

The Trestle-Board



Bent Lodge 42 - AF&AM
Taos, NM
December 2013 - 6013 A.L.



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JS Scot Loomis

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Chaplain Peter Kunkel

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From the East

Brethren,

We have arrived, my Brothers, to the end of one road... the start of another. I want to express my heart-felt appreciation to all the Brethren that made my year as Master an enjoyable and memorable one.

Having the 'big guns' from the Grand Lodge come to BL42 for our installation, made for a very auspicious beginning to our year. Very grateful to MWB Jeff Jordan and WB Dan Lucero for making the long trip from Albuquerque; to Brother McIntosh for the fantastic meal; and to the Brethren, families and friends that came to celebrate with us.

We had several milestones this past year. We were very fortunate to have the Grand Master of Masons, MWB Josh Lightle come to confer a 3rd Degree before Grand Lodge, aided by Brothers Jordan, Lucero and the Elder and Younger Carls Berghofer. It certainly was a memorable 3rd Degree. In August, BL42 hosted the Grand Lodge Regional, welcoming the Grand Lodge officers and Brethren from around the state to our Lodge. I was very happy to be part of the Grand Lodge for the day. Sitting in the South for the Communication was a truly memorable experience.

Not to get too maudlin now, but I can't express my gratitude and appreciation enough to certain Brethren of Bent Lodge #42. First and foremost, Bro. Keith McIntosh is probably the most unselfish and generous man I have ever had the pleasure to know. From the extraordinary meal at the Installation to the many Pancake Breakfasts and the hard work of installing ceramic tile and toilets in the bathrooms, Bro. Keith was ever ready to step up and contribute. The entire Lodge is the beneficiary of his generosity. I again would like to thank Brothers Noble, Thayer, Loomis, Burling, Kunkel, Smith, Clark, Yule, Jagers, Rutherford, Carl and Windy Burghofer and Shapiro. Thank you also to my wife Lisa, to Ryfqah Brener and to Rachel Hunt. Without all of your assistance, I wouldn't have made it through the year. **THANK YOU!**

Looking forward to seeing you at Lodge next Monday, December 16th, 2013!

Fraternally,
WM Dave Cordova, 32°,
Bent Lodge 42 A.F. & A.M.



***** CONGRATULATIONS ***
TO THE OFFICERS ELECT**

**Worshipful Master - Noah Shapiro
Senior Warden - Jed Noble
Junior Warden - Scot Loomis**

“JACOB’S LADDER”

by Albert G. Mackey

Here is an Albert G. Mackey quote from *The Symbolism of Masonry*. Mackey is describing the symbolism of one of the first visuals one might see in their studies of Freemasonry, which is Jacob’s Ladder.

This mystical ladder, which in Masonry is referred to “the theological ladder, which Jacob in his vision saw, reaching from earth to heaven,” was widely dispersed among the religions of antiquity, where it was always supposed to consist of seven rounds or steps.

For instance, in the Mysteries of Mithras, in Persia, where there were seven stages or degrees of initiation, there was erected in the temples, or rather caves,—for it was in them that the initiation was conducted,—a high ladder, of seven steps or gates, each of which was dedicated to one of the planets, which was typified by one of the metals, the topmost step representing the sun, so that, beginning at the bottom, we have Saturn represented by lead, Venus by tin, Jupiter by brass, Mercury by iron, Mars by a mixed metal, the Moon by silver, and the Sun by gold, the whole being a symbol of the sidereal progress of the solar orb through the universe.

In the Mysteries of Brahma we find the same reference to the ladder of seven steps; but here the names were different, although there was the same allusion to the symbol of the universe. The seven steps were emblematical of the seven worlds which constituted the Indian universe. The lowest was the Earth; the second, the World of Reexistence; the third, Heaven; the fourth, the Middle World, or intermediate region between the lower and upper worlds; the fifth, the World of Births, in which souls are again born; the sixth, the Mansion of the Blessed; and the seventh, or topmost round, the Sphere of Truth, the abode of Brahma, he himself being but a symbol of the sun, and hence we arrive once more at the masonic symbolism of the universe and the solar orb.

