can I Help You?

I hear this when I'm in any store: sometimes, it is an annoyance when I'm just wandering, other times it is an opportunity for me to find what I need. Be we are Freemasons and we ask ourselves daily: what can we do to help? We are rare in the world: we are men dedicated to improving ourselves, to helping others, and bettering our communities. But how do we do it? We feed the hungry. We build ramps for those who are in need. We visit the infirm. But is that enough?



Of course, we help our Brothers. When asked by a worthy Brother, we extend our cable tow as far as we can without injury to ourselves or family. Sometimes that means buying a meal. Other times that means sitting in a hospital room. It can even mean donating a liver. But is that enough?

What of the quiet men who walk slowly from their cars to their cubicles? What of the men who wish they could find friends having outgrown their High School and College chums? What of the men facing the one of life's many joyous crunch-times, getting married, becoming a father, or buying a home? What about men facing sad times? What can we do for these men? What can we do that we know through our personal experience that will be beneficial?

We know the answer because we have the answer: Freemasonry and our doors are open. This issue is dedicated to Brother A. B., the unknown Brother, the Brother on the horizon, the Brother whom we haven't yet met.

Knowing that I am a Mason and that it would be a benefit to just about every man to be a Mason, brings a bit of spring into my step. That spring is from the knowledge that I can help. When a new co-worker stops by or when I meet another father on the lacrosse field, I know I will bring Masonry to him (or my car will with my new Freemasonry plates!) And then we shall see. Some men are atheists and don't have the option to be a Mason. But most men will benefit.

It is our job to reach our hands, confident that in our friendly handshake we may help Brother A.B. to become a Brother in Freemasonry.

Fraternally, *Lee H. Fenn*

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
JULY 17, 2018

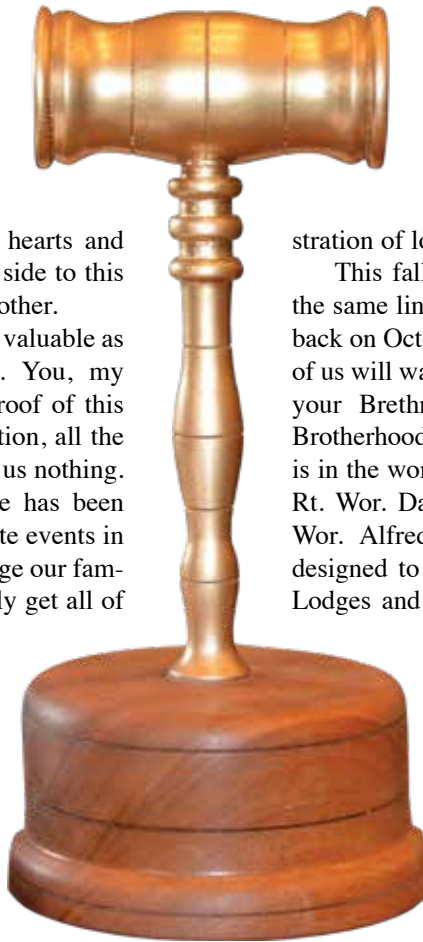
The Gavel's Are Coming, The Gavel's Are Coming

By Rt. Wor. Peter M. Culbertson

When many of us hear the words Membership Committee, our minds turn to thoughts of Square and Compass Days, Elevator Talks, and other such initiatives designed to bolster our ranks with new and exciting Brethren. While it is true that these and many other events have been sprung forth from the hearts and minds of this committee, there is another side to this committee which begins with you, our Brother.

You see, having membership is only as valuable as what you share with that membership. You, my Brothers, are the foundation, walls, and roof of this vast structure, and without your participation, all the new membership in the world would gain us nothing. To that end, the Membership Committee has been working hard in the past few years to create events in which every member can participate, engage our families, are open to our friends, and hopefully get all of our minds working on the possibilities of what can be when we band together as a Fraternity. Some of these have already come to pass.

The very successful 300th Anniversary Gala held in Natick last fall saw a full house with Brothers and their Ladies dancing the night away. It provided an awesome opportunity to meet Brothers from across



our jurisdiction, and to introduce our Ladies to the Brothers they had been hearing about for so long. It showed those who attended the undying love between MW Albert T. Ames and his wife, as they waltzed across the dance floor, giving us all a wonderful demonstration of love and class.

This fall, there will be another opportunity along the same lines, as the Bow Tie Dinner makes a comeback on October 27th. This night will be one that none of us will want to miss, and a great opportunity to meet your Brethren, and help us raise money for the Brotherhood Fund. Another event, a Ritual Competition is in the works for late this summer. The brainchild of Rt. Wor. David Blake, and being resurrected by Rt. Wor. Alfredo Canhoto, the Ritual Competition is designed to be a team building exercise in our Blue Lodges and its goal is to improve the quality of our work. Even more importantly, it is designed to get Brothers together.

This January, we are bringing out what we hope to be a Cornerstone Event for the Fraternity for years to come. The Golden Gavel Awards will make their debut January 26, 2019, at the Scottish Rite Museum in Lexington. The mission of this event is simple: *continued on page 28*

A Cable Tow Story

eBay Sale of a Past Master's Jewel

Part 1 of 4

by Rt. Wor. Eugene A. "Cappy" Capobianco

Just after lunchtime on New Year's Day, 2017, I decided to look on eBay as I regularly do. I'm often in search of Masonic items, preferably from the Shrine, Massachusetts' Consistory, and Boston Commandery. One of my saved searches is Past Master's jewels.

I have previously sought out and returned to various Lodges and Masonic bodies many of the jewels that belonged to them.

Intriguingly, I came across a Past Master's jewel from Rhode Island and, because many of my Masonic friends live there, I would have been delighted to pass on this find if it was from one of their Lodges. I proceeded to look over the listing, and noticed that it was a Past Master's jewel from a Lodge in RI I was familiar with. As I continued to read the item description, it stated who it was originally presented to by means

of the engraving on the back, with the master's name and year for him to wear it. This would remain so until he either presents it to another Master of his Lodge, or if he passes to the Celestial Lodge above.

At that point, it is usually returned by the family back to the Lodge, or it ends up being sold for gold, or put up for sale on eBay. But now, the listing took an interesting turn when the seller stated that it was presented to him when he became Master. I was infuriated by this so I immediately contacted the seller. I zoomed in on *continued on page 32*

The Lodge is A People

by Rt. Wor. & Rev. Matthew J. Wissell

*I am the Lodge! You are the Lodge!
We are the Lodge together!
All who walk as Hiram,
all around the world!
Yes, we're the Lodge together!*

*The Lodge is not a building;
the Lodge is not a chamber;
the Lodge is not a resting place;
the Lodge is a people.*

Some of you might recognize this as an adapted version of the hymn "We Are the Church," by Richard Avery and Donald Marsh. It was written by the pair to help remind children that the Church is a people and not a building. The song reminds children of all ages that whatever triumphs and tribulations the Church may experience, all contribute to its character and development. The same principles apply to Freemasonry as well. It is good to be reminded of that from time to time.

The Lodge is the men who belong to it. It is not the building where gatherings and events take place. It is not the room where the meetings are held and degrees conferred. It is not a place where we go just to hang out and have a good time with our friends. The Lodge is so much more than all of those things. The Lodge is a group of men who have agreed to share a portion of their lives together.

An application, either for initiation or affiliation, is a request by the petitioner to share his life with the group. A ballot is an acceptance or rejection of that offer. The purpose of the ritual is to set the basic parameters for the sharing of our lives. These are the rules we agree to govern our experiences together. They are the foundation of our interactions with one another. The entire process is designed to facilitate our relationships with each other, because the Lodge is people sharing their lives together.

We are taught when we join the Craft that the ultimate goal of our participation is self improvement. We are told the first step in that process is discovering how to keep our passions in check. This is so important. You cannot truly connect with another person if your selfish interests are in control of everything. Good friendships

are never rooted in some ulterior motive. They only work when both persons are willing to sacrifice for the sake of the relationship.

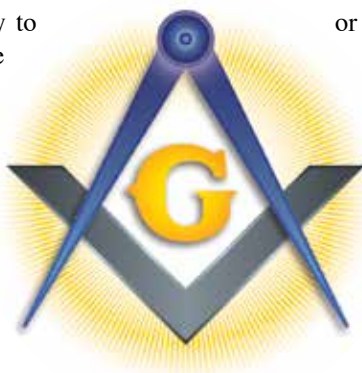
The nature of our obligations are designed to help facilitate that part of our relationship. If you think about the things we agree to do, and not do toward each other, they help us eliminate some basic activities that destroy relationships. They also have us engage in behaviors that build relationships up. There are things we do not discuss in a Lodge Communication for that same reason. It is obvious that the founders of our Fraternity intended for us promote actions that bond us together, and avoid actions that drive us apart.

We claim to hold ourselves to a higher standard. We have tenets and virtues that distinguish us from others. We have charities that create a public image for us as well. If we talk the talk, we really should endeavor to walk the walk. New Brothers are watching to see if we take our words seriously. The community at large is viewing us with curious eyes as well. Are we really who we say we are?

I remember a church where I formally served participated in a community wide event where different organizations sold food items as a fundraiser. The group next to us was a service club type group. A young member of our church watched and listened to them as they hung around their booth. At the end of the day, he turned to us and stated, "I wouldn't want to be one of them, all they do is smoke and tell dirty jokes." They may speak of higher virtues in their ceremonies and formal presentations, but the public view did not align with them. It didn't matter who they said they were; the teen saw something different in them.

I challenge us to live up to the most excellent aspects of our beautiful Fraternity. Let us engage in those activities which build up one another. Let us refrain from those things which drive wedges between us. Let us not allow the divisions and strife within our communities to cause separation among us. We claim to be better. Let us show the world all that we can be. ■

Rt. Wor. and Rev. Matthew J. Wissell is the current pastor of Eastham United Methodist Church and a Past Master of Bay Path and Mount Lebanon Lodges.



THE MARCH 2018 QUARTERLY COMMUNICATION

OF THE GRAND LODGE OF MASSACHUSETTS



by Wors. Lee H. Fenn and H. Robert Huke

Three nor'easters had blown through Boston in the three weeks prior to the Spring Quarterly Communication of the Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts. Regardless of the threatening fourth nor'easter that day, the communication commenced at 1:30 on March 13, 2018, when the Grand Master of Masons in Massachusetts, Most Worshipful Paul F. Gleason, entered the Lodge room.

The Color Guard was the Masonic Secretaries association, consisting of Wor. James Baxter, Good Samaritan Lodge; Wor. William Cheetham, St. James Lodge; Rt. Wor. William Currier, North Reading Lodge, and President of the Association. After the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem, Rt. Wor. Bro. Currier explained the purpose of the Association to the assembled Brethren.

The Brethren sang Oh God Our Help in Ages Past and Rt. Wor. and Rev. Keith Alderman led the assembled in prayer. The Grand Master declared the Quarterly Communication open.

The past Grand Masters of the Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts in attendance were M. Wors. Albert Timothy Ames, Donald G. Hicks, Jr., and Harvey John Waugh.

The First Responders in attendance were Rt. Wors. Jerry Bergeron (Captain), David Maxim, Kevin Hamel, Wors. Jack MacNeill, Craig Erickson, Ed Burg, and Ryan Matthews.

M. Wor. Bro. Ames reported the Recognition of Proxies, Rt. Wor. Robert V. Jolly, Jr., gave a report on from the Committee on Charters and By-Laws, and Rt. Wor. Archie Campbell reported from the Committee on Records. All reports were accepted.

