

ANCIENT LANDMARK LODGE NO. 5

Ancient Free and Accepted Masons



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Volume 7, Numbers 2
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FROM THE EAST

The State of the Lodge

Brethren,

You may have heard on the news over the past few months that the economy has been performing a little less robustly than we'd like. Many companies have down sized and that means people have lost jobs. We might even lose one of the big three automakers during this recession. Closer to home I took a look at my 401(k) and it has lost approximately 25% of its value over the past year. Luckily for Cheryl and me we don't plan on using it for about 20 years so it has time to recover.

You may be wondering how the Lodge is doing. Well, like everyone else the Lodge's portfolio has gone down. At the February stated communication we have the Trustee's Report so you can get all the details. Also at the February meeting you will get a chance to see the budget for 2009. We came in under budget for 2008 and I am hoping that tradition will continue.

Financially we are still ok and with a little belt tightening we'll weather this storm just fine. You may notice through 2009 that the Lodge is not subsidizing as much as it had before. One of the first cost cutting measures was having the Installation a closed one. If you have ideas on how the Lodge can save money please let me know.

Some of our Brothers may face challenges this year. They may become unemployed, or their small business could suffer losses. Some may even lose their homes. A brother called me that was close to facing foreclosure on his home. When he told me about it I could hear the pain in his voice. It was probably one of the hardest things he has ever had to talk to somebody about. He was asking me if the Lodge could help him out. All of our Obligations demand of us to contribute to a brother's welfare. One of our tenets is Relief. I called our Sr. and Jr. Wardens, Allan Floyd and Drew Bjorklund. The three principle Officers by the laws of the Lodge, make up the Charity Committee. We discussed what we could do to help our brother in need. We were ready to go to the Lodge and ask the brethren for their OK to

contribute to his relief. I told our brother that I would pray for him. I assume that the others did to. Well, I was going to call the brother to let him know what we were going to do, but before I did I received a message from him. He received word from the mortgage company that they were able to work with him. I called him to talk with him and the relief in his voice was palpable. How did it work out that way? I don't know. But I think that part of it was the healing that came from talking to someone about the issue. Also, the prayers certainly didn't hurt. If you are in need, talk to someone. Don't let it eat you up inside, let it out. We are Brother's. We are here to help.

In other aspects the Lodge is doing great. We had a large influx of new members in 2008 (not enough to have positive growth, but dang close) and they are excited to be members of the Lodge and I am excited to have them in our Fraternity. The Officers of the Lodge are excited and committed to a great year for Ancient Landmark. And I hope the brethren of the Lodge are excited as well. The Officers can be the greatest, hardest working and motivated group of men in the world, but without the support and participation of the brethren it doesn't really matter.

We are here to serve you. Please let us know how we can do it better.

That's it from the East this month

See you in Lodge
Loren



FROM THE WEST

STARTING A NEW YEAR

I'm writing the column before I'm formally installed as your new Senior Warden. I want to thank all of the Brothers who voted for me. I consider this a great honor, and I promise that I will do my best to make 2009 a great year.

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From the West...continued from page 2

We have plans for several social events for the year. The next one up is our Valentine's Dinner to be held on Friday, February 13, at the Lexington Restaurant in St. Paul. We have been there before, and we look forward to being there again. We need your reservations no later than Tuesday, February 10. One change this year will be that you do not need to select your entrée in advance—you can decide that night whether you prefer sirloin steak, chicken marsala, or walleye almondine. The cost is \$35 per person. Please make plans to come to what should be a great evening.

We will be having our usual bunco nights throughout the year, as well as the second installment of our St. Paul Saints baseball outing and our annual BBQ in July. Please remember that these events are also great opportunities to invite men who are not Brothers (along with their families) to meet us and get a taste of the fellowship we all enjoy.

