



The Discoverer

The Monthly Newsletter of The Lodge of Discovery

In this Issue

Questions & Answers 2-5

Faith, Hope & Charity 6

Famous Masons Part 6 7

Humour 8

Greetings Brethren,

The February Meeting was a rehearsal for Installation. We had an interesting visitor from Hong Kong—W. Bro. Hugues de Jaillon who gave us some interesting information about the history of Freemasonry in Hong Kong. The G.I. V. W. Bro. Ross McDonald also paid us a visit as a member of our Lodge.

Editor:

W. Bro. Alan Churchill

P.O. Box 235

Port Vila, Vanuatu

Tel: 678 55 64486

achurchill@vanuatu.com.vu

www.LOD8737.org

LODGE LOGO EXPLAINED

I have been asked, "whose effigy is on the logo?". W. Bro. Jock supplied me with the following:

The effigy is of Capt James Cook. British Navigator & Explorer, who claimed and chartered Australia and New Zealand for the Crown in 1767 - 1769. The scientist on board was Sir Joseph Banks whom the Banks Islands are named after. Cook introduced the pig (known now as Capt. Cookers), to the New Hebrides and New Zealand about 1769. His ship was named "The Endeavour", and on a later journey, "The Discovery". Incidentally, on the original Founder's and Lodge jewel, he was looking the other way than that which is on the present ones, (made by a different firm). To me the present one looks like old Pocahontas, a Red Indian..! Whoever it was who ordered the present jewel, didn't ask me where the original was made. Actually it was a firm in Auckland I ordered it from, as it was agreed in 1977, that it would take too long to get them from England. Ah Well, that's the way things go.

New Master's Collar

W. Bro. Jock Hannaford has presented the Lodge with a new Master's collar. The chain adorning the collar is from the old Lodge Ohura, one of the oldest lodges in NZ. The wee town is still there, but the Lodge closed some years ago. Jock had one of the chain plates engraved with the name of Robin Barnes (1st Master) with his year of office and he further suggests that the names of every 10th Master be engraved. Jock also sent us a box of VSLs recovered from the archives of NZ Lodges. We are extremely thankful to Jock for these items.

Membership e-mail address list

A list of current members and their e-mail addresses is available on request.



W. Bro. Tom Stirling (2nd from the left), a visitor to our Lodge last year, at a Scottish Lodge in Victoria

Why cross wands over the candidate?

There appears to be no direct symbolism attached to the tradition of holding the wands over a candidate when he takes his obligations. Many old Masonic reference books make mention of the Deacons having wands, but make no mention of specific use for them, other than holding them as a mark of office.



Should the installing Master declare all offices vacant?

There are certain offices in a Craft Lodge which, when the Lodge is in session, must be filled to maintain the Lodge 'in being' and so, de facto, are never vacant. When Officers appointed by an outgoing Master relinquish their positions on the intervention of a Board of Installed Masters, it is superfluous and incorrect for the Master to declare all Offices vacant. The Book of Constitutions nowhere states that the Master has the power to declare all offices vacant. It is more sensible for the Master to ask, 'Would the Officers kindly remove their collars?' Obviously, the collars need to be removed, so they are available to the DC and ADC for the investiture of the new Officers as they are appointed.

What is meant when we say, "It proves a slip"?

These words are a survival from the early versions of the Third Degree, and allude to a theme, which seems now to have disappeared from the modern renderings of the ceremony. This part of the ceremony was originally designed to illustrate the lessons of Death, Decay or Corruption, and Resurrection, but nowadays only the first and last of these are emphasized.

The evidence of some of the early Catechisms and exposures shows how 'The Slip' arose, for example:-

"..taking a greip at a finger it came away so from Joint to joint..'

(Graham MS, 1726).

'..when Hiram was taken up, they took him by the Forefingers, and the Skin came off, which is called the Slip.....'

Prichard's Masonry Dissected 1730). 'One of them took hold of the body by a finger, and it came away in his hand'.

What is meant by the question: "Are you a free man"?

In Emulation ritual 'free' is written with a small letter 'f' and there are two separate words. In Taylor's ritual it is 'Are you free?'

Early exposures make reference to the words 'free born', probably meaning free at the time of birth, not the offspring of a slave, and not a bondsman, probably meaning free at the time of entering Freemasonry, not being in prison.

There is a case of Grand Lodge acting in respect of the latter point. In 1769 in the King's Bench Prison, John Wilkes was initiated, passed and raised. In 1783 some Freemasons in prison for debt initiated some other prisoners likewise confined. Grand Lodge took action and substituted 'free' for 'free born', thus making it clear that it is inconsistent with the principles of Freemasonry to hold any regular Lodge for the purpose of making masons in a prison. No doubt the primary purpose of the question is to ensure that principle is not violated. The recent emphasis on Masonic discipline indicates that a mason who becomes a prisoner is likely to be asked to resign or risk being expelled.