The Grand Master called Rt. Wor. Kamel Oussayef and designated him the Grand Representative of The Grand Lodge of Quebec near the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

Rt. Wor. Scott T. Jareo, Deputy Grand Master, had the sad duty of announcing the necrology. Rt. Wor. and Rev. Bro. Alderman expressed our grief in prayer.

In further difficult news, the Grand Master moved for six suspensions and two expulsions for men whose conduct was unbecoming of a Mason. In addition to these men, two

The Grand Master introduced to the Brethren assembled the distinguished guests:

M. Excel. Dana A. Jackson, Grand High Priest, Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Massachusetts
Sir Knight Glen M. Cunningham, Rt. Eminent Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery, Knights Templar, and the Appendant Orders, of Massachusetts and Rhode Island

Representatives of The Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry for the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction of the USA

Ill. Donald M. Moran, 33°, Deputy for Massachusetts
Ill. Robert C. Schremser, 33°, Active for Massachusetts

Representatives of The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts

Rt. Wor. Gerald Thaxton, Junior Grand Warden
Rt. Wor. Wilbur Evans, Sr., Grand Marshal Emeritus

Ill. Harlan L. Woods, Jr., Potentate, Aleppo Shrine, Ancient Arabic, Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine
Rt. Wor. and Dad Philip Drouin, Executive Officer, Order of the DeMolay, Massachusetts

letters of reprimand have been issued. "It is with hopes that they [the suspended and reprimanded] will strongly consider their actions and correct their behavior so harmony may once again prevail and the business of brotherly love in our fraternity may move forward," said the Grand Master.

"Bro. Grand Marshal, you will present the following Brothers to the East: Bros. Donald M. Moran and Mason Russell," the Grand Master said. Upon arrival in the East, the Grand Master presented these worthy Brothers with Joseph Warren Medals.

The Grand Master asked that the Masters and Wardens from the following lodges present themselves in the following order:

*Amity-Mosaic Lodge
Charity Lodge
Daniel Webster Lodge
DeWitt Clinton Lodge
Frank W. Thompson Lodge
King David Lodge*



Left: Wor. James Baxter, Good Samaritan Lodge, Rt. Wor. William Currier, North Reading Lodge and President of the Secretary's Association, and Wor. William Cheetham, St. James Lodge pledge their allegiance to the flag after presenting the colors.
Right: The Grand Master designated Rt. Wor. Kamel Oussayef the Grand Representative to The Grand Lodge of Quebec.

Marine Lodge (unable to attend due to weather)

Meridian Lodge

Middlesex Lodge

Milton Lodge

Mount Holyoke Lodge

Mount Moriah Lodge

Mystic Valley Lodge

Norumbega Fraternity Lodge

Orient Lodge

St. John's Lodge Newburyport

Saint Matthew's Lodge

United Brethren Lodge

William Sutton Lodge

William Parkman Lodge

The Grand Master greeted each representative in the East and presented him with The Grand Master's Award.

After bestowing this award upon the above lodges, the Grand Master called on his Grand Marshal to present Rt. Wor. Paul Craigie, District Deputy Grand Master of the 13th District to the East. Rt. Wor. Bro. Craigie presented to the Grand Master donations from the 13th District and

William Parkman Lodge.

The Grand Master opened the East for any other presentations to the Grand Master.

The Grand Master thanked all present "in the aftermath of our third nor'easter this March." He made three announcements:

- 1) "We are starting up a state-wide CPR Training Initiative with the goal of having two to four CPR instructors in each district. Your District Deputy Grand Master and District Service Officer will approach you later in the year to see if you are interested in becoming a CPR instructor within your district. I hope many of you will respond to this offer. More information will be available on MassMasons.org."
- 2) "I suggest that someone from each lodge log into find-massmoney.com to ascertain if your lodge has any abandoned dividends, interest or other negotiable instruments that you might reclaim." (There are both Blue Lodge and York Rite Institutions listed on this site, which is run by the state.)

THE GRAND MASTER'S

Milton Lodge



Mount Moriah Lodge



“FOR LODGES THAT PURSUED THE AWARD BUT FELL SHORT, I HOPE YOU AGREE THAT IT PROVIDES A GOOD TEMPLATE PROGRAM FOR ANY LODGE TO FOLLOW. I HOPE TO SEE AN EVEN BIGGER POOL OF RECIPIENTS NEXT YEAR!”

3) “We have several Education events coming up between now and our next Quarterly: Master’s Path (with a Secretary’s breakout) is scheduled in East Longmeadow on the 31st of this month and in Wakefield on the 19th of May; Treasurer’s training will be offered in Marlboro on the 31st and in East Longmeadow on May 19th.”

“Just before the Super Bowl, your Grand Master was overtaken by a fit of complacency that I wish to share with you in the hope that we might be spared a recurrence next year. As I heard phrases such as ‘What will we do with six rings, there’re only five fingers on a hand?’ It was suggested to me by a former member of Grand Lodge that I reach a friendly agreement with the Grand Master of Pennsylvania on the game’s outcome. Accordingly, I called Rt. Wor. Eugene Herritt and offered a gallon of Boston Clam Chowdah for the best of Philadelphia cheese steak Hoagies. Well, we know how that turned out. Take due notice and govern yourselves accordingly. Does anyone have a job for a former member of Grand Lodge? He’s well-qualified, but rather rash in his suggestions,” joked the Grand Master to the laughter of all in attendance.

The Grand Master became more serious by discussing

the expulsions and suspensions. “While it is always sad, it is solely for the good of our Fraternity that we do this. Unfortunately, I often wonder about the work the Lodge investigation Committee did when these individual’s applications were processed.”

The Grand Master reminded the Brethren that while we

are seeking new members, that we not let “that enthusiasm distract us from the importance of adequate background investigation.” He said lodges should follow the procedures outlined in brochures from the Supply Department.

“Did you see how many Grand Master Awards were just given out? 20 of them! I’m sure that most of you know how difficult it is [to earn] this award, said the Grand Master with joy. He recalled that planning begins before the Master is installed,

the lodge spends the entire year fulfilling the requirements, and not all lodges that try will receive the award. “For Lodges that pursued the award but fell short, I hope you agree that it provides a good template program for any lodge to follow. I hope to see an even bigger pool of recipients next year!”

Our Grand Master directed the attention of the Brethren to Membership. “It is easier to retain a member than to gain



Rt. Wors. Donald M. Moran and Mason Russel enjoy a laugh with the Grand Master after being surprised to receive Joseph Warren Awards.

AWARD RECIPIENTS

Saint Matthew’s Lodge



William Parkman Lodge



continued on next page

a new one,” said the Grand Master. “In that vein, we have found that the Receivership Program has been very effective for retaining and rejuvenating our lodges. Since its inception, the Receivership Program has covered 19 lodges. Of these, 13 have returned to light, 5 are still in process, and only one has gone dark! Over 1,400 brethren helped lighten lodges and another 800 are still in process toward light.” The Grand Master thanked the Receivers, Observers, and Administrators of the Receivership Program.

The Grand Master, in thinking of individual members, pointed the Brethren to the recently released video interviews of former members where they explain why they lost interest in membership. It is available for viewing on MassMasons.org. “It is not entertaining. It’s a series of lessons in what could have been done to retain these valued assets. Note the tone of each of the interviews. These men still want to be Masons.”

A new series of modules for the Lodge of Instruction are addressing these Masons without membership. Also, the District Membership officers will take action to urge every lodge to call each of their members every year.

The Grand Master asked, “A quick show of hands here: how many lodges have indeed contacted, or at least attempted to contact, each of their members?” Some hands went up. “Ok, thank you for that. We can do better Brethren!” “Further planned activities aimed at giving back value to our members are being developed, and will be announced in the near future.”

The Grand Master reported that in the first half of the Masonic year, Ezekiel Bates Lodge has raised 11 new members, Saint John’s (Newburyport) has raised 7, Sinim and Essex Lodges each raised 5. “A good start Brethren, and I know there are several more raisings scheduled for this and next month.”

The Grand Master asked lodges to raise their hands if they raised three, two, or at least one Master Mason this year. Hands around the hall went up. He asked about Entered Apprentices and Fellow Crafts waiting for the next degree. Again, hands were raised.

The Grand Master thanked the lodges for their hard work and looks forward to June when all hands would be raised.

He then talked about the “Bow Tie Benefit” fundraiser later this year.



“We intend to offer a special evening for our ladies, raise a little money for our Brotherhood fund, and engender a positive feeling about Freemasonry which might inspire our members to recruit more members for the biggest new program on the horizon: on Saturday, March 9th next year [2019], we will be holding a One Day Class. We will conduct the degrees here in Boston, and we hope to add additional locations if the demand exceeds what our headquarters here can handle.” The Grand Master asked at least one proficient ritualist from each District to volunteer for one degree team for the One Day Class.

THE GRAND MASTER'S AWARD RECIPIENTS

Amity-Mosaic Lodge



Charity Lodge



Daniel Webster Lodge



The Grand Master was presented with donations from several generous Lodges and Associations



He reminded the assembled that we will still be performing a full investigation on all the candidates for the degrees. The Western gate must be guarded vigorously. All the normal procedures, investigating, balloting, and collection of fees must be followed. An additional procedure for One Day Class candidates is they need to be registered. An announcement will be made regarding this process.

“A One Day Class represents another option for a man to experience our degree work,” said the Grand Master. In addition to ritualists, instructors will be needed for the Lodge of Instruction sessions between degrees for the can-

didates. “We hope to work with all of our One Day Class candidates more following the degrees, by assigning mentors to encourage each of them to pursue the Rookie and Master Builder Awards. We will have some incentives for lodges and candidates who participate, so keep an eye out for more information as it becomes available.”

Upon conclusion of his remarks, our Grand Master received a standing ovation. After singing America the Beautiful with the Brethren, the Grand Master declared the Quarterly Communication of the Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts closed in ample form. ■

DeWitt Clinton Lodge



Frank W. Thompson Lodge



King David Lodge



continued on next page

Grand Masters of Massachusetts

by Rt. Wor. Walter Hunt



Most Worshipful William Parkman

1863-1865

Sea Change

*The twenty ninth installment in the
continuing series focused on our past
Massachusetts Grand Masters.*

One of the most distinguished men to occupy the Oriental Chair of our Grand Lodge was William Parkman, who served as Grand Master from 1863 to 1865—a particularly tumultuous time in the history of Massachusetts Freemasonry: a war was raging between North and South, the Temple in Boston was consumed by fire, and—though this is only apparent in retrospect—the leadership of our Grand Lodge was in the middle of a great sea change, ushering in a new group of Grand Masters who would lead the Grand Lodge for decades to come.

For some time there has been some mystery regarding the election that brought Brother Parkman to the East of Grand Lodge in 1862. Two unusual things stand out about this choice: first, that Parkman, unlike every Grand Master since Henry Price, was not a permanent member of Grand Lodge (a Deputy Grand Master or Grand Warden); and second, that he was elected in place of a sitting Grand Master who had just completed his second—not third—year, William D. Coolidge. Neither the Proceedings of Grand Lodge, nor Thomas Roy's *Stalwart Builders*, the existing authority on our history, provided any insight into the reason why he was chosen and Coolidge was rejected. Indeed, in isolation—considering only the 1862 election, the only one in which a sitting Grand Master was deliberately turned out—there is no ready explanation. But in the context of the years that preceded it, one presents itself.