Albert G. Mackey

From the West

What a year this has been! As individuals and as members of the Craft we faced many challenges, but we did not just wring our hands and moan about them. So very many stepped up, even without being asked to do so and, one by one, those challenges were met and overcome.

By their efforts, these good men and good Masons became better men, better Masons, and Bent Lodge became a better, stronger force in our ancient Institution. Never were the words we hear in the opening ritual more true than now — how good and how pleasant it is for Brethren to dwell together in unity!

At our Regular Communication in November I was honored by your vote to elevate me to the East, to serve as Master of Bent Lodge No. 42 in 2014. Brethren all, I pledge to you that I will endeavor to prove myself worthy of the trust and confidence that you have reposed in me. No one man can hew and shape the stones that build and reinforce our Fraternity, and I will need your help, your wisdom and guidance throughout the coming year.

My themes, if such they may be called, will be simplicity, transparency, and a closer adherence to the basics of Freemasonry. Ever mindful of the need to guard our Western Gate, we should all so rededicate ourselves to our established tenets and practices that Bent Lodge becomes an even greater attraction and destination for good men seeking our unique light.

We can do this, my Brothers, by becoming more involved in, and visible to our community; by speaking of Freemasonry to all who will hear; by meeting every man, Mason or Profane, on the level and acting by the plumb in all of our dealings with them.

Brethren, again, I give you my sincere and humble thanks for the honor which you have bestowed upon me.

Bro. Noah Shapiro 32°
Senior Warden

Are you a Master Mason?

“I have been a Mason for a year now,” remarked the Young Brother to the Old Past Master. “While I find a great deal in Masonry to enjoy and like the fellows and all that, I am more or less in the dark as to what good Masonry really is in the world. I don’t mean I can’t appreciate its charity or its fellowship, but it seems to me that I don’t get much out of it. I can’t really see why it has any function outside of the relationship we enjoy in the Lodge and the charitable acts we do.”

“I think I could win an argument about you,” smiled the Past Master.

“An argument about me?”

“Yes. You say you have been a Master Mason for a year. I think I could prove to the satisfaction of a jury of your peers, who would not need to be Master Masons, that while you are a Lodge member in good standing, you are not a Master Mason.”

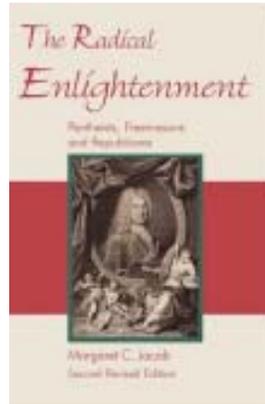
“I don’t think I quite understand,” puzzled the Young Mason. “I was quite surely initiated, passed, and raised. I have my certificate and my good standing card. I attend Lodge regularly. I do what work I am assigned. If that isn’t being a Master Mason, what is?”

“You have the body but not the spirit,” retorted the Old Past Master. “You eat the husks and disregard the kernel. You know the ritual and fail to understand its meaning.

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Freemasonry Segment on CBS Sunday Morning: Answers or Raised Questions about the Craft?

On Sunday, December 8, 2013, CBS Sunday Morning featured a segment on their program about Freemasonry. Questions were posed to Lodge officials from New York and to Margaret Jacob... an authority on Freemasonry? As it turns out, Ms. Jacob is not an authority on Masonic Ritual, but rather on how Freemasonry has shaped our modern world, especially in the United States. Ms. Jacob has authored many books and articles on the topic, most notably, *"The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans."* The CBS segment can be seen on YouTube at:



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AqcKKjTzn6M>

The following are the thoughts of WB Scott Thayer, regarding the program.