Why are the Wardens columns Raised and Lowered?

There is a theory that the Wardens' columns are the sole remains of what were once Hour Glasses. The Senior Warden's column would mark the time at which the Lodge was open.

We really need to look back to the early days when many Lodges were held in pubs. Sometimes the ceremony would be interspersed with eating, especially if there was a lecture or a question and answer session about Freemasonry. Therefore it was essential that the Brethren knew when the Lodge was 'called off' for refreshment or 'called on' to do Masonic work.

The Senior Warden is second in command in a Lodge and therefore the column is raised on his pedestal when the Lodge is working. He also sits at one end of the table at the festive board.

The Junior Warden is the ostensible Steward of the Lodge and he 'calls the Brethren from labour to refreshment and from refreshment to labour'. Therefore, when not engaged in Masonic business, the care of the Lodge is in his hands. He sits at the other end of the table. When the Lodge is 'called off' or closed, the column on his pedestal is raised. When one column is raised, the other one is always lowered. Thus Brethren could look at the position of the two columns to confirm the status of the Lodge during the course of an evening.

In Emulation working, the Wardens are presented with their columns of office when being invested at installation. The ritual given by the Worshipful Master to his Wardens in this respect is as follows:-



SW: 'I now present you with the column of your office, which you will place erect when the Lodge is opened to point out to the Brethren that the Lodge is engaged in Masonic business'.

JW: 'I now present you with the column of your office, which you will place horizontal when the Lodge is opened for business and erect whenever the Lodge is called from labour to refreshment, that matter being under your immediate supervision as the ostensible steward of the Lodge'.

Is the Immediate Past Master a Lodge Officer?

He is not, but holds his position because he was Master the previous year. The Jewel on his collar is that of any Past Master, being a Square from which is suspended the 47th Proposition of Euclid which demonstrates the 3, 4, 5 principle.

The IPM retains his situation until he is succeeded by the following Master. If during the following Master's year as IPM, that following Master should die, or cease to be a member of the Lodge, then the previous Immediate Past Master reoccupies the position. Although the IPM is not an Officer, his precedence in the Lodge is immediately in front of the Chaplain: if there is no Chaplain, then immediately in front of the Treasurer.

In the absence of the Master, the Immediate Past Master would take the 'Chair', but he has no absolute right to conduct any ceremony when the Worshipful Master is present. When the Master is present, he alone has the power to decide who shall take his place, if he temporarily vacates the Chair.



ABSENT BRETHREN

In many Lodges, it is customary to drink a special toast to 'absent brethren' at a prescribed time during the festive board following regular meetings as a means of maintaining a fraternal bond with those members who are unable to be present.

It is an important feature of the toast that the specified time (often 10pm) should be observed punctually so that brethren both absent and present may be able to enjoy a reciprocal act of caring remembrance at the one time.

The earliest known record of such a toast is to be found in the minutes of a meeting of the Lodge of Antiquity No.2 E.C. held in April 1759, the minute reading, '.....a lecture in the Entered Apprentice part was given after the lodge was open'd in due form, the Health of our Absent Brethren was drunk and no other business being proposed the Lodge was closed.'

The toast had limited application only for many years but became into general usage during and following the 1914 - 1918 World War.

BROTHER

In its strictest sense, a brother is a male person in his relationship to another person of either sex, born of the same parents. Widened, it can be a male person in his relationship to any other person or persons of the same blood or ancestry - a member of a common family or race in his relationship to all other members.

The term is used in an even wider sense in Freemasonry. It is related to Biblical custom and, more particularly, it follows old guild and operative practice. For example, the old MS charges of the operative masons contain the instruction, 'You shall masons your Brother.....' Also, it is recorded that the process of admitting working masons into the fellowship of the Craft in Scotland was known as 'brothering' or 'brithering'.

Speculative Freemasons are brothers to each other in professing the same faith and beliefs, in being engaged jointly in the same moral endeavours and in being united in a special relationship by a mutual bond or covenant.

Using the word 'brethren' as the plural of 'brother', Freemasons together are appropriately called 'brethren of the Mystic tie'.

CALLING OFF AND ON

'Calling off' is the brief procedure used for the temporary suspension of a lodge meeting at the discretion of a Master, and an equally short 'calling on' is the process employed in the subsequent resumption of the meeting. The use of this format avoids the need to go through the ceremony of formally closing the lodge which would involve a later formal re-opening.

It is intended that this abbreviated procedure be used only for short breaks in proceedings and certainly not for the purpose of adjourning a meeting to a later date.