A Pillar of Society

William Parkman was born in 1811 in the North End of Boston, a descendant of a long-resident family. He entered business at a young age and was made a partner at age twenty-two, and was a member of Boston's City Council; he was involved in the building of the Public Library, and an active member of the Unitarian Church—a true pillar of Boston society.

In 1844, at age thirty-three, he was admitted a member of the Lodge of St. Andrew, and became its Master in 1857, serving three years. He was named as a Director of Grand Lodge, though he never served as a line officer or as a District Deputy Grand Master. And yet in 1861 he received a handful of votes for Grand Master, and in 1862 was overwhelmingly elected.

Two things stand out regarding this. First, Parkman was already well-known to the members of Grand Lodge and showed himself

THE GRAND MASTER'S AWARD RECIPIENTS

Meridian Lodge



Middlesex Lodge



Mount Holyoke Lodge



more than equal to the Grand Mastership as described later in this article, despite not having served in the subordinate offices; and second, M. Wor. Bro. Coolidge seemed to hold no particular animus toward Parkman or the Grand Lodge, as he continued to attend and serve in various capacities until his death in 1885.

The Letter

A letter has recently come into the possession of the Library that sheds light on this mystery, and has led to the consideration of a theory that reveals some of the “inside baseball” that dominated the workings of Grand Lodge, ultimately leading to the election of Dame and William Sewall Gardner after the Civil War—two much younger men who would have a profound effect on the Grand Lodge during and well beyond their terms as Grand Master. It should be understood that this is conjectural, based on the author’s understanding of the period and taking the contents of the letter at face value.

In 1875, Dr. Winslow Lewis, Jr., who had been Grand Master in 1855 and 1856 and again in 1860, died after a long illness. His departure was a significant and tragic event: he had been an influential and beloved figure in Grand Lodge for nearly forty years, and fully a third of the very thick 1875 Proceedings consists of encomiums, memorials, correspondence and biography about Lewis and his life and work as a doctor and a Mason. At the time of his death, a committee was appointed by Grand Master Percival Everett to prepare a set of memorial resolutions, with Past Grand Master John T. Heard as

its chairman. Heard (evidently) wrote a letter to R. W. George G. Smith, Past Deputy Grand Master, who knew Lewis very well and had helped introduce him to the Fraternity, asking him to compose the resolutions. In his reply, Bro. Smith refused, and provided an account that he had evidently kept to himself for sixteen years—but which he now poured out to Heard, excusing himself from the duty. According to Smith, Lewis had participated in a scheme to deny him the opportunity to serve as Grand Master in December 1859, due to a personal “pique” led by Brother William C. Martin, who at that time was a Grand Lecturer. Smith claimed that he had been offered

the position in the summer of 1859 with, seemingly, no objection, and had arrived at Grand Lodge in December of that year with every expectation that he would be elected—but instead, that support went to Lewis, who received the necessary majority on the second ballot. Far from being innocent, Smith assumed Lewis had to have known that it was in process, and told Smith nothing of the matter, much to Smith’s surprise and chagrin.

Smith felt betrayed, both at the time and in 1875, when he told the story to Heard, who had been sitting Grand Master in 1859. From the tone of the letter, it seems clear that Smith did not consider Heard complicit: it was “certain permanent members” and Bro. Martin himself, as well as influence among the “country Brethren” (Masters and Wardens, who, after all, represented more than two-thirds of the vote). Almost everyone who had participated in this seeming injustice was now gone—almost all of the then-permanent mem-

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Winthrop House, the home of the Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts, before the fire.



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bers, Martin (Senior Grand Warden in 1863, who had died in office), and, of course, Lewis himself. Smith was now 80 years of age (Heard was only 66 in 1875, and had only been 50 when his term ended). Within three years he too would be dead. His grudge, such as it was, would not prevent him from signing the resolutions—he simply had no desire to pen them.

Lewis was only four years younger than Smith in 1859. He had been born in 1799, Smith in 1795; but he had come to Masonry in 1831, in the middle of the anti-Masonic storm, while Smith had been raised in 1819 and was an active and loyal member of the Fraternity during the entire period. Smith was from Columbian Lodge, where Lewis was raised, and Smith had helped introduce Lewis to the Craft. Clearly they were old, and Smith certainly considered them close, friends—and according to Smith, Lewis was among his closest supporters in his effort to become Grand Master. Clearly Smith never forgave him for what he perceived as a cruel betrayal.

Why did it happen? Smith's account was that those with the power to deny him election had, as it were, "poisoned the well." But why? It wasn't an age thing: most—nearly all—of the permanent members were approximately the same age, and belonged to the same generation—either survivors of the anti-Masonic period or raised toward its end. Past Grand Masters—Robinson, Raymond, Randall, Dean, and of course Heard—were men he would have called friends, as were most of the other permanent members.

It wasn't lack of respect for him personally or professionally: He had been Deputy Grand Master for three years under Rev. Paul Dean (1838-1840); he was well known at Grand Lodge as an engraver, and the diplomas for Master Masons in use in that era were printed from a plate he had prepared (and the well-known picture of the Boston Masonic temple, recently sold to the U. S. Government, was from an engraving that he had created). When his memorial was presented to Grand Lodge in 1878, it had all the traditional tokens of respect and admiration—indeed, it

ends with these rousing words: "They who endured the burden of the conflict are fast going to their rest. Every passing gale sighs over another veteran's grave, and ere long the last sage and the last soldier will be seen no more. Soon, too soon, will you seek in vain for even one who can tell you of that day of stout hearts and strong hands. To the memory of one of the most zealous, efficient, and useful of that noble band of Brothers, we here record our tribute of gratitude, admiration, and affection." And, of course, it was composed by men who knew Bro. Smith, but were not of his generation—they primarily knew him as an old soldier, a relic of times past. No mention of consideration of his candidacy appears in that text, or any other, and it is unlikely that most of the brethren of 1878 even knew of it. By that time, most of them were gone.

Assuming his story is true—and there is no reason to believe otherwise—it is possible that Rt. Wor. Brother Smith was turned aside simply because voters at Grand Lodge had no desire to elect a man for three years who belonged to that generation. Lewis, if elected, may have made an assurance that he would serve for one year—his third year, postponed after 1856 for health reasons—and would step aside, and possibly in favor of the man who was elected Junior Grand Warden at the same time: William D. Coolidge, then a District Deputy Grand Master. Lewis was 60, but Coolidge was a mere 51, and with the prospect of a civil war on the horizon, it was felt that a younger man would be more suitable. It might also have been believed that Lewis was "one of them" and Coolidge would be bid-dable and amenable to sound advice from the more senior members of Grand Lodge. Coolidge would serve three years, and then Grand Lodge would turn to one of the up and coming younger men to succeed him—Gamwell, Goddard, Baker, or even Gardner, who was very young (only 32) but already serving as Grand Marshal.

And so it was done. Lewis was elected, Coolidge was elected, and a year later Coolidge became the choice of the Grand Lodge as Grand Master. At the time of his election the country was already coming apart, and by the spring of

THE GRAND MASTER'S AWARD RECIPIENTS

Saint John Lodge



United Brethren Lodge



William Sutton Lodge



his first year, the Confederates had fired on Fort Sumter, inaugurating hostilities.

Whatever the gray heads at Grand Lodge had expected, it is certainly possible that a civil war wasn't it—and Coolidge's response was not apparently ideal. He granted dispensations for regimental military lodges, and permitted a number of men to be made Masons without the usual waiting times, both at home and on campaign. It is suspected that this, more than anything else, contributed to the opposition to his government. Already in December 1861 there were votes against him in the annual elections; 25 ballots were cast for William Parkman, a past master of the Lodge of St. Andrew and a trustee of Grand Lodge. Some time during the next twelve months this opposition intensified and became organized; perhaps these opponents made some threat to Coolidge, indicating their intention to unseat him. Unfortunately there is no evidence of any kind—merely the cold fact of his defeat and the election of Parkman as Grand Master in December 1862. If there was a plan regarding Coolidge as described above, it had been completely unhorsed by the end of 1862, if for no other reason than the members of Grand Lodge who had placed Winslow Lewis in the Grand Mastership and—without question—assisted in replacing Coolidge with Parkman were starting to disappear from the scene. If Parkman was their response to Coolidge's departure from their expectations or intentions, his dynamic leadership and relative youth allowed him to simply outlive them.

Parkman went steps further: his choice for Deputy Grand Master was the 44-year-old Charles C. Dame, who was only five years in the Fraternity; in 1863 his Senior Grand Warden was William Baker (41, raised 1845 at age 23); 1864 his Senior Grand Warden was William Sewall Gardner (37, raised 1852 at age 25). He was the leading actor in a major sea change in leadership in the Fraternity. Dame became Grand Master at the end of 1865 at 46; Gardner, in 1868 at age 41.

Viewed in this context, all of it—Lewis' selection, Coolidge's replacement, Parkman's leadership, Dame's and Parkman's administration—all fit into an overall pattern, and explain the basic sequence of events. It is almost all speculative, but it is by no means unreasonable. Most unusually, it's based on a "zealous, efficient and useful" member of the Fraternity who was denied the opportunity to serve as Grand Master and never forgot it.

Parkman's Grand Mastership

Returning to Parkman's service as Grand Master: it was

extraordinary and extensive.

He chartered twenty-five lodges, including the first Massachusetts lodge in China (Ancient Landmark). He maintained the dispensations for the army lodges granted by his predecessor, only revoking them at the end of hostilities.

In April 1864, he dealt with the tragedy of the destruction of Winthrop House, the home of Grand Lodge in Boston. Under his leadership, the Grand Lodge proceeded to commission the building of a magnificent new temple. On that subject, he remarked in 1865:

We express the hope to see this noble edifice completed within the next year. When finished it will be an ornament to our beloved city, and a monument of the taste, public spirit, and liberality of the fraternity. It will be one of the most magnificent buildings in Boston. . . it would seem that we ought to have a Home in the capital of our State, to which all our brethren can point with pride and say, "It was erected by our Fraternity."

He made numerous rulings, and was considered an expert on Masonic jurisprudence. He ruled on candidates, on the criteria for qualification of Masters and the definition of Past Masters, and on the requirements for Lodge records.

As Grand Master he was an inspiration for the Brethren, from the many new members to those in war service to those presiding, or serving as District Deputies. His leadership was highly praised.

**“As Grand Master
he was an inspiration
for the Brethren,
from the many new members
to those in war service to
those presiding, or serving
as District Deputies.”**

Later Years

For more than twenty years after his service as Grand Master, Brother Parkman was a highly respected member of Grand Lodge, serving on many committees and providing sage advice. Parkman was highly sought after as a Masonic speaker, and a number of his addresses can be found in our Proceedings. He became the senior Past Grand Master in 1885 at the death of his predecessor. His death in 1892, after a long life, was still a shock to his Brethren, as it was noted in his memorial that he had accompanied the sitting Grand Master, M. W. Brother Wells, in his official visits, until just before his final illness. Like many figures in our history, he seemed like a figure who had always been, and would always be, present.