Yes, this is a positive take on our Fraternity and I liked it, but to me it comes at a price. One reason our membership is down 2/3 (!) in the last 50 years (!) is because we as Masons have largely bought into just what the general public hopes is true about us: there's nothing secret or unique about us, little to fear or laud about us, despite the Shriners' hospitals, some notable Freemasons in American history and some cornerstones we set. Is that true?? Is Masonic Light the light of day that humanity walks around in or is it symbolically and in truth something else altogether? Is not the Initiate, Masonic or otherwise, awakened to greater Light and understanding, consecrated to the service of Humanity, dedicated to the Brotherhood of Mankind and the Fatherhood of Deity, pledged to uplifting the plight and easing the burden of his brother (and sister) as best he can, made privy to great secrets- albeit veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols- that the select few ancients in all cultures learned, treasured and protected under penalty of death?

The female history professor in this video is an apt apologist for us, for she is a "commoner", not a Freemason yet a reputed expert on our Fraternity, so she can earnestly deflect curiosity and suspicion and innocently misrepresent the importance of the Craft in history and now. Despite this ongoing struggle between conspiracy wingnuts and apologists for who can best undersell the integrity and significance of Freemasonry, the video shows that there are younger men joining FM, at first curious but hopefully many who will be keen on discovering the secrets they sense are real and hidden in our ritual and initiations.

Yes, good press is better than bad, accuracy better than misrepresentation, truth better than falsehood, and if it sparks interest and enquiry in Freemasonry, so much the better. But if shining a positive light on our Craft by the media in fact dims and dismisses that Masonic Light as far as the general public is concerned, gently putting them at ease about us in their benighted state of mind, let us see that for what it is. They are spreading shadows, whereas we are intent on bringing Light to the world. That's forever the struggle, within and without us.

Tentative Agenda Regular Communication *In the 1st Degree* December 16, 2013

Committee Report:

Lodge Use Policy

Report:

Kit Carson Home & Museum

Report:

Unitarian Congregation Request
Contra Dance Group Request

Report:

Bent Lodge #42 Installations
Saturday, December 28, 2013

Educational:

- Bro. Noah Shapiro
 - WB Scott Thayer
-

TEN MASTER MASONS

Ten Master Masons, happy, doing fine;
One listened to a rumor, then there were nine.
Nine Master Masons, faithful, never late;
One didn't like the "Master," then there were eight.
Eight Master Masons, on their way to heaven;
One joined too many clubs, then there were seven.
Seven Master Masons, life dealt some hard licks;
One grew discouraged, then there were six.
Six Master Masons, all very much alive;
One lost his interest, then there were five.
Five Master Masons, wishing there were more;
Got into a great dispute, then there were four.
Four Master Masons, busy as could be;
One didn't like the programs, then there were three.
Three Master Masons, was one of them you?
One grew tired of all the work, then there were two.
Two Master Masons with so much to be done;
One said "What's the use," then there was one.
One Master Mason, found a brother — true!
Brought him to the Lodge, then there were two.
Two Master Masons didn't find work a bore;
Each brought another, then there were four.
Four Master Masons saved their Lodge's fate;
By showing others kindness, then there were eight.
Eight Master Masons, loving their Lodges bright sheen;
Talked so much about it, they soon counted sixteen.
Sixteen Master Masons, to their obligations true;
Were pleased when their number went to thirty-two.
So we can't put our troubles at the Lodge's door;
It's our fault for harming the Lodge we adore.
Don't fuss about the programs or the Master in the East;
Keep your obligation by serving even the very least.
Author Unknown

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You carry the documents, but for you they attest but an empty form. You do not understand the first underlying principle, which makes Masonry the great force she is. And yet, in spite of it, you enjoy her blessings, which is one of her miracles. A man may love and profit by what he does not comprehend.”

“I just don’t understand you at all. I am sure I am a good Mason.”

“No man is a good Mason who thinks the Fraternity has no function beyond pleasant association in the Lodge and charity. There are thousands of Masons who seldom see the inside of a Lodge and, therefore, miss the fellowship. There are thousands who never need or support her charity and so never come in contact with one of its many features. Yet these may take freely and largely from the treasure house which is Masonry.