There is no prescribed requirement that a 'calling off' should only be carried out in a particular degree but it would be desirable to 'call off' in the first degree to avert any possibility of confusion among different grades of brethren on re-entering. On both 'calling off' and 'calling on', knocks are only given by the principal officers, i.e. the Master, Senior and Junior Wardens (in ascending order) and not by the inner Guard or Tyler. During the adjournment, the Volume of the Sacred Law will be closed but neither the working tools nor tracing board will be covered.

APRON

Wherever Freemasonry is practiced, the apron is the distinguishing badge of its adherents and, although there are many differences in design in different jurisdictions, the essential base of spotless white lambskin (or substitute thereof) is common to all.

While the apron was a necessary article of protection for the clothing of the operative stonemason, it was introduced into speculative Freemasonry and is still employed as a symbolic badge of innocence and purity and a bond of friendship.

The investiture of the initiate with a plain white apron provides him with tangible evidence of his formal admission into the Masonic fraternity. Rosettes and other adornments are added later to mark each brother's advancement but the white skin is retained as the basis of the apron, representing a reminder of the common level on which all Masons meet.

It is of interest that, in some constitutions, particularly in the United States of America, all lodge brethren excepting officers wear a plain white apron at all times.

During the 18th century, the ornamentation of aprons proceeded in a free, unchecked manner and many highly decorative styles emerged; it was not until the formation of the united Grand Lodge of England in 1813 that apron design was regularised for the first time.



ASHLARS

The dictionary meaning of an ashlar is a square hewn stone used for building purposes or in pavement construction.

In Freemasonry, brethren have the opportunity of distinguishing between the cubically-shaped rough ashlar (positioned on the Junior Warden's pedestal) being an unhewn stone from the quarry on which the apprentice learns his trade and improves his skills and general ability, and the similarly-formed perfect ashlar (on the Senior Warden's pedestal) developed as a smooth and true die by the experienced craftsman.

Freemasons are enjoined to speculate on the symbolism of the two ashlar which, together with the tracing board, are called the immovable jewels of the order – being termed in this way because they are permanently open in our lodges for the brethren to study and moralise upon.

The clear intention is that brethren will come to appreciate that life is progressive in character and that considerable and concentrated effort is needed to plan and develop their lives from the original unpolished and undeveloped situation of the natural man to as perfect a state as possible representing the cultured, educated person with a full sense of responsibility and social conscience.



FAITH, HOPE & CHARITY

FAITH

Faith is one of the 3 theological virtues – along with hope and charity.

It is referred to in the first tracing board lecture as the first of 3 principal staves or rounds on Jacob's ladder, by which means Masons hope in the fullness of time to attain a state of perfection enabling them to complete the journey from earth to heaven; our faith lies in the Great Architect of the Universe and in the dispensation of His Divine providence and mercy.

In the first Catechetical lecture (4th section), faith is described as 'the foundation of justice, the bond of amity and the chief support of civil society'.

In Chapter XI of his letter to the Hebrews, Paul gave a number of examples of faith in the 'fathers of old time'. In particular, in verse 1, he called faith 'the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen'.

On the first degree tracing boards in some jurisdictions, the 3 theological virtues are symbolised on Jacob's ladder by female figures, the one representing faith carrying a sacred volume.

HOPE

Hope is one of the 3 principal staves of the Masonic and theosophical Jacob's ladder which, symbolically, leads from earth to heaven.

It is combined with the other 2 staves – faith as the lower rung and charity as the higher – on the basis of faith in the Great Architect of the Universe, hope in salvation or immortality and charity in living with all men.

Dr. Oliver, in describing faith, hope and charity as the 3 fundamental virtues which exalt mankind, said a strong faith in the word of God 'produces a well-grounded hope of sharing the promises recorded in that Sacred Volume'.

In the Catechetical lectures, there is reference to hope being 'an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast.....' There is a further reference in the same passage reading, 'If we believe a thing impossible, our despondency may render it so, but he who persevered in a just cause will ultimately overcome all difficulties'.

CHARITY

In the ceremony of initiation, candidates are informed that charity is to be regarded as 'the distinguishing characteristic of a Freemason's heart'.

Charity is often seen as being synonymous with benevolence. While in the world of today these words often in a narrow way given a somewhere similar import, charity in the earlier days of Freemasonry, was given a wider interpretation, being intended to represent a love of one's fellow man: this is still the overall intended meaning in the Masonic sphere.

Another related definition shows charity in its fullest sense being described as a complete goodwill of heart and mind to influence every word, thought and deed.