More than a century and a quarter after his death, William Parkman is still celebrated and admired. Like Winslow Lewis and Charles C. Dame, he had the honor of granting a charter to a lodge named for him. This lodge is highly respected and extremely active, and is the mother lodge of our sitting Grand Master, M. W. Brother Paul Gleason. ■



The Search for the Fraternity

by Rt. Wor. Scott Thomas Jareo, Deputy Grand Master

Most Worshipful Grand Master, Most Worshipful Past Grand Masters, Distinguished members, guests, and Brethren all. It is indeed an honor and privilege to be standing before you here this evening, at this Feast of St. John, celebrating the installation of Grand Lodge officers in the position of Deputy Grand Master. It is a position and an honor that I never expected, and I would be remiss if I did not publicly thank you Grand Master for the opportunity you have bestowed upon me to serve our Grand lodge in this capacity. I look forward to working with you and the newly installed line of officers.

Brethren, when I joined Freemasonry, I never dreamed I'd be standing here before you tonight. In fact, when I joined Freemasonry, I had no idea that "here" even existed. I knew nothing about Grand Lodge, what a jurisdiction was, or even that there was such a person as a Grand Master, all of that came later. You see, like so many of you, I knocked upon the door of Freemasonry because I was intrigued, intrigued and looking for something, something personal, something for me. I'm not sure I knew exactly what that something was, but I had expectations. I came looking for something that I couldn't articulate, something beyond what was common in the world, for I had long been intrigued by Freemasonry. As I look back, I can see that the notion of Freemasonry or more specifically, of being a Freemason, somehow found its way several times into my life:

The first time was as a young boy, I'm not certain now of my age, probably around seven or eight, and it was in the form of a ring. A gold ring with a red stone with what seemed at the time like mysterious markings centered on the stone. Today of course, all of us would recognize it instantly as a Masonic ring, and we're probably wearing something similar. But to that eight-year-old boy, it was an object of mystery. I still see it clearly today, a small white covered porcelain dish sitting on a dresser top in a sliver of

dusty sunlight. I can still hear the scrape of the lid being removed as I peered inside and found the ring sitting on top of a small collection of pocket change. I can still feel the weight of the ring on my fingers, and can remember fondly the worn corners and scratches that it contained. It has truly left a mark upon my mind, and I can also remember being disappointed when the ring was not in its container, for you see sometimes the ring was being worn by brother A. B. I'll tell you more about him in a bit.

The next time that Freemasonry entered my life was many years later. Life, by this time, had carried me to Massachusetts, and my sister, two years my junior, was then in college studying library sciences with a minor in Russian studies. She and I would frequently talk about books, and so it was partly through her that I was introduced to some of the great Russian writers. Here, after getting used to reading all the translated character names, I immersed myself for a period of time in the works of Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Turgenev, and others. It was truly some of the most remarkable writing I have personally experienced. I was captivated by the depth of emotions being explored, the vividness of the scenery, and the complete humanness of the characters being portrayed for both good and bad. And then, I tackled *War and Peace*. And though today, many years later, the details of many of these stories have faded, in *War and Peace*, the character Pierre has always partially stayed with me. You see, Pierre was also looking for something in his own life, when he happens upon a stranger, or a traveling man, wearing a ring that he recognizes as being Masonic. Pierre has a conversation with this Freemason, who explains to him what is missing from his life, and he ultimately seeks initiation in the Craft as part of his quest for self-knowledge. He too was looking for something, a journey that I'm sure many of us can all relate to, and I certainly did at the time. And once again, the

seeds of Freemasonry were planted in my life.

But, the journey continued, and a few years later, much like the One Ring in Lord of the Rings, the Masonic ring again made its way back into my life. This time however, on the hand of a man at my place of employment. He was a bit of a mentor and teacher to me, and we became friends. In time, I asked him about his ring, and about Freemasonry. He said he would happily sponsor my membership, but being away from his mother Lodge, he didn't seem to know exactly what to do, and he unfortunately didn't follow through. How many candidates have we lost to similar circumstances Brethren? I don't blame him however, he was a good man who ultimately, several years later, affiliated with my own Lodge for a time before his passing. The task of bringing me into Freemasonry did not ultimately fall to him. That task was left to another friend whom I did not meet for still a few more years. This Brother, though I did not know it at the time, was a Past Master, and as we all know, they don't mess around. When I discussed Freemasonry with him and asked him how I might go about joining, he replied with a slap on the back saying, "You just did." The rest, as they say, is history, still being written here tonight. But this story is only partially about me. What about brother A. B.?

Well, quickly after being raised, I purchased a Masonic ring of my own. The same one I'm wearing here tonight. To me, it was the symbol of a Mason, and the token that had long drawn me to the Craft. I was proud to wear it. But, I hadn't yet told my family outside of my wife, about joining the Fraternity. I'm not sure why, except that it was something personal to me, not something I was necessarily looking to share at the time. I was still learning, and still enjoying the mysteriousness of the Craft. One day, a few weeks later, my mother came for visit. She inquired about the ring I was wearing and seemed a bit shocked when I told her that I had joined the Fraternity. She said, you know your grandfather was a Mason? I said that I did know, you see, my grandfather is brother A. B. The next time she came to visit, she brought me a gift. I have it here with me this evening, it is my grandfather's Masonic Bible. I was thrilled to have it. It was something I had heard about, but not a custom that my own Lodge participated in. Imagine my surprise when I opened its cover and read the names of the men who were present at my grandfather's raising, coincidently in the same month and year I was born. Relatives, family friends, and men of the community I had known or knew of during all my years of childhood and adolescence. These men represented community to me, but I had no idea of their deeper connection. You see, little did I know, but Freemasonry had always been around me, waiting for me to discover it. The men who had been living examples of men and community in my life, many of them were Masons. I just never knew it.

I stand before you here today, because other men, many sitting in this very room, have taken enough interest in me and cared enough for me, that they have encouraged me to do more than I thought I could, and to be more than I knew was possible.

And there was another discovery to be made in the pages of this book, beyond of course the lessons contained within its pages, that discovery remains, tucked where brother A.B. placed it. It's a piece of the sash from the funeral arrangement of flowers he purchased when his wife of almost 50 years passed away. It simply says Wife, placed in the pages of his Masonic Bible. The one that I can recall he specifically asked for by name on the day of her funeral many years ago, though at the time I didn't know why.

This is what Freemasonry meant to him.

Brother A.B. passed to the celestial Lodge himself one evening a few years later. He died of heart failure at the age of 76. Shortly after putting away his snow blower, after helping his neighbor, his Masonic Brother, clean out his driveway. He was never a Deputy Grand Master, not a Past Master of his Lodge, to my knowledge he was never an officer, and by many accounts, his was not always the smoothest ashlar in town. Like all of us, he was still working on his. But he was man, and to borrow a tag line, not just a man, a Mason.

Freemasonry meant community to brother A.B., and I think that ultimately, that reflects what is best and brightest about us. The most successful Lodges that I've seen, are always those where the Brethren genuinely enjoy being in each other's company. They have built, and continue to strengthen their Lodge community through social discourse, interaction with each other, and general caring for each other's welfare. What an amazing concept. I have discovered in my Masonic travels that that is truly (in the words of Most Worshipful brother Hodgdon) the gift of the Freemasonry. I stand

before you here today, because other men, many sitting in this very room, have taken enough interest in me and cared enough for me, that they have encouraged me to do more than I thought I could, and to be more than I knew was possible. And all of us have the ability to do the same thing in return. We simply have to be there to extend the hand to our Brothers and prospective Brothers. If we strengthen our Lodge communities, we won't be able to keep people away. Because in the end, I think we all want what brother A.B. had - a sense of place.

My place tonight is here with all of you, and our journey continues and takes a new step today. I don't know if I've yet found what I originally came looking for, but I've certainly gained from Freemasonry, and it has nothing to do with fancy jewels, titles, or purple ties. You see, what I have gained, and what has kept me coming back, is all of you. I have gained all of you. I didn't know that all of you fit behind that door when I first knocked upon it, but it is much more than I thought I would find. Thank you all, and thank you Grand Master for the opportunity to speak this evening. ■



The Bow Tie Benefit Banquet Returns to help the Brotherhood Fund

“When you wear a bow tie, doors open for you. Your posture is a little more erect; your shoulders are a little further back; your style is a little more dynamic. It’s about the reestablishment of the gentleman.”

-Dhani Jones, NFL Player

Dhani Jones is a proponent of what he called the Bow tie Revolution. What was once seen as the badge of a nerd is once again seen as the signature of an independent man of quiet confidence. However, fashion is just one small part of the art of being a gentleman.

A gentleman is a well-mannered and considerate man, with high standards of proper behavior. How he treats the woman in his life, and how he treats those less fortunate defines him.

It is the job of Freemasonry to provide ample opportunities for a man to conduct himself as a gentleman. October 27, 2018 will be one of those opportunities. On that date, Grand Lodge will be holding another Bow tie Benefit Banquet at 186 Tremont Street in Boston. The event will raise funds for the Brotherhood Fund, chaired by Rt. Wor. Frank B. Gomes, Jr.

The Brotherhood Fund, in conjunction with the Scottish Rite Almoner’s Fund, chaired by Rt. Wor. Donald M. Moran, provides resources to Brothers dealing with catastrophic issues. Here are just a few examples of the kinds of charitable activity that the Brotherhood Fund has done in the last year:

Brother X is dealing with his third bout of cancer. He had been in remission for six plus years, and since last July he has been dealing with leukemia. Brother X had medical co-pays for the two years, mortgage, utility, and general living expenses incurred due to his absence from work. These very substantial medical and expense bills hanging over his head caused stress that is not helping with his recovery. The Brotherhood Fund, along with the Scottish Rite Almoners Fund, donated enough to remove the debt and to alleviate this stress from Brother X’s mind. Since receiving this donation, Brother X has received a stem cell transplant, and due to immune suppressive medications, he cannot return to his place of work, but he is hopeful to return in a few months, and once again become self-supporting.

Brother Y was in great need. Unfortunately, he (like many of us) tends to be a proud person, and as such, does not look for help easily, and would not accept help unless he was truly in dire straits. He was laid off from his job, took odd jobs filling in as a per

diem school custodian, but only on days when others called in sick or were out on vacation. Unfortunately, he wrenched his back in that role, and once again found himself out of work. His wife, a medical/nursing assistant professional, works many overtime hours to help cover some of the loss of his income. Other brothers helped him updating his resume, and network to get him in front of possible job opportunities.

His home furnace died and was irreparable. They now use a pellet stove to heat part of their home, and they use small fans to circulate the heat as best the fans can. Brother Y’s blue lodge has forgiven his back dues, and is covering the Grand Lodge dues. His blue lodge brothers have pulled together funds to help him purchase one ton of pellets for their stove and purchased some gifts for their young daughter, just to make sure she has presents to open at Christmas. The Brotherhood Fund, along with the Almoners Fund, gave Brother Y \$11,000 in his time of need.

Brother Z’s family, along with five other families, lost everything in his three-story walk-up home in a multi-alarm fire around midnight. Luckily, no serious injuries were reported. When the Brotherhood Fund received the call, Brother Z and his family were staying with some friends until they could find other housing. He had no insurance, but was hoping to see if the landlord had any content coverage for the tenants. Bro. Gomes made a command decision to get him two gift cards right away, to get him and his wife through the next week until their ultimate needs could be understood. This case is still being worked, to know what is needed from both the Brotherhood and Almoner’s funds in this emergency.

How can you help? Come and enjoy an elegant evening with brothers, friends, and family. This is an open event. Bring that One Day Class candidate that can only do things on weekends, so that he can enjoy the fraternity and see the beauty that is Grand Lodge. There will be sumptuous meals for all. A signature, custom bow tie will be gifted to the men, and a lovely matching scarf to the ladies. Numerous silent auction items for fun will be available, and music performed by a Grammy nominated artist! Yes, I said Grammy nominated artist...details to be announced closer to the event.