Later in the year will be two special events. Over the Labor Day weekend, we will be visiting our Brothers at Ancient Landmark Lodge #3 in Winnipeg, Canada. Many of you remember the great time we had when they came to the Twin Cities in 2007. Moreover, in November our stated meeting will be at the James Hill House—and this will also be a Ladies' Night. The House will be decorated for the Holidays, and the ladies will be given a tour.

We also plan to have some great LEO presentations during our stated meetings. All in all, 2009 should be a great year.

See you in Lodge!

Allan Floyd
Senior Warden



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FROM THE SOUTH

Change is Good

Here is to the New Year...

Here we are at the beginning of a new year, full of hope and expectation for change. Let me count (some of) the ways:

1. Washington D.C. and the leadership of the American people
2. Wall Street funds and main street banking (anyone remember what an upswing in account values feels like?)
3. A hoped for change in our weather (whoa Baby – it's cold outside)
4. Digital and HD TV is a mandate (does anyone care?)
5. Gopher and Viking football to generate winning teams that go the distance (do we need to continue to be the bridesmaid?)
6. Insert your own list of changes here...

Changes within our Lodge are happening as well. As of the 8th of January, we will have a new cadre of officers; fortunately, the individuals have moved-up in position, which provides for new blood as well as continuity in our leadership. We say good-bye and thanks to Alan Peterson, for his fine leadership of AL5. It is through his zeal we have grown by leaps and bounds, and I would hazard to say we will have a positive spike in membership for a change. He also championed a Five-Year Plan for AL5, which is to be tweaked each year to be responsive to influences affecting all of us. Fine leadership handed down to those moving up in the line.

While we have a change in our leadership, we would be remiss if we did not try to duplicate, nay, even exceed the gains we made this last year. Everyone has a different story for why they joined, and we should be able to carry that to others who might be looking at joining Masonry. Look to your family members, friends and co-workers. Are they of good repute? Would they benefit our organization? Would we benefit them? (Answer: Of course we would). How is this done? Don't ask them to join – that is not the proper way. Talk up your experience in the Craft (don't give away any secrets!) and what it means to you. Invite them to a dinner meeting to meet the Brothers. In fact, in April the Scottish Rite is having a barbecue to promote Masonry and the Rite. This too would be a venue for them to learn more about our Craft. You will hear more about this later.

Change is good. You are a part of it. Be an ACTIVE part of it. Let's keep the momentum going!

Fraternally yours,
Drew C. Bjorklund
Junior Warden



Ancient Landmark Lodge #5

Cordially invites you to the

2009 Valentine's Dinner

At



1096 Grand Avenue

St. Paul, MN 55105

Friday February 13, 2009

6:00PM Social Hour and Appetizers

7:00pm Table Service Dinner

Menu:

Top Sirloin Steak

Chicken Marsala

Walleye Almondine

Cost is \$35.00 per person. Please RSVP to rsvp@ancientlandmark5.com
or call the Lodge Secretary at 651-222-2643 by February 10, 2008.



LODGE EDUCATION OFFICER

DARKNESS TO LIGHT

Barnes A. Sharitt, Jr.
Lodge Educational Officer

During 2009 it is hoped that two purposes may be met by this column. One, that all of our members may be encouraged to seek further light in Masonry, and as individual brothers, deepen our personal search for light. Secondly, it will highlight the search results as seen by members of this lodge by featuring the results of any research that individual brothers wish to contribute. In order to facilitate this objective, this month a column by WB Roger Firestone, a member of our lodge as well as in Virginia is featured. WB Roger is one of the most knowledgeable brothers I know. This article, first printed in the Virginia Masonic Herald, is printed with the permission of Bro. Roger., and was circulated in the 3,5,7 Educational Network of the Grand Lodge of Minnesota.

