



GFN CYBER MASON

www.masonic-network.com

The Newsletter of the Global Fraternal Network -- VIRTUAL INTERNET LODGE NO. 1
Volume 1, Number 7, September 2006

Editorial

Is the News Letter working? We seem to be having more participation on the Forums.

As all Reps are now correspondents to the News Letter I am hoping to receive some input. Don't be shy, there must be lots going on in your area. Why not share the news with us.

Perseverance

Edgar A Guest

Someone said it couldn't be done!
But he, with a chuckle, replied,
That "Maybe it couldn't, but he would be one
who wouldn't say so till he tried"?
So he buckled right in with a grin on his face
if he worried he hid it
Somebody scoffed "Oh you'll never do that"
At least no one ever has done it
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat
and the first thing we knew he'd begun it.
With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin
without doubting or "quid it"
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done and he did it
There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done
There are thousands to prophesy failure
There are thousands to point out to you, one by one
that dangers will assail you
But just buckle in with a bit of a grin
Then take off your coat and go to it
Just start in to sing as you tackle the thing
That cannot be done, and you'll do it

Submitted by Bro Mike Dyer

Pins, Caps and Car Stickers may be viewed and ordered from the GFN Site

Editor bwbutler@btinternet.com

SPOTLIGHT ON THE BOARDS

GFN Comments Board

This Board is opened to the GFN Membership for general comments and feedback to the GFN Staff. It will also allow those who couldn't attend a meeting on one of the Chat Forums to express their views and opinions of the subject matter that had been discussed.

Do you have an idea to make the GFN even a better place for our Brethren? This is the place to express it!!!

You might add that the GFN is going to make upgrades to the site in the near future. Brethren can make their comments and suggestions on what they would like to see changed or added to the GFN Site. These posting can be made on the Comment Board and for Staff on the Staff Board.

FR
Ran

The Best event in a Mason's Life

I heard three knocks on the Temple door
And then it was opened wide
I felt the grip of a Mason's hand
As I slowly passed inside.

I was lowered down on bended knees
As a prayer was said for me
And then I was helped to pass around
For the Brethren all to see.

And all to me was black of night
As my leader took me around
And my racing heart I heard more clear
Than the solemn organ's sound.

My faltering footsteps here and there
Were halted on my way
And several questions were put to me
As I struggled not to sway
With my right hand resting on the law
I took my obligation
I swore I'd be a Mason true at my initiation.

I shall not tell what more I saw
Or what to me was spoken
But I saw the sign and heard the word
And felt the Mason's token.

I'll tell you this, what I heard a charge
(Which I later learnt by heart)
That told me all that a Man should do
As a Mason from the start.

It matters not if you pass the Chair
Or reach the highest station
The best event in a Mason's life
Is his Initiation?

AP Forum

Every day at 7.00 pm Perth Time. 11.00 am BST

Nothing to report from AP



USA Forum

Every day at 9.00pm.

...Combating apathy in the Lodge requires some proactive leadership by the Lodge officers, not reactive...

FIGHTING LODGE APATHY

by W.:Tim Bryce, PM, MPS

timb001@phmainstreet.com

Palm Harbor, Florida, USA

"A Foot Soldier for Freemasonry"

Not too long ago I attended a roundtable discussion of local Lodge officers from my district to discuss the state of our Lodges and what, if anything, can be done to improve our current situation. Inevitably, the talks primarily focused on declining membership and rising operating costs of the Lodge. One question, which caught my attention, though was from a young Junior Warden who complained attendance at meetings was substantially down indicating apathy in the Craft. He claimed this was their Number One problem right now and was at a loss as to what was causing it. I looked at him incredulously and said, *"You're kidding, right? You really don't know why they are not attending?"*

He said no; the officers of his Lodge were baffled by what was going on.