Famous Freemasons – Part 6

Richard J. Gatling - Inventor of the Gatling Repeating Gun which changed the face of warfare but also saved many lives as it was thereafter unnecessary to field so many men. He also invented a steam plough and numerous machines to sow seeds and improve the lives of farmers. In 1943 a US Destroyer was named in his honour. Centre Lodge No. 23, Indianapolis.

King George IV. King of Great Britain. Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England (Moderns) 1790-1813 while still Prince of Wales.

King George VI - King of England during World War II. Grand Master of Scotland and honorary Past Grand Master of the UGLE. Initiated in Naval Lodge No. 2612. Royal Arch First Principal, 33 degree AASR, Past Grand Master Mark Master Lodge.

Sir William S. Gilbert (1836 - 1911) was an English dramatist, librettist, poet and illustrator best known for his fourteen comic operas produced in collaboration with the composer Sir Arthur Sullivan, of which the most famous include H.M.S. Pinafore, The Pirates of Penzance, - and one of the most frequently performed works in the history of musical theatre, The Mikado. These, as well as most of their other Savoy operas, continue to be performed regularly throughout the English-speaking world and beyond by opera companies, repertory companies, schools and community theatre groups. Lines from these works have become part of the English language, such as "short, sharp shock", "What, never? Well, hardly ever!", and "Let the punishment fit the crime". English poet and play write, partner of Sir Arthur Sullivan. St. Machar Lodge No. 54, Aberdeen, Scotland.

King C. Gillette - American inventor and manufacturer who developed the safety razor and founded the Gillette Safety Razor Co.

John H. Glenn Jr. - U. S. astronaut and first American to orbit the earth in a space craft in 1962, he became a U. S. Senator from Ohio from 1974 through 1998 and in November, 1998, returned to space 36 years after his original journey as the oldest American astronaut.

Barry Goldwater - American politician, a conservative Republican he served as Senator from Arizona and unsuccessfully ran for president in 1964. US Senator. Arizona Lodge No. 2, Phoenix, May 12, 1931.

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe. German poet. 50 year member of Amalia Lodge, Weimar.

D. W. Griffith - Pioneer film maker

Virgil "Gus" Grissom - Astronaut who made the second crewed spaceflight in 1961, he was tragically killed in a launch pad explosion in 1967.

Masonic Birthday

Charles Kleiman 18 years (J)

Humour

One evening after a brother had been a guest at an installation, he had partaken of too much wine, and his host was very worried, as he did not want him to drive home in his present state which was some distance away, so insisted that he stay the night at his house, and travel home the next morning, and after much persuasion this is what he did.

When he got home the next morning, his wife was furious with him because he had forgotten to phone, and she did not believe his story about staying with a brother because of the state he was in, but wondered if he had been with another women, however she pretended to believe him, by asking how the ceremony had gone, and asked how many other brethren had been there and all the regular questions that wives do ask, and he told her that it had been an excellent Lodge meeting and that 65 brethren had turned up, etc.

However at the next Lodge meeting when the secretary rose to read out correspondence, he read a letter from the wife asking if the brother where her husband had stayed the night after the last lodge meeting would please write to her and confirm his story that he had stayed the night at his house because he was unfit to drive home.
The next day in the post she received 64 letters.

Pat & Bill had been Lodge Brothers for many years. They had promised each other that the first to go to the Grand Lodge above would return to tell the other whether there really were Lodges in Heaven and what they were like. By and by, it came to pass that Bill went first.

One day shortly after, Pat was working in his garden when he heard a whispered voice, " Pssst Pat!" He looked around but saw nothing. A few moments later he heard, now quite clearly " Pat! Its me, Bill!" "Bill" Pat exclaimed, " are you in Heaven?" "Indeed I am" said Bill.

Pat paused for a while to get over the shock and then said "Well, Bill, are there Lodges up there in Heaven?" "There certainly are, Pat. There are Lodges all over and they are quite magnificent, equal or better to Great Queen Street. The meetings are well attended, the ritual is word perfect, the festive board fantastic and the spirit of Masonic Fellowship is all pervasive."

"My goodness, Bill," said Pat, "It certainly sounds very impressive but for all that you seem rather sad. Tell me old friend, what is the matter." "Well, Pat, you are right. I have some good news and some bad."

"OK, so what's the good news?"

"The good news is that we are doing a 3rd this coming Wednesday"

"Great" said Pat. "What's the bad news then?"

"You're the Senior Deacon!"

There's a man, walking down the street at 1 in the morning and he's very drunk. A policeman stops him and asks: Where are you going in that condition?

Man: II'mm on mmyy waayyy to a lectttuurre on FFreemmassonnrrry.

Officer: Where can you possibly get a lecture on Freemasonry at this time of night?

Man: Frrromm mmyy wifffe, wwhenn I ggett homme!