Tickets for the event can be purchased on www.massmasons.org, with a discount for couples’ tickets. Do not hesitate to buy your tickets now. This event sold out with dozens on the waitlist in 2013! ■



How to Drive Success in Membership

by Bro. Alexander Todd, The Harvard Lodge

In the past two years, The Harvard Lodge has seen a surge in interest from Candidates and a wave of returning members who had been inactive. Several members who demitted have become current on their dues. In total for the Masonic year, the Lodge has initiated 12 Apprentices so far, and expects to have another eight initiated before the summer. In just a few years, evidence has been gathered that the decrease in membership can, in fact, be reversed with some simple tweaks.

Attracting new members

One of the hardest challenges the Lodge faced was that many men simply did not know anything about Freemasonry, or that it even was an option for them. Why would someone approach a Lodge if they had no idea they were even eligible? The number of Candidates who assumed they must be tapped by an existing Brother was often the majority.

To address this, the Lodge invited them to learn more, speaking to Candidates on the platforms they use, such as Facebook, and enticing them by embracing the mysterious nature of the organization. If their only assumptions about Freemasonry revolve around popular movies or books, it is helpful to at least nod to the mystery when beginning a conversation. The Lodge placed targeted ads (males only, within 15 miles of Boston) that did not recruit, but simply invited the Candidates to learn more about the oldest Fraternity. It was simple, with deep colors, a slightly obscured logo, and the option to learn what Freemasonry could mean to them, if they wished to learn such a thing. Curious, but neither pretentious nor misleading.

When the Candidates asked for more information, the Lodge invited them to a series of varied membership events spanning four months. There were mixers held at locations of Masonic significance, such as the Green Dragon Tavern. There was a philosophical forum about the meaning of life, using the Socratic method of discussion. Candidates were invited to the Lodge's annual Head of the Charles garden party and charity ball. They were invited to a post-communication dinner to understand what a typical event might entail. As a group, Candidates were sent on a scavenger hunt across the city to Masonic landmarks to both learn history and form friendships and bonds among themselves. This was critical, as they would then enter the Lodge with existing friendships and have a sense of ownership over their journey. When handed their petitions, they are brought out one by one to have a personal discussion with the Worshipful Master. All of this builds interest, creates friendships, and keeps the Candidates coming back. It also is enjoyable for current Brethren to have a variety of ways

to meet Candidates and learn how they think. A mixer or coffee meeting can only tell so much.

Retaining and engaging current members

Bringing in Candidates is but one part of the greater membership puzzle. If they join, but do not stay, the efforts are in vain. Retention and engagement are critical. The Harvard Lodge approached the retention puzzle with the understanding that it was competing for attention in a world that has work, family life, and the allure of Netflix over putting on a suit. It drew on areas where members are already engaged and inserted itself into those mediums.

First, a group chat was launched to allow members to communicate with each other at any time of day from anywhere in the world. As an academic Lodge, The Harvard has members who disperse to every corner of the globe after graduation or when their assignment is complete. It has always been a challenge to keep in touch with remote Brothers, but a group chat helps alleviate that sense of distance.

Next, a monthly email newsletter was launched to further engage members who might not be able to make it to every meeting, highlighting the latest events, interesting stories, and links to websites that might interest them, even if the content itself had nothing to do with Masonry.

In addition, informal gatherings were increased in frequency. Movie nights, monthly lunches in Harvard Square, Red Sox games, museum visits, and more were added to the Lodge calendar. Discounts were obtained at major menswear retailers, including Brooks Brothers and Men's Warehouse. These were free to the Lodge, and were a token of understanding that by asking them to attend so many meetings, The Lodge, at the very least, would use its status as an organization to lower the cost of dressing up.

Finally, the Lodge highlighted a large-scale annual homecoming weekend during Installation to encourage all Brethren from across the globe to attend. Including philosophy discussions, the open Installation ceremony, a black tie dinner, and a farewell brunch, this event is a favorite of many members and keeps them engaged throughout the years.

Conclusion

When considering membership and retention, there is one fact to keep at the forefront - you are competing for time and attention in a world where both are in short supply. Not every suggestion above is applicable to every Lodge, and every Lodge has its own culture. Still, your Membership Committees should focus on making events, communications, and bonds among men that willingly become the priorities of both Candidate and seasoned members alike. ■



The Prodigal Mason

by *Richard Thompson*



One of my Masonic friends from New Hampshire, Rt. Wor. Joseph J.H. Beaumont, called me recently. He called me on my home phone, so there was a delay in getting back to him. I was in the UK at the time, and only checked my home messages once or twice a week.

Bro. Beaumont is one of my first Masonic friends from New Hampshire.

I met him just a few months after my wife and I moved to Nashua, NH, from Chelmsford, MA, in 2006.

A few months after moving to Nashua, I decided it was time to get to know the people in my new locale. Where is the best place to meet them? The best place is at the Masonic Temple, of course! I met Joe the first night I visited Rising Sun Lodge No. 39.

As he explained while we spoke on the phone, Joe was in the Whittier Rehabilitation Hospital in Haverhill, MA. He had been quite ill, and was in Haverhill to work on getting back on his feet so he could go home.

He called because one of his nurses is a Massachusetts Mason. Joe had lent him a copy of *The Northern Light*, the magazine published by the Scottish Rite Northern Masonic Jurisdiction. In turn, his new Masonic friend let him borrow a couple of copies of *TROWEL*. He said he was surprised to see a familiar face attached to "The Prodigal Mason" column.

As we spoke, I realized just how sick he had been, and how tough the road to recovery was. As we concluded the call, I told him I would call him again before I left the UK, and would visit him when I was back in the area. I said I would drive to Haverhill to see him, and if he was finally at home, I would see him in Nashua.

I have to admit I was feeling a bit guilty as I hung up the phone. I completely forgot just how important that a hospital visit is to an ailing Lodge member.

In September 2003, I had a severe case of pneumonia

(which I did not know at the time). On a Sunday, I was suddenly hit by what to me was the worst pain I had ever experienced. What I did not know at the time, and what I learned later that day at St. John's Hospital in Lowell (now part of Lowell General Hospital), is my left lung had collapsed.

What I also did not know, and what was found when doctors were attending to the lung collapse, is I had contracted lung cancer. The cancer was found when a surgeon opened my back to see what he could do about my condition.

When I came out of that surgery, I was in intensive care. That meant that only the members of my family could visit me. Of course, the visiting restrictions didn't stop the Masons. When challenged by the ICU nurses, all the Masons had to say was, "He is my brother!"

I'm sure that after my seventh or eighth brother, they knew something was afoot. But possibly my positive reactions to the visitors made them decide to look the other way.

It seems I forgot just how important those hospital visits were to me. I forgot just how long a day in a hospital bed felt. I forgot how a friendly face can raise your spirits and change your attitude. And a positive attitude is, at times, as good a bit of medicine as anything prescribed by a doctor.

I've heard of lodges that have formal hospital visitation programs. These programs serve not only the members of their lodge, but also members of other lodges who are in hospitals close to them. To me, that is a wonderful way to serve the Fraternity and its members.

As for me, I am going to try my best to be more aware of my brothers who are ill, especially those who are in the hospital. I'm going to try to visit those who are in the hospital, never forgetting just what those visits meant to me.

Maybe I can be one of the seven or eight Masons who sneak into the ICU to visit a brother when he may need a visit most. I hope I will run into a nurse who recognizes what these visits can do for someone who is stuck in a hospital bed.

There are at least two types of family. One is the family of blood relationships. The other is the family formed by our Fraternity. One family has dozens of members; the other has millions. For those in the Masonic family, let's try not to visit a brother in the hospital on the same night. ■

Richard Thompson is a Past Master and the current Secretary for Merrimack Valley Daylight Lodge.

Keys to Successful Recruiting

Bro. Joe Beaton - Lodge Ambassador - Major General Henry Knox Military Lodge

In my less than three years as a Master Mason, I have brought over 20 Brothers into the Craft for two Lodges. Last week, Bro. Joe Magee, our Junior Deacon at Major General Henry Knox Military Lodge (MGHK), asked me for an Application for Degrees Kit saying, "You've got more than 15... Can I have this one?"

When I meet a prospect, be it for degrees or affiliation, I want them to feel my passion, zeal, and love for the Craft and my Lodges. I try to let him talk as much as he wants, and ask any questions that come to mind. I give him a brief history of Freemasonry and how proud we are to be the 3rd oldest Grand Lodge in the world. If he is an MGHK candidate, I proudly tell the history of General Knox and of our Lodge, and how we were chartered on the decks of the U.S.S. Constitution on March 17, 1926. To anyone who is a history buff, veteran, and patriot - this is a huge selling point!

Have the prospect to dinner many times so that he feels the warmth and feels wanted. While he's there, make sure all the Brothers introduce themselves; this has a huge impact!

Another point I want to make is to wear your Masonic apparel, be it t-shirts, polos, shirts, hats, etc. I could tell 10 different stories of people I've met because of this. Some are very touching, some heartbreaking, and others very funny. My point is advertise yourself!

I will share this story with you. I was driving home this

morning after a hectic schedule, perhaps a little too fast. A cruiser pulled me over. He chastised me, but then asked me about my MA Masons license plate. I briefly, not my forte to those who know me, explained Freemasonry. Instead of a ticket, I left them with my lodge business card. Again, be proud of who you are and advertise!

This is a letter I received after my follow-up email which I sent the morning after Lodge.

"Good Morning Joe,

Thank you for your note. Yes, I enjoyed being your guest last night. Dinner was excellent, and the conversations were natural. I felt welcomed, and valued as a potential brother by everyone I met. I said to my wife Nelia, when I got home last night, how nice it was to walk into a strange place...and to quickly be made to feel like an old friend.

I am excited that my process to brotherhood has begun. Do let me know if you need anything else from me. I have placed a "no travel hold" on the fourth Wednesday of each month to be available to MGHK Lodge with the exception of February as I have a business trip planned to Chicago. Thank you both again for the warm welcome last night...I hope to one day call both you, and Phil, double brothers.

To Our Success!

Curtis"

That letter gave me a feeling of complete self actualization! In closing, I leave you, my Brothers, especially those who recruit, with the three Ps - personable, proficient, and professional.

Again, make the prospect feel your fervor. ■

Meetings With Masons - Not Without

by Wor. Bryan Simmons

Why are your current members not attending your meetings? I'm sure many will say times are different, and Freemasonry is competing with this and that. So, let's rephrase the topic to "Why should your current members attend your meeting?" To support the Lodge? To support new Brothers going through the degrees? Because it is in their obligation? I am sure the list can go on, but the common denominator is all the reasons benefit the Lodge, not the Brother.

What value does the Brother get from attending your meeting? Is the

Lodge welcoming? Warm temperatures as well as warm smiles? Is there a great meal every month where Brothers may break bread together? What is on the agenda for the evening? A short business meeting? Is it followed by an interesting program? Is there a nice collation set up for after?

I am willing to bet that if you answered yes to the questions above, your Lodge is doing great. If not, then let's work on what you can do to help your Lodge.

Let's begin with this - there is no cure all that will work on all Lodges. There is no one-size-fits-all cure for the lack of attendance. Fixing any Lodge is

possible, but it will take time and effort, and some things will fail, but that's okay. It is always better to fail trying than to not try at all. There are dozens of excellent speakers across New England that would love to come and speak at your Lodge for free on almost any topic you can suggest.

Set up a speaker for a meeting with plenty of notice, and promote it in your monthly notice. Tell the Lodges in your district. Is the talk on something that must be tiled? Can you invite spouses or prospective Candidates? Step up the dinner for that night. For \$10- per person, you can really make a great meal. Many meals can be prepared the night

Have you ever raised a garden?

By Wor. Mark Pearrow

Have you ever raised a garden? Maybe a vegetable garden, or flowers? Many years, my wife and I plant a vegetable garden, and every time we do we have great hopes for the bounty of produce we'll enjoy: cucumbers; big, ripe tomatoes; hot peppers, corn...I'm getting hungry just thinking about it as I write. With every new garden, we spend a weekend getting the soil ready, getting seedlings from our favorite garden store, or putting in seedlings we've grown ourselves during the preceding months, and generally making a fuss over the things we are planting. Looking at the garden after we've planted it, we feel pretty satisfied, and imagine the awesome salads we are going to enjoy, the grilled veggies on a hot summer night during a backyard barbeque, and the delicious herbs we'll use to season our dishes. A garden is a truly great thing.

But once we've planted the garden, it all too frequently happens that life gets busy, and we don't tend to the weeding as much as the garden needs. Oh, and the blight, which always seems to show up unannounced. Last year's lovely corn looked so delicious, and I am sure it was to the raccoons who stole it. And wait – those cucumbers are the wrong breed altogether; they are pickling cucumbers! We won't be making any Greek salad with those. Of all the pepper plants we planted, Peter Piper couldn't have packed a peck out of them – only one pepper sprouted! Oh, the disappointment. My neighbor's garden is so awesome, and mine is just sad. It's easy to be mad at nature and blame the garden! But the painful truth is I haven't been a good steward of the seedlings, and I have no one to blame but myself.

Raising a fruitful garden of Masons is just as hard, and probably even harder than raising a garden of veggies. Someone who is newly initiated into an order is often called a neophyte. Not surprisingly, the word neophyte comes from the Greek neophytos, "newly planted." The early Masonic life of a Brother is every bit as fragile as a seedling, and without proper tending, that life will wither on the vine. Those of us who have been around for a while are the gardeners. We can't just "plant" our Entered Apprentices and expect them to flourish without proper tending. It's all too common for us, in our busy day-to-day lives, to lose sight of the several obstacles those Brothers meet in their progress.

Feeling directionless is a common blight on new Brothers. The raccoons of modern life steal their attention away from the Craft. Some Brothers come into the Fraternity expecting one thing, but find something utterly different. Predictably, those fellows frequently fall off the vine, and the Craft is poorer for it.

The good news is that this is a solvable problem. Just as a master gardener learns how to nourish his crop, protect it

from the wild beasts of the field, and shelter it from the inclemencies of the weather, so can we learn to do the same for our new Brothers.

Understanding the optimal growing conditions of a plant helps the gardener ensure its health. The same is true for a Brother! Everyone comes to the Craft for a reason. What is that reason for each Brother? What are they looking for? How can your Lodge provide it? What are the conditions that will empower a Brother to flourish in Masonry? A Master's duty is to set the Lodge at work, and give necessary instruction. Every Mason should have a five-year plan, whether he is an Officer, a committee member, or someone on the sidelines. Knowing what kind of work he will be doing and what goals he will attempt to attain will give a Brother a sense of direction, and a feeling of belonging; both are essential to growth. A good plan will tie into each Brother's interests that brought him to Masonry, whether it be community service, Masonic history, outreach, or Fellowship. It will contain concrete, measurable goals. Such a plan should be worked out with the Brother and the Membership Committee, making sure that the Brother is well-supported and knows how, and who to ask for help. The Master should check in with each Brother periodically to see how he is progressing on his plan, and to find out if any blight is creeping in.

Toxic personalities in the Lodge can be a huge source of attrition in good members. A disproportionate level of emphasis on the trappings of Masonry, rather than the underlying tenets, can also stunt a newly-planted Brother. Ritual and traditions are only tools that are used to teach what's really important. They are symbols that express a deeper meaning that words alone cannot capture. To focus only on the surface value of those things is folly, and too much of it can spoil a new Brother's progress and alienate him. Likewise, a single toxic personality can sour a Brother's experience and lead to attrition. A good Master will need to identify any such blight and nip it before it can spread.

As the soil itself must be properly tended to ensure healthy garden growth, so must the "soil" of a Lodge be fertile with opportunity, leadership, grace, and purpose. Without this, even the hardiest of species cannot take root (or what does take root is a weed in your garden). Do the veteran members of your Lodge know the names of your newest Brothers? Do they know what they do for a living, if they have kids, or what their Masonic mission is? A Lodge that makes the effort to integrate a new Brother and give him a sense of belonging will see fewer empty seats, and will be able to enjoy the happy reflection consequent on a well-tended Masonic garden. ■

Paying Attention to Retention

*By Bro. Rob Cooper (Amicable Lodge) and
Pam Pacelli Cooper (Verissima Productions)*

Do you remember the Brothers who were raised with you? The sense of accomplishment you all felt having met the requirements to become a Master Mason? How many of those brothers are still active in your lodge?

Each year we raise about 600 brothers in Massachusetts, but 50% of them will have drifted away within ten years.

We figured the best way to find out why this was happening would be to reach out and ask the brothers themselves. With support and input from M.W. Paul Gleason, R.W. Robert Jolly, and the Board of Directors, we worked with Wor. Robert Huke, Communications & Development Director for Grand Lodge, to locate and record interviews with 16 lapsed brothers, and eight active brothers from lodges who have had success retaining members.

What we did not hear was a disregard for Freemasonry. Almost to a man, these lapsed brothers said they retained great respect for the fraternity, and almost all of them still think of themselves as Masons. Why didn't they stay involved?

While some had specific issues, many had simply missed a few meetings, and came to feel they had been forgotten. One said, "No one ever reached out to ask about me. They just called once -- to ask me about my dues." Some spoke of a disconnect between officers and sideliners. They didn't have the time or inclination to get into the line, but still wanted a way to be active and involved in their lodges, instead of "just sitting and watching ritual every month."

In acknowledging these challenges, the active Brothers we interviewed pointed out that in most lodges, officers are already overcommitted, and there is no one person who has responsibility for retention. They also shared initiatives they are doing, including making sure that brothers not in the line are involved in lodge activities (committee work, events, etc.), "shaking up the meetings" for more variety (one lodge alternates education with ritual), finding ways to include significant others and family, scheduling more outside-of-lodge events, and, most basically, keeping regular tabs on brothers who haven't been seen for a while (even a few months) and reaching out to say that they are missed and would be welcomed back.

A ten-minute pilot video summarizing their comments premiered at the January Organizational Meeting, and has since been shown at Lodges of Instruction, and the North American Conference of Grand Masters. It has sparked a conversation about retention that we hope will continue into the new Masonic year, and include interviewing a larger sample of brothers - both active and lapsed. Then, in partnership with the Education and Membership Committees, share this information in a program designed to help lodges across the jurisdiction be more effective in developing their own solutions for addressing this critical issue.

With care and attention, we can keep more of our brothers active and involved in a fraternity that will remain healthy and vital for years to come. ■

Meetings With Masons (continued)

before or slow cooked all day, so you are not spending a day at the Lodge.

If the program is open to all, invite the local cable access channels to film it. They are always looking for content, and its free promotion for your Lodge. Invite the local newspapers. Write an article about the program and send in a good photo. If published, chances are it will catch the eye of more than one of your members.

For minimal cost, you have added value to the Brothers of your Lodge, but it may not have met your expectations for attendance. That is okay. Did the Brothers who did attend enjoy it? It will take a few times to really build attendance. This is just one of the multi-pronged approaches to bettering

your Lodge. Again, you need to know your membership. Maybe many joined to do charity work. That is one of the easiest things to accomplish. Many organizations have events all over the state, and they need help. Contact one, and help as a Lodge wearing Masonic shirts. You will not only be doing hands-on charity, but also exposing your Lodge to the community.

Another great way to build your sidelines is to travel to other Lodges. You will not only pick up ideas from them, but you will also meet new Brothers and make new friends. These new friends will visit your Lodge, thus building your sidelines.

Consider updating your Lodge notice. In most Lodges, that is your only contact with many of your

Brothers. Again, this is adding value, and maybe making it color, or adding photos of events from the month earlier.

I am a strong believer in the quote from Field of Dreams, "If you build it, they will come." Improving your meeting is the first step to reaching your Lodge's full potential. The easiest way to grow attendance is to get your current members engaged. At the same time, your members' time is valuable, and should never be wasted. Yes, all the reasons why they are not attending may be true, but you can make your meeting a can't-miss event.

It does seem like a lot of work, and in some ways, it is, but isn't your Lodge worth it? If you're wondering, this was part of the recipe for my Lodge four years ago. Yes, it is working. ■

FRATERNITY News & Events



Photo From left to right Wor. Bryon Hicks, Bros. Joseph Saucier, Roy Bacon, William Proper. And Rt. Wor. Christopher St. Cyr (DDGM) District Deputy Grand Master of the 24th Masonic District.

Recruiting Pays Off at Quinebaug Lodge

On Saturday February 24th, 2018 the Brethren of Quinebaug Lodge of the 24th District in Southbridge assisted in the raising of 3 local men to the sublime Degree of Master Mason.

In the past 2 years, under the leadership of Worshipful Bryon Hicks his

goal has been recruitment of new members. At every monthly meeting, Wor. Bro. Hicks, talks about our mission statement "Who We Are" and pushes us to spread the word about Freemasonry to friends, neighbors, any man asking.

Copies of our mission statement can be found on the table in the lobby. Under Wor. Bro. Hicks' term we have

raised 6 men to the sublime Degree of Master Mason with 2 more candidates going thru the degree work starting in February. Two additional men have applied for degrees and will be voted on in March if found to be worthy.

Congratulations to three of the new Brothers as a result of these efforts: Bros. Joseph Saucier, William Proper and Roy Bacon.

The following is a version of what was published in a local paper about the raising:

On Saturday February 24th, 2018 the Brethren of Quinebaug Masonic Lodge of the 24th District in Southbridge assisted in the raising of 3 local men to the sublime Degree of Master Mason.

These men along with other men that have followed their path joined this great fraternity because of "Who We Are".

We are men, each becoming the best version of ourselves possible. We find it's easier to do that when we're with other men who share the same values. We're there for our Brothers no matter what life may bring, and our Brothers are there for us. We help others, not just because it's the right thing to do, but also because it helps us grow. We value honor and integrity. We believe there's always more to learn.

A great well known Master Mason, Bro. Benjamin Franklin once asked "Is there greatness in you?" If so become a Master Mason.

-Bro. Vincenzo Jimmy Falzone

Rt. Wor. Phil Druin shows the permanent charter to the members of Gethemane-DeMolay Co



Chartered: DeMolay in Newton

The Greater Boston DeMolay Chapter in Newton received its permanent charter on April 14. Work began on this project when Wor. Nick Pappas proposed a chapter in 2014. Gethsemane-DeMolay Commandery #7 of the Knights Templar serve as the sponsoring body.

Over the past four years, the Chapter has grown steadily and we passed the 15 members needed to apply for a permanent charter in late 2017. Today, the Chapter has 18 members and continues to grow. Kaloyan Hristov is the Master Counselor and Wor. Michael Bickford is the Chapter advisor. Greater Boston Chapter also supports a Squires Manor and a number of the Squires have joined the Chapter once they turned 12 years old.