I told him it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure it out. There are primarily three reasons for apathy in the Lodge:

Lodge activities have become boringly repetitive; the same old things are said over and over again, the same old pasta or rubber chicken is served, and nothing of substance is happening. Basically, the Lodge has fallen into a rut and is having trouble getting out of it. To do so, it is necessary to somehow stimulate the Craft. This can be done many different ways; perhaps a guest speaker or special topic, perhaps a slight change in the format (hold refreshment before the meeting as opposed to afterwards or vice versa), serve meals on china as opposed to paper plates, perhaps a different kind of meal altogether (some day I'll have to tell you about my Deep Fried Turkey dinner or "Spamfest"), perhaps something as simple as a slight modification in dress, etc. Small changes add up over time and do not go unnoticed by the Craft. They should be viewed as positive, beneficial, and upbeat.

Attending Lodge has become very political in nature. Bickering and backbiting is not conducive for attendance. Members experience enough of this during the day at work or in their personal lives; they don't want to listen to it in Lodge. I know too many Masons who stay away from Lodge for this reason alone. They want harmony in the Lodge, not contention; camaraderie, not competition. Petty political power struggles are costing Lodges a lot of sideliners.

It is perceived that attending Lodge does not add value to a person's life. Brothers will stop coming the moment they believe they are not getting anything out of attending Lodge. If they are not learning anything or enjoying some camaraderie, they will stop coming. Further, if they believe the Lodge is not

accomplishing anything of merit, such as supporting a local charity or tackling some kind of project, that it is stagnant, they will lose interest quickly. If they believe the Lodge is apathetic, they will act as such in return. It is contagious. These three reasons do not necessarily pertain to Brothers who live far away from Lodge or who cannot attend due to health reasons. But then again, maybe they do. For example, for those Brothers who live far away, has the Lodge made an attempt to find out what the Brothers are doing and reported it in Lodge (or perhaps in a Trestle board newsletter)? The names of Brothers may become obscure over time but are rarely forgotten. Further, they like to be remembered, be it a birthday or some important anniversary. As to Brothers who have difficulty attending Lodge due to health reasons, has there been an attempt to contact the Brother and provide some assistance for attending Lodge? If a Lodge remembers a Brother, the Brother will likely remember the Lodge when it is in need of something, such as a donation.

Combating apathy in the Lodge requires some proactive leadership by the Lodge officers, not reactive. It is necessary to plan meaningful Lodge events in advance, promote and execute accordingly, and follow-up to review what worked well and what didn't. Before you can get the Craft to perspire, you need to inspire them first.

You will not have any problems with apathy as long as the Craft believes the Lodge is fun and interesting; they will WANT to come to Lodge as opposed to feeling coerced into attending. But if Lodge is perceived as boringly repetitive, political, or lacks substance, your Lodge room will look more like a racquetball court as opposed to a Masonic Lodge.

Keep the Faith.

Submitted by Steve Grant
Article reprinted with permission of the author



UK Forum every Sunday at 9.0pm BST

4th UK Getogether

The fourth get together of GFN UK members will be held at Tarbolton Lodge, Prestwick, Scotland. On Friday October 20th 2006. Tarbolton Lodge was the Mother Lodge of Robert Burns.

Dartford Festival July 22nd-23rd

The Dartford Festival held at Central Park, Dartford on 22nd and 23rd July was once again attended by the Crayford Lodge. Unfortunately due to security issues we were unable to erect the Marquee on the usual Friday evening, so it was "all hands to the pumps" early on Saturday morning, but we were all set up well before the opening of the Show. The display provided by the Provincial Grand Lodge of West Kent, once again proved to be of great interest to the general public and of course visiting Masons as was apparent from the remarks entered in our visitor's book.

The Mayor of Dartford called in to see us and thank the Province and Lodge for supporting the Festival and we were also pleased to receive a visit from W.Bro Charles Marchant APMG and his good Lady, both of whom were soon in deep conversation with an elderly visiting Canadian Freemason. We received 6 enquiries to join the Lodge but it remains to be seen if the applicants will pursue these. In all it was a fun Weekend and at Six O'clock Sunday evening to the sounds of "Chas and Dave" still performing on stage, a group of old and not so old Freemasons dismantled the Marquee and went their separate ways, tired but well satisfied with a rewarding weekend.