Masonic Philosophy

By Roger M. Firestone, PM

Originally, as it began in antiquity and continued into early modern times, the term “philosophy” covered all forms of knowledge outside medicine, law, and theology. Somewhat later, it tended to exclude history, literature, and the arts, but still provided a guide to the interpretation of those fields it did not propose to include immediately. Even physics, chemistry, astronomy, and the other sciences, such as they were, were lumped together as “natural philosophy” and taught in departments of that name at universities in the US and other countries well into the 19th century.

Around the beginning of the 20th century, with the increase in general knowledge, the development of specialization in many areas of both the arts and sciences, and the expansion of institutionalized learning, the definition and teaching of philosophy became more restricted in scope. As we understand the term today, philosophy comprises logic, aesthetics, ethics, metaphysics, and epistemology. Moreover, it connotes a method of arriving at new knowledge by speculative means (thinking), rather than empirical methods (observation and experimentation).

Masonic thought, as we see it explicitly in the degrees, notably that of the Fellow Craft, where useful knowledge is particularly emphasized, contains only one discipline usually thought of now as philosophy: Logic. Astronomy is one of those areas considered as natural philosophy, while mathematics (which begins with arithmetic and geometry) is considered as dependent on, but distinct from logic. Masonic philosophy is to be found in the interpretation

NEXT STATED MEETING

February 12th



of the degrees as well as from the nature of the institution itself, as it evolved in modern times.

We date the modern institution of Freemasonry from the formation of the first Grand Lodge on St. John’s Day, 1717, although Lodges engaged in speculative Freemasonry for more than a century prior to that date, based on what sparse records survive. By that year, the start of the Renaissance was some two centuries past, and many areas of learning were far more available than in mediaeval times, when only clergy and nobility had access even to such basic skills as reading and writing.

In 1717, the Protestant Reformation was exactly two hundred years old (in October), yet many of its issues still had to be resolved. Queen Anne, last of the Stuart line to hold the throne, had died in 1714; a Jacobite uprising (“the Fifteen”) followed the year after that. But the House of Orange had ratified the Declaration of Right not thirty years before, when the Stuart king, James II, was deposed, and its principles were not to be reversed. Thought and education in England, having become part of the United Kingdom less than a decade earlier, was changing dramatically, paralleling the movement on the continent of Europe known as the Enlightenment.

With very limited records of Freemasonry prior to 1717, we can only hypothesize about what constituted discussions in Masonic Lodges of the early era. We have some idea, thanks to Elias Ashmole’s diary, of the kind of man who became an accepted Mason in the 17th century: a gentleman, meaning one who did not work with his hands or in a shopkeeping enterprise, but who owned property (real estate, e.g.) and lived off the income from it, not necessarily a member of the nobility, possibly a clergyman or military officer. Such men had the leisure time for study of history and literature, which largely meant the classics of the Greco-Roman period, along with that of England (e.g., Chaucer, Shakespeare, Malory, and the like). The Greek and Latin classics would include much of foundational philosophy, like the works of Aristotle, the Socratic dialogues recorded by Plato, Marcus Aurelius, and others. These classics were the foundation of Western university education until well into the 19th century.

These, then, are the ingredients poured into the mix that was Freemasonry in its first few years of the modern Grand Lodge period: Classical Greek and Roman philosophy, the

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still-maturing religious Reformation of Christianity, the recent Declaration of Right, knowledge of the Enlightenment on the Continent, a lengthy literary tradition in English (including the chivalric romances), an English tradition of individual rights beginning half a millennium earlier with the Magna Carta, and political ferment between the monarch and Parliament (as well as change in the House from which the monarch was chosen). To all of that can be added certain ideas peculiar to Freemasonry and derived from the supposed connection between its structure in modern times and the mediaeval operative guilds, which were the notions of labor and building as honorable (in a time when, as noted already, gentlemen did not, for the most part, actually engage in work) and the need for liberty as a prerequisite for contributing most effectively to the advance of the human race.

What resulted was a philosophy that differed from what had been a discipline of intellectual contemplation in ancient times, and, in mediaeval times, something pursued mostly by monastics. For one thing, Freemasonry's philosophy takes as axiomatic certain issues that have been the subject of considerable debate among philosophers from ancient times. Three of these are: Is there a God? Is there life after death? Is there a moral law? No Mason needs instruction on where to find the answer to these questions in our ritual. Further, certain topics are ruled out of Masonic discussions to the extent that they derive from sectarian religion; for example, the nature of life after death is not treated by Masonic ritual, because conflicts among Christian or Jewish resurrection, Muslim paradise, and Hindu or Buddhist reincarnation, not to mention other possibilities considered by individual Masons, cannot be resolved in amity among Brothers.

Remembering that the modern concept of philosophy, as it began to develop in the 18th century, comprised logic, aesthetics, ethics, metaphysics, and epistemology, not all of these would be accessible to most of the men who became Masons, as the fraternity grew explosively then. As just noted, most of the metaphysical questions are either considered settled in the Masonic context or else out of bounds. Logic, which is taught in the FC degree, is not like the other fields, in that it is a tool for thinking clearly, but does not tell us what to think about. Epistemology, or the theory of knowledge, is a difficult subject not likely to be easily explored by the average Mason of any period, including the 1700s.

This leaves aesthetics and ethics. These two have something in common: Both concern evaluation of what is good, the former in the sense of what is good in terms of perception, and the latter in terms of action.

The term "aesthetics" is not mentioned explicitly in the ritual, yet we find several references to the concept of beauty, associated with the Corinthian architectural order,

the role of GMHA in creating the decorations of the temple, the beautiful Indented Tessel, and so on. Rituals of the 2nd degree in other states note that the Creator provided senses like smelling and tasting in such a way that the organ of smell can warn us before we ingest and taste something nauseous; another aspect of aesthetics--teaching us to use all our senses to appreciate the beauty of the world, both natural and man-made.

What most Masons think of when asked to describe Masonic philosophy is what remains: Ethics. Masonry has been described as "practical moral philosophy," treating ethics not as solely some abstract consideration of an ideal world, but requiring the Mason to put ethics to use in his daily life. A very large part of the ethics found in the Masonic degrees is little different from what developed in the West from the classical Greco-Roman philosophers, the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, their interpretations, and the works of their mediaeval students from Aquinas and Augustine onward. The four cardinal virtues taught in the EA degree are neither unique nor novel to Freemasonry, nor are the directives of charity, brotherly love, or fidelity to a trust. How the elements of these ideas became foundations of political philosophy in the Scottish Rite Degrees must be left for another time, however. The charge in installing a Master to be "a good man and true, and strictly to obey the moral law" applies to us all, and embraces practical ethics in a single sentence.

The one unique and profound element of 18th century Masonic ethics is the notion of religious toleration. The Reformation had not embraced any such idea: Martin Luther penned numerous anti-Semitic tracts, and in Britain, the established Church had little tolerance for Dissenters. Quakers and Methodists, for example, labored under restrictions nearly as stringent as those on Jews. Yet we read in the Old Charges of obligating the Brethren only to "that religion on which all men agree." Not to mention that, while atheists or agnostics might not be admitted to the Lodge, there was no brief in Masonry to persecute them either. This was a dramatic departure from all of preceding history and one of the greatest contributions Masonry made to human progress by spreading this philosophical doctrine.

The struggle continues today, even within Masonry, as some Brothers fail to understand this vital part of Masonic philosophy and live up to what is made clear in the degrees, as well as in Scripture: "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." To use a difference of opinion in how the Creator is to be worshipped as justification for hatred and bloodlust is a most grievous offense against Him and the worst form of blasphemy. What could be simpler to understand than a philosophy of "Do good unto all; recommend it more especially to the household of the faithful." Such a Masonic philosophy is within the reach of every Brother.



LODGE of SORROW 2009



And we shall become immortal by our deeds which will live on after us.

Name	Birth	Initiated	Passed	Raised	Celestial Lodge
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