-Wor. Michael Bickford

Your A-Team's Membership Push

by Bro. Alex Li

One of the most important elements of Freemasonry is undisputedly membership. Lodges make attempts to both recruit new members and hold onto their existing ones through a variety of means and events to guide men of all ages toward the light. It is our lifeblood and what makes us a great Fraternity. From the least active, to the most active Masons, we all play a role in each other's growth, prosperity, and happiness. Therefore, Lodge membership retention and recruitment are two subjects where we should always put both feet forward.

In my quest to do my part for Freemasonry, I have recently conducted several rounds of visits to the other Lodges in the 4th Masonic District in an effort to assemble an A-team of Membership Committee members. I set out with the intention of ensuring each Lodge has a Membership Committee up and running of approximately 1-3 people to aid in membership duties. I visited each Lodge anywhere from 1-3 times over the past few months. I beseeched them to supply men who would be willing to participate in making phone calls to Brethren who have fallen beyond the sidelines. Through these efforts, we hope to rejuvenate their Lodges with additional Brethren partaking in the activities and social events of Freemasonry. They may also assist in an outreach program in which we recruit men who are Masons in their hearts, but have not yet found their way to the Fraternity.

I have had great success in my efforts, and after my visitations, I have approximately 18 members in 6 Lodges lending aid. My incentive: Fraternalism. Our first meeting will be held on April 29, and will be a whiskey, scotch, and single malt tasting designed to encourage friendship and brotherly love as we reach out to our Brothers we no longer see in Lodge. We will be discussing the best ways to bring our Brothers back in with incentives like Lodge events, dinner vouchers, social events, and everything we can think of including reminding them of the reasons why anyone joins Freemasonry. We will make the phone calls to every member in each of our Lodges, and will have a good time doing it. Our overall goal is to double the number of active members in each of our Lodges, and put a little extra zing into seeing those friendly faces at our monthly meetings. It is important to enjoy each other's company and have fun while we advance toward worthy goals, both in the Fraternity, and in life. ■

What Seek You?

by David P. Newcomb

*Men live different lives these days
With tension, fears and stress.
They find themselves in crowded rooms
And experience loneliness.*

*For those who yearn for something more,
Whatever should you do?
For most good men, the question then,
Is simply, "What seek you?"*

*Seek and ye shall find it.
To be given to you, just ask.
Knock and the door will be opened.
These three are your task.*

*Masonry answers questions.
Seek out the lodge room door,
Where so it seems men share their dreams,
And discover something more.*

*Freemasonry has blessed the world
For countless generations.
Millions of respectable men
Have masonic associations.*

*Membership in this brotherhood
Is worth its weight in gold.
So where did Masonry come from and
What secrets does it hold?*

*The popular assumption is
It started as a guild,
Centuries ago by workers of stone,
With cathedrals yet to build.*

*These builders of cathedrals
Shared knowledge known to few.
Their tools and implements symbolized
Distinctive points of view.*

*They use specific working tools
Trowels, levels and squares,
To demonstrate life's lessons
And ascend life's winding stairs.*

*It's a system of morality,
Symbolically illustrated,
Veiled in allegory,
Divinely illuminated.*

*To belong to such a society,
You must be qualified,
Of good report, well recommended,
Otherwise, you are denied.*

*We're told that it's for good men,
Yet better, they wish to be.
The path that good men follow is
A journey - Freemasonry.*

*What makes Masons different?
And stand out from all others?
It's being with friends as family,
Where members are your brothers.*

*"What seek you?" is the question.
What are you looking for?
Perhaps your answers may be found
Behind the lodge room door.*



On Tuesday, April 10, 2018, the Master of Mystic Valley Lodge, Wor. Bro. Philip Privitera, and the Brethren welcomed M. Wor. Paul F. Gleason, M. Wor. Yves R. Maignan, Grand Master of Prince Hall in Massachusetts, and M. Wor. Jean Reed 33°, Past Grand Master for Quebec with other dignitaries for an evening in Arlington.



Wor. Phil Dubey, Master of Major General Henry Knox Lodge, M. Wor. Paul F. Gleason, Wor. Cdr. Thomas Morris, his wife Andrea Morris, and Rt. Wor. Robert F. Stanley. M. Wor. Bro. Gleason presented Wor. Cdr. Thomas Morris with a Joseph Warren Medal on April 25, 2018.

The Grand Master attended the 60-year lodge anniversary and building re-dedication at Webster Lodge on April 14, 2018. Wor. Anselme Maxime, the Master of Webster Lodge, flanks M. Wor. Paul F. Gleason on the left and the State Representative for Webster, Joe McKenna, is on the right.

-Wor. Torrey Wallace



Before Christmas, Lowell DeMolay and Wamesit Rainbow paid honor to our active servicemen and Veterans today by assisting the “Wreaths across America” organization. We remembered and paid respect to 1700 veterans in Chelmsford by laying wreaths upon their graves.

-Wor. Dad Wayne





Joseph Warren recipient, Wor. Rev. Henry I. Pierce, Rt. Wor. Robert Johnson Award recipient, Bro. Ernesto Fernandez, and 50 year veteran Rt. Wor. James Spurrell at Amicable Lodge.

Triple Recognition at Amicable Lodge

On March 1, 2018, Amicable Lodge A.F. & A.M. of the Second Masonic District celebrated a trifector of awards presented by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

The event was initially organized to celebrate Rt. Wor. James Spurrell, commemorating 50 years of service to our ancient and honorable order. There were close to 100 guests for this celebration.

Rt. Wor. Bro. Spurrell is a Past Master of Amicable Lodge, and Past

District Deputy Grand Master of the Second Masonic District. He served as Treasurer for Amicable Lodge for several years, is a recipient of the Joseph Warren Distinguished Service Award, and has also been very active in the collateral bodies of Freemasonry such as the Order of the Eastern Star.

What Rt. Wor. Bro. Spurrell did not know however is that on March 1st the Grand Lodge had more planned for Amicable Lodge than what was expected.

Rt. Wor. Robert Stanley, D.D.G.M. of the Second Masonic District, and Wor. William O. Saunders, the presiding Master of Amicable Lodge planned in secret for several months leading up to March 1st.

Two additional worthy brothers would also receive honors for their sacrifice and service to the craft. Wor. Rev. Henry I. Pierce toiled long in the quarries, and was awarded the Joseph Warren Distinguished Service Award. Wor. Rev. Bro. Pierce is among only 5 members to receive this distinction in Amicable Lodge.

The Rt. Wor. Robert Johnson Award was presented to Bro. Ernesto Fernandez. Bro. Fernandez is the presiding Treasurer, and has spearheaded a campaign to raise funds for the renovation and remodeling of the Cambridge Temples upstairs apartments. He was able to raise over \$35,000 in pledges to commence this arduous undertaking.

After the awards ceremony we enjoyed a cocktail reception accompanied by passed appetizers. All received a commemorative keepsake glass that included all three names of our award recipients. Dancing and fellowship filled the remainder of the evening.

A very special thank you to Bro. Rob Cooper for his video footage, and Bro. Micah Sieber for his professional photographs and dedicated work as our Sr. Steward. *-Wor. William O. Saunders*

● PICK UP AND PUT ON YOUR PLATES ●

Have you picked up the Freemasonry License plate you applied for?

If not, please do so now! Approximately 600 brothers ordered plates and did not pick them up! Go to the full service RMV you noted on your application and please pick up your plate; or email Richard Maggio rwddgm13@gmail.com to find out where your plate is.

The Freemasonry plate is available to all Masons, their families and anyone who supports Masonry. The MM series plate (Freemasonry) is available now at ALL FULL SERVICE RMV offices across Massachusetts. The Registry of Motor Vehicles began releasing the plates in late January 2017. Only the RMV can accept applications for these plates. They cannot be ordered through Grand Lodge.

For online ordering, go to the official RMV website:

<https://secure.rmv.state.ma.us/SpecialPlates/intro.aspx> and scroll through the sample plates until you see the MM series (Freemasonry) plate.

Besides providing awareness, the Masonic License Plates support our statewide Masonic charities, including the Brotherhood Fund. Since the release of the 1st plate this program has raised over \$70,000.00 with your help!

-Rt. Wor. Richard Maggio





Fun in Focus: BROTHERS

A group of Brothers stopping for lunch in their BWA shirts on the way to "Stogies and Scotch Night" at Sequin Level Lodge in Newington CT.



The BWA (Brothers of the White Ash) Masonic cigar club was founded over 12 years ago by a group of Master Masons whom they afterwards found to also be friends. I think there were six of us at that first meeting! In fact, the first several meetings were the same as before we started the club; a few of us would get together to enjoy a cigar, maybe play golf or sit on the back porch at one of our homes or stay late at a lodge that permits cigar smoking. Now we meet 4 times a year; Spring-Summer-Winter-Fall.

The average attendance is somewhere between 40 and 80 of the clubs nearly 200 members. Membership is pretty easy and if you are a Master Mason in good standing, have your \$20 dues which includes your meal, and don't mind the smoke we are happy to have you. Periodic emails are sent to the membership with reports and pictures from past activities as well as announcements and reminders of future activities.

The meetings are held at all sorts of venues and we like to move it around to keep it interesting. Bristol Lodge in North Attleboro has been a gracious host as have several members like Past President Bro. Robert Rashid (pictured) who has opened his home for our Fall meeting the last few years. We have met at retail establishments, restaurants and cigar lounges all over the

BWA Past President, Bro. Robert Rashid and current BWA President, Rt. Wor. Mike J. Douglas.

OF THE WHITE ASH



The most recent meeting where 70 brothers gathered at the (Mason owned) White Ash Lounge in Pawtucket RI.

MA, RI, and CT area.

It has really become a lot of fun. The food is always great, the meetings are always a lot of fun, and the fellowship is even better; like a reunion with everyone wearing their BWA smoking jackets and shirts, fedoras, winter caps, and golf shirts.

Normal club activities include things like trips to cigar events, participation in golf tournaments, and attending charity cigar dinners; the annual ones hosted by Ezekiel Bates, Dewitt Clinton, and J Philip Berquist Lodges really stand out to me.

Cigar smoking and Freemasonry have many parallels. The BWA brings together like-minded Master Masons who genuinely enjoy each other's company, as well as a good meal and a fine cigar. It feels good to reflect on the fact that over the years, our loose association has managed to directly or indirectly raise tens of thousands of dollars for various Masonic charities while enjoying what for many of us is our favorite leisure time activity; getting together with friends to relax, smoke a cigar and solve the problems of the world.

For more information or to be added to the BWA email list contact club president Rt. Wor. Bro. Douglas; fni.mike@hotmail.com or vice president Bro. Anibal Tavares; broswhtash@gmail.com

- Rt. Wor. Michael J. Douglas



Bro. James Steele proudly wearing his new BWA velvet smoking jacket.



ASK THE GRAND LECTURERS

by Rt. Wor. Robert F. Doherty, Chairman of the Grand Lecturers

By now you are no doubt aware of the One Day Class to be held March 9, 2019. This is an example of how we can, and do, change our operations. The fact that admission requirements for Candidates are the same shows we are not changing our Core Values.

Q: *Where is it determined which parts of the First Section of the First Degree are to be done one Candidate at a time?*

A: Some of it is determined by the Grand Constitutions, and some by the Grand Master's Edict. Actually, at one time, it was required to perform the entire First Section for every single Candidate. When this became impractical, the limitations were specifically set.