Our thanks to our Secretary for his efforts in collecting and returning the display to Provincial Office and to the members of the Lodge who manned the Stand.

Stan Dunham



CANADA

STRANGE AND INFAMOUS MASONS

This time, we have something just a little bit different in the way of Masonic Education. I know, some of you loathe those two words. As soon as you hear them, I can see the hair on the backs of your necks stand up, and I can hear you saying, "Oh no! Not this again! I hope he keeps it short. My goodness, who wants to hear the same old stuff, time after time." Well, good news, Brethren! It's not the same old stuff. It's new stuff. For I have always believed that Masonic Education does not have to be dull, or boring. Why even some of it can be amusing or even down right funny, and to prove it, tonight we're going to talk about Strange or Infamous men who were, or may have been, Masons. We begin with a Frenchman.

The Chevalier Charles Dean of France was born on October 5, 1728, and was given the name Charles Genevieve Louise Augusta Andre Timothy Dean Beaumont. He was obviously born of a noble family. He became a Freemason in 1766 in the Lodge of Immortality, No. 376, which met at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, in the Strand, London, England. He served as Junior Warden in 1769 and 1770. He had many talents; he was an expert fencer and soldier, and an able diplomat who successfully negotiated the Treaty of 1763, ending the Seven Years War in which Austria, France, Sweden and Saxony were united against Frederick the Great of Prussia [who was joined by England]. So what, you say? Nothing strange about him so far. Well, let's look a bit further. He unfortunately had an effeminate appearance, and occasionally masqueraded as a woman. His enemies in France accused him of being a woman masquerading as a man. Masons wondered whether a woman had been initiated into the Craft. The controversy about has sex caused considerable gambling, and speculation got out of hand. Finally an insurance company filed a petition to have the matter adjudicated. Witnesses testified that he was a woman. About this time he accepted an offer of Louis XVI to receive a generous pension, on condition that he return to France, and resume the garb of a woman. From this time on, with rare exceptions, he wore women's clothes. When he died on May 21, 1810, a competent physician performed an autopsy

and clearly proved that D'Eon was a man after all. Let's now return to England and an English Reverend sir.

The Reverend William Dodd was an English Freemason, who was born in 1729, and died in 1777. He was the first Grand Chaplain of the Grand Lodge of England, in the year 1775. He delivered an oration at the dedication of Freemason's Hall in London in 1776. He was also the author of many books and literary papers including "Beauties of Shakespeare." Weakness of character in money matters caused him to be tried for the crime of forgery. He had the effrontery to sign the name of the Earl of Chesterfield, in the matter of 4200 pounds sterling. He was convicted of forgery and executed. The affair created great public commotion and attempts were made both by the City of London, and by the 30,000 people who signed petitions to the King to commute the sentence. But [to show how severe English Criminal law was at the time] the sentence was carried out. It was one of the last public hanging in England. Not a good ending for a man of God and a Mason.

Now from an Englishman to a Scottish American.

Matthew McBlain Thompson was born in Scotland, and was a member of two Scottish Lodges and a Past Master of one of them. He also affiliated with King Solomon Lodge, No. 22, in Montpelier, Idaho when he settled there in 1881. He later demitted from this lodge. He returned to Scotland, but in 1898 he came back to the United States, where he created the "American Masonic Federation." He promoted the sale of all sorts of "Masonic" degrees by mail, and through paid solicitors or salesmen; they were sent out to organized lodges and grand degrees throughout the United States. [By the way, reduced rates were given for large groups and many joined his special Craft.] In 1915 one of his salesmen was arrested in St. Louis, Missouri, and the postal inspector there decided that it was time to break up the gang. He assigned inspector M. G. Price to the case; he sent two years gathering evidence in the United States and also far off in foreign lands. Judge Wade of the United States District Court for Iowa, a non-Mason, presided, and none of the jurors was a Mason. Matthew McBain Thompson and two others were found guilty of using the U. S. Mails to defraud the public, and were sentenced to serve penitentiary terms of two years and to pay a fine of five thousand dollars each. In those days this was a lot of money. Now, let us look at another American.