“Masonry, my young friend, is an opportunity. It gives a man a chance to do and to be, among the world of men, something he otherwise could not attain. No man kneels at the altar of Masonry and rises again the same man. At the altar something is taken from him never to returned, his feelings of living for himself alone. Be he ever so selfish, ever so self-centered, ever so much an individualist, at the altar he leaves behind him some of the dross of his purely profane make-up.

“No man kneels at the altar of Masonry and rises the same man because, in the place where the dross and selfish were, is put a little of the most Divine spark which men may see. Where was the self-interest is put an interest in others. Where was the egotism is put love for one’s fellow man. You say that the ‘Fraternity has no function.’ Man, the Fraternity performs the greatest function of any institution at work among men in that it provides a common meeting ground where all of us be our creed, our social position, our wealth, our ideas, our station in life what they may, may meet and understand one another.

“What caused the Civil War? Failure of one people to understand another and an inequality of men which this country could not endure. What caused the Great War? Class hatred. What is the greatest leveler of class in the world? Masonry. Where is the only place in which a capitalist and laborer, socialist and democrat, fundamentalist and modernist, Jew and Gentile, sophisticated and simple alike meet and forget their differences? In a Masonic Lodge, through the influence of Masonry. “Masonry, which opens her portals to men because they are men, not because they are wealthy or wise or foolish or great or small but because they seek the brotherhood which only she can give.

“Masonry has no function? Why, son, the function of charity, great as it is, is the least of the things Masonry does. The fellowship in the Lodge, beautiful as it is, is at best not much more than one can get in any good club, association, or organization. These are the beauties of Masonry, but they are also beauties of other organizations. The great fundamental beauty of Masonry is all her own. She, and only she, stretches a kindly and loving hand around the world, uniting millions in a bond too strong for breaking. Time has demonstrated that Masonry is too strong for war, too strong for hate, too strong for jealousy and fear. The worst of men have used the strongest of means and have but pushed Masonry to one side for the moment; not all their efforts have broken her, or ever will!

“Masonry gives us all a chance to do and to be; to do a little, however humble the part, in making the world better; to be a little larger, a little fuller in our lives, a little nearer to the G.A.O.T.U. And unless a man understands this, believes it, takes it to his heart, and lives it in his daily life, and strives to show it forth to others in his every act unless he live and love and labor in his Masonry. I say he is no Master Mason; aye, though he belong to all Rites and carry all cards, though he be hung as a Christmas tree with jewels and pins, though he be an officer in all Bodies. But the man who has it in his heart and sees in Masonry the chance to be in reality what he has sworn he would be, a brother to his fellow Masons, is a Master Mason though he be raised but tonight, belongs to no body but his Blue Lodge, and be too poor to buy and wear a single pin.”

The Young Brother, looking down, unfastened the emblem from his coat lapel and handed it to the Old Past Master. “Of course, you are right,” he said, lowly. “Here is my pin. Don’t give it back to me until you think I am worthy to wear it.”

The Old Past Master smiled. “I think you would better put it back now,” he answered gently. “None are more fit to wear the Square and Compasses than those who know themselves unworthy, for they are those who strive to be real Masons.

What Masonic Penalties Are Enforced?

The only penalties known to Freemasonry are reprimand: definite suspension from membership; indefinite suspension from membership; and expulsion from the Fraternity. To these must be added that intangible penalty which comes to any one who loses all or part of his reputation. Other penalties suggested in the ritual are wholly symbolic are not now and never have been enforced. They were legal punishments in the middle ages, designed with special reference to the religious beliefs of the time that an incomplete body could not “rise from the dead”; that a body buried in unconsecrated ground (as between high and low water mark) could not ascend into heaven. Some Grand Lodges offer an interpretation of the ritualistic penalties, in order to be sure the initiate understands the symbolic character of these otherwise difficult phrases.

The Bent Lodge #42

Trestle Board



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