Q: *We use the phrase Oblong Square many times in our Ritual. Exactly what is an Oblong Square?*

A: There are a great many articles on this on the Internet, many with extensive discussions and observations. The most common Masonic usage is that it is a rectangle where the four angles total 360°, but the angles are not equal.

Q: *Are there any requirements regarding the presentation of the preliminary questions to new candidates?*

A: Yes. Prior to the conferral of the First Degree, these questions must be presented to every Candidate individually by the Junior Deacon, in the presence of the Stewards, and no one else. This is covered in the Grand Constitutions. Additionally, as covered by instructions in the Standard Work, as well as the Cipher, the Junior Deacon must present the preliminary questions from memory. This will also be required in the 2018 Exemplifications.

Q: *Do the portions of the degree work written out in English have to be given during an Exemplification?*

A: Absolutely. While the reading of the English may be omitted at ritualist's workshops in order to allow more time for questions and floor work review, at Exemplification the entire degree must be done, and it must be done by installed Officers. It is very important for all Masters, Wardens, and Deacons to understand this requirement. ■

► The Gavel Awards continued from page 3

To create an event which Brothers will look forward to attending, and one that will increase activity in the core programs of the Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts by recognizing Lodges, as well as individual Brothers for the successful activities, events, and programs they have performed throughout the preceding year.

Think of it as the Oscars for our Fraternity. All of our Lodges run events throughout the year, cornerstones of the Lodges. We want to learn more about those events, and we want to reward you for your efforts. This is a night to share with your friends and families, an opportunity to show them the wonderful contributions of this great Fraternity, and perhaps even win a trophy.

There will be a red carpet, photographers, interviewers, the Grand Line introduction, hors d'oeuvres, and of course, fellowship. The entire event

will be live streamed and the winners will take home the coveted Golden Gavel. This is an event you will want to put on your calendar now so you don't miss out.

The Categories are:

- Best membership initiative
- Best charitable event
- Best fundraiser
- Best public relations project
- Best presentation of a Lodge of Instruction module
- Best Masonic educational program
- Best rusty Brothers program
- Best Masonic service project
- Best widows and orphans program
- Best fellowship and family involvement program
- Best Brotherhood activation program
- Most original presentation in a regular communication

Entries can be submitted at any time to goldengavelawards@gmail.com. We encourage you to send either a brief video, or picture slideshow, along with your submission for presentation purposes. All submissions will receive equal consideration regardless of format. All nominees will be informed in writing, with an invitation to the event, and any remaining seats will be available for \$100.00 per couple, or \$50.00 each.

The absolute last day for submissions to be considered is November 1, 2018. Help us recognize you. Submit your program ASAP. We will provide the platform, but it is you who will provide the content by sharing with all of us the great work you have done this past year. Membership is about you, and this night is all about you, honoring your contributions which make us great. ■



The Overlook Communities in Charlton and Overlook VNA, a Continuum of Care

On the Campus in Charlton, as we've written in past articles, we offer a Continuing Care Retirement Community with residential and care services including Independent Living, Enhanced Living and Memory Care Assisted Living, Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation, and Adult Day Health through Summit Eldercare.

There is another valuable part of our Continuum of Care that supercedes a single location. It is omnipresent throughout one's life and care needs whether at home, or within our Charlton Campus. This service is Overlook Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice. OVNA is providing timely rehabilitation, skilled nursing, home care, and telehealth to Masons and other Residents throughout the Commonwealth. Under the leadership of its Executive Director Ernesto Moreno, the OVNA has achieved top rankings for quality measures in both Worcester County, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Within the realm of a changing health care climate in the United States under the Affordable Care Act, VNA has become a valuable and cost effective service for those in need of timely care in your home.

Overlook VNA services include: Medicare or Commercial Insurances subsidized services, Skilled Nursing Services & Physical, Occupational and Speech

Therapy as ordered by a Physician. Those services in addition to more than 15 different Clinical Specialty Programs, plus Transitional Care & Telehealth Services have reduced our patients' Re-Hospitalization rates to 9% (State Average is 17%). The most common interventions OVNA and Home Care provides are Falls Prevention, Balance Screenings, New Medication teaching & monitoring, Wound Management, Diabetes management, and High Blood Pressure management. Our Team of qualified clinicians will conduct an assessment and design a "Taylor Made" Plan of Care to address the most complex and specific clinical, psychological and psychosocial needs of every single patient and their families. Our patient centered approach using innovative technology combined with 'Old Industry Values' like compassion and personalized care have made a significant impact on our patients' quality of life, placing the OVNA as #1 Preferred Provider by Patients in Central Mass and among the Top 5 in the entire State.

Overlook VNA is appropriated to serve a broad geography of Masons, and other constituents, across the State of Massachusetts from Western Mass to Cape Cod and in between.

For more information on Overlook VNA services, please call 1-800-990-7642. ■



MASONIC CON 2018 EDUCATES

by Wor. Bryan Simmons

Masonic Con 2018 is in the books, hundreds of Masons and non-masons alike flooded Ezekiel Bates Lodge in Attleboro over the last weekend in April. This year we held an event the Friday before for all of the out of town guests at Brother owned Bog Iron Brewery where Bro. Matt Menard crafted a special batch of his brew for the occasion while Bro. Jay Dahl fed us from his food truck the Fork & Bibb.

On Saturday we held Masonic Con, like last year the weather was beautiful. Brothers', spouses, family members and, friends filled the building from 3 countries and 15 states to see the various speakers and Masonic owned vendors. Even the Killwinning club stopped by to play the pipes and drums for us.

The lectures were live streamed to the Ezekiel Bates Lodge Facebook Page for those who could not attend.

The speakers this year included M. Wor. Peter Iacobucci,



The thirst for knowledge is growing and it is our job to

the Grand master of Rhode Island who spoke on the Symbolism of the American Hobo. Rt. Wor. Alex Powers from the Grand Lodge of Kansas spoke on digitizing your Lodge History. Bro. Angel Millar from the Grand Lodge of New York Freemasonry, Anti-Masonry, and The Challenges of the Future. Also from the Grand Lodge of New York Bro. Nathan Tweedie presented his talk The Craft in the Clubhouse: a Comparative Study of American Freemasonry and the National Game. Wor. Ryan Flynn spoke on Brunelleschi, and the Birth of the Modern Architect. Bro. Geeg Wiles talked about his 40 lbs. lawn gnome and Wor. Jon Ruark out of Virginia and Bro. Nicholas Harvey talked membership from their points of view

To cap the speakers off our very own Junior Grand Warden Rt. Wor. Michael Jarzabek teamed up with Bro. Greg Kaminsky and Rt. Wor. Robert Johnson to do a panel discussion on Star Wars and Freemasonry.

Following the event, the lodge hosted a festive board which had over 60 Brothers, spouses and friends discuss the day's events as well as the various issues facing our craft today. ■



continually improve our Brethren and feed that thirst.

THE YOUNG TYLER

by Wor. Lee H. Fenn

The Young Tyler arrived early at the Lodge Building and forgot his key fob—he couldn’t get in. He hooked his hanger holding his tuxedo on one of the lights on the porch and sat down to wait for the next Brother to arrive.

A man was walking on the sidewalk just beyond the front lawn of the building. He had tool belt and looked as though he was in little rush.

“How you doing?” asked the Young Tyler.

“Pretty good,” said the man. He glanced up the Lodge Building, looking to the eaves, the windows, and the peaked roof. “I walk by here every day, but I never see anyone going in, coming out, or sitting on the porch.”

“Well, we have these key fobs—modern era, you know—and we usually just walk in. I’m out here really because I forgot my fob.”

“Well, good to see you,” replied the man as he approached the porch. “My name is Ted,” the Young Tyler reached out his hand and introduced himself.

“So what do you do in there? Is it a drinking club?”

The Young Tyler laughed, “No, it isn’t a drinking club, though I’d bet

we have as a good time. I’d invite you in, but I can’t,” said the Young Tyler as he rattled the doorknob, “Nope. We’re Freemasons.”

“What does that mean?”

“Why don’t you pull up a chair and I’ll try to explain it to you,” he replied indicating another chair on the porch.

Ted took off his tool belt containing his hammers and nails, put it behind a pillar, and sat on the chair with a sigh.

“Rough day?” asked the Young Tyler.

“No rougher than others. We’re putting in studs on some new construction in town, so it’s always this tough. So, you’re a Freemason, what does that mean?”

“Well, a big part of what we do is what you and I are doing: if you were a Mason, then we would be two Brothers talking.

“We do a good deal of work around the community and we help each other out. That doesn’t mean just pushing cars in winter, for example, it may mean helping with advice on kids, purchases, or just good movies. Also, we spend time in the Lodge room and make ourselves better.”

“So it sounds like you hang out

a lot.”

“Maybe I’m telling you our story backwards. First, we all are vetted before becoming Masons. We are all men of good character, believe in God, and wish for betterment of ourselves and our communities. From that basis, our “hanging out” is often more than just talking.

“Yes, we play cards, some smoke cigars, make jokes, etc., but we talk with each other about tricky questions and we try to help each other be good men. So, on the one hand, we’re just a bunch of Brothers talking or working—or eating, I can’t forget eating—but we are doing it all toward a higher purpose.”

“Must be good food if you are eating to a higher purpose!” joked Ted.

As the two men laughed on the porch, the Marshal pulled up in front of the Lodge Building and dropped off an elderly Brother. The Marshal waved to the Young Tyler for help.

“Excuse me, my Brother needs a hand,” said the Young Tyler as he trotted off the porch.

Ted watched the men help with the walker and wondered what the inside of a Lodge Building looked like. ■

► Cable Tow Story *cont’d from p. 3*

the photo of the jewel, and noticed a name engraved on the back of it. The name was Larry Remsen (not his real name). I sent the following email:

“Worshipful Brother Larry, from one Mason to another, shame on you for listing your Past Master’s jewel on eBay. That was, and is, property of the Lodge, and was given to you at no charge to wear as a tribute to your serving in the East. As further proof, your name is not the only one on it, so that means the previous Worshipful Brother or his family had the Masonic sense to turn it in so you could proudly wear it. Even though the Lodge is gone, I hope

you reconsider. It needs to be sent back so it can be reissued and both names live on. Your Lodge members affiliated with another Lodge, and some Past Master would be honored to wear it.

Happy New Year RW. Brother Cappy”

I couldn’t understand why a Past Master would do this. I wondered if it was a financial issue or if he was old and senile. I wondered if he was suspended from the Lodge, or if someone listed it pretending to be Larry Remsen. Luckily, my worrying came to a halt when I received a response to my original email sent on 1/1/17, around 4:30 pm. The following is the response from Larry Remsen:

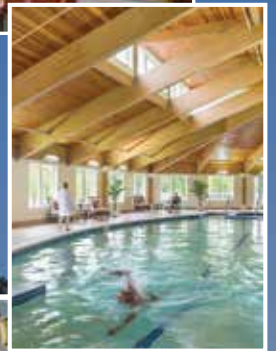
“Dear RW. Bro. Cappy,

There is so much you do not know about this matter, and I would be willing to enlighten you, but not in this manner. If you would respond to this, I will tell you the whole story of how and why I have decided to sell my Past Master’s jewel. It is not a happy tale, and it brings me no pleasure in the telling, but I feel the story needs to be told. You may be the one person who could understand why this old man must cling to his honor and dignity.

Fraternally Yours,
Larry Remsen”

Check our summer issue for the continuation of this story.

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