In 1847 an American visiting England introduced himself as a Major General George Cooke, LL.D., Chancellor of the University of Ripley. He joined Prince of Wales Lodge, No. 159. He became a devoted supporter of the Masonic Charities, and actually became vice-president of the Girls' School, and a life Governor of the Boys' School and a member of the Benevolent Institution. The Grand Master conferred on him the rank of Past Grand Warden, and appointed Cooke his personal representative to the Grand Lodge of New York. A fund was started to place his bust in Freemasons' Hall. Yes, he certainly seems to be the type of man who would become the ultimate Mason, generous, devoted, benevolent, humane and philanthropic, and indisputable humanitarian. Undeniably the type of man the Craft needs. But after he had returned to the United States it was discovered that Cooke was a medical quack. He was immediately stripped of all his Masonic honours, and all the money had he had contributed to Masonic Charities was returned to him.

Now let me tell you about a man Englishman.

Joshua Norton was born in England on February 4, 1819. He engaged in a number of business enterprises in Africa, and emigrated to San Francisco in 1849. He immediately entered the real estate business and accumulated Considerable wealth. When he tried to corner the rice market, he lost everything. In order to cheer him up, his friends started to call him "Emperor." On September 15, 1859 he proclaimed himself Emperor of the United States. He donned a blue uniform with brass buttons, epaulets, and a military cap. Instead of sending him off to have his head examined, everyone humoured him because of his pleasant and cheerful disposition. He rode the streetcars free, attended theatres without charge, and was supplied with the necessities of life by those around him. When he ran short of cash, he simply drew drafts on his Imperial Treasury. He issued Royal Proclamations that were designed to better the human race. On Sunday he always attended a church. He played no favorites, but visited

them all. Merchants and financiers consulted him on business matters and apparently he gave them sound advice on these matters.

So what does this have to do with Masonry? Well he was a member of Occidental Lodge of San Francisco, and for a time he lived in the Masonic Temple; some of his proclamations emanated from it. When he passed away on January 8, 1880, he was given a Masonic Funeral. Fifty-four years later his Grave was moved and a monument was erected over his new grave.

Now a Scottish Canadian.

This is one of my favorite short but true stories. The story of man who loved his Lodge, and who [I think] also loved his pocketbook.

Miles McGuigan was a member of the 81st Regiment of Loyal Lincoln Volunteers and a member of Merrickville Lodge, No. 55, in St. Lawrence District in Ontario. When he died, it was his last wish that his body be dissected, and then placed in the Merrickville Lodge for future work into the Third Degree. His wishes were carried out, and his bones remained in the Merrickville Lodge until the Lodge Room and building were gutted by fire in 1959.

So Brethren, now let's hope that you have been amused and entertained with these short episodes in the lives of some of our Masonic brethren. Not your ordinary run-of-the-mill Masons, that's for sure. Not all ideal role Models! But interesting! Believe it or not, this is Masonic Education.

By Bro. Nelson King; Published with Permission;
Rec'd from Bro. K. Van Herd; St. George's Lodge
No. 41; GRBC&Y.

Submitted by D. Roy Murray
King Solomon Lodge, No. 58, GRS
Victoria Lodge, No. 13, GRA

Bro. Percy M. Aga, MM
Maple Leaf Park Lodge No. 63
Grand Lodge of British Columbia and Yukon
Internet Lodge No. 9659
United Grand Lodge of England

Bro. Percy M. Aga
Global Fraternal Network
Representative for British Columbia & The Yukon,
Canada

Editorial team

Editor: Brian W Crayford: bwbutler@btinternet.com
Asian Pacific Regional Editor: Dennis McDowell: Dennis_19502000@yahoo.co.uk
USA Regional Editor: Corby Christenson: rangercorby@yahoo.com
Assistant editor: Furokh Santoke: fsantoke@hotmail.com
Distribution: Ellis Mills: eteldest@yahoo.com

Correspondents: All GFN Reps

Master Masons are welcome to request free copies. Please send full name, name and number of lodge, and email. Copies available by e-mail.

Back issues are archived at: http://www.geocities.com/gfn_news

FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY.