

ROCKY RIVER LODGENO. 703 F. & A. M.
 20149 LAKE ROAD
 ROCKY RIVER OHIO 44116

UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 01 Entered Apprentice Degree
Dinner @ 6:30 pm
- May 08 Stated - Dinner @ 6:30 pm
- May 15 Fellow Craft Degree @
Medina Masonic Home. 7:00 pm
- May 22 Mothers Day Dinner 6:30 Program 7:15
- May 24 Cleveland Indians Baseball Game
- May 29 TBA

- Jun 05 TBA
- Jun 12 Stated - Dinner @ 6:30 pm

Please see inside articles for additional information



May 2008
 Volume 66 - Issue 05

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From The West

The High and the Low

Although the formal inspection report has not yet been received, I believe our annual inspection went well. Our ritual work was up to Rocky River's usual high standard, and our books and records were in good shape as in the past years. We had a good turnout of both members and guests.

The week following the inspection, however, was disappointing. We just had enough to open. I know that two members were attending a funeral, but where was everyone else? You all missed a good dinner of sausage, peppers, and onions. I would like to thank WB Ferrell, and Brothers Wilson and Spooner for moving up that evening. You did a good job and will do well in those chairs next year.

Our Master has arranged for meals for virtually every week, in the belief that we are all Belly Masons and that will spark attendance. And while initially successful, it seems that attendance is again on the decline.

What motivates you to come to Lodge? Please let us know so that we can address your concerns. Lodge is much more enjoyable when more of you are there.

Thank you.

Ben Farah, Senior Warden

Miracle Aging Process Pares 30 Years Off Dan Draeger!

Before you ask "what is this fool writing about now" let me explain. Dan Draeger has patiently put up with the fact that I, as keeper of all sacred birthday records, have erroneously been reporting his birthday as June 23, 1907. I was set straight at the 3/6/08 Awards Night that the correct date is January 23, 1937. Doubly embarrassing is when, in an attempt to be humorous, one does so with incorrect information. Dan, however, seemed to take it all in good humor. (I thought, darned, for someone 101 years old he sure climbed those steps at Lodge better than I do.) Should any other birthday errors, misstatements or even outrageous lies from this pen be observed, please advise so I can get the egg off my face.

Fraternally and most apologetically,
Bill Gay, Secretary

Quote of the Month

"Aim for the stars
when setting your goals.
Even if you miss,
you'll land among the stars!"

Dr. Norman Vincent Peale

OLE' SOL

Well another Lodge meeting had come to a close and there were those of us who were anxious to open the next. So it came to pass that we arrived with a powerful thirst at the Linden Lounge and due to the emergence that thirsty situation, we opened Lodge #703 1/2 in very short form to began our libation and conversational indulgences.

The topic at hand related to the double Entered Apprentice Degree we had conferred previously that evening for the brothers (two-fold meaning here) Brent and Keith Miller. Not often does it happen that any Lodge has the opportunity or even the necessity in one evening to confer two degrees but that then, was our pleasant task.

Insightful observation was made (remember it was still early after our arrival) that one of the EA lecture explanations dealt with the "Jewels of the Lodge". The six "Jewels" which if you haven't been to the old Lodge hall recently refers to the Plumb, Square, Level, Rough & Perfect Ashlars and the Trestleboard.

Masonically relevant as these time-honored symbols may be to Freemasonry, this was not the reference being alluded to. The jewels under discussion were the people involved in the degree. Many of us remember the evenings we got our degrees because of the effort other of our brethren made to confer a memorable evening upon us and I believe that night your Lodge was certainly equal to that task.

Presiding over the evening from the East for both brothers was current WM Don Auping and his preparation and presentation produced as eloquent an effort as any candidate could ever hope to get. Don did it twice and if that wasn't a "Jewel" of an effort, then I am a sad judge of performance. The next "Jewel" was exhibited by WB Jim Manthey who presented the Apron lecture to Brent. Flawless as that jewel might have been, it was equaled in brilliance by the Apron Lecture given to Keith by WB Scott Croxford. But the best was yet to come. Every explanation of every symbol of the EA lecture was dealt with in jewel-like precision by WM Sonny Ferrel and the 25 minutes it took to present, makes it the longest of the three lectures. Not wanting to be the cubic zirconium in this field of diamonds, your Secretary did his best in the deliverance of the charge to merit the performance inclusive in the jewels displayed that evening.

Are my recollections of the evening I got my degrees so different from those you have? I remember being impressed by the lessons given but I also remember myself thinking "why would these brothers make this kind of a memorization effort, dress up in tuxedos and dedicate an entire evening, just for me." The answer of course, I received twice again and an innumerable number of times more as a witness for other brothers. This is what we Masons do for one another and perhaps that is why we tend to keep our membership longer in this fraternity than any other fraternity or organization you may be able to think of. Where else could a man find so many that were willing to do so much for so few, to paraphrase another great Freemason, Winston Churchill.

The jewels we instruct as symbols, the jewels we have as officers and the jewels we count as members, make #703 a jewel of a Lodge to be a member of. And, while on the subject of jewels, I better haul mine out of this bar if I expect to accomplish any thing worthwhile tomorrow.

"Ole' Sol"
Secretary #703 1/2

Visitation to Western Reserve Masonic Center

On May 15, your Lodge will be paying a visit to the Western Reserve Masonic Center in Medina for the conferral of a degree. The Lodge has at least one member who resides at the Center. There are also several members who live in the Medina area we have not seen in Lodge for quite sometime and this visit provides you with not only the opportunity to see some excellent ritual work but more importantly renew old friendships. Please mark your calendars to join us at the Center in May.

W.B. Tom Lindsey, Treasurer

Birthday Trivia

The first two birthdays in May include respectively our youngest and oldest. W.B. Tom Lindsey, our Treasurer starts the month off celebrating on the 1st and I'm happy to report that Francis Shockey is still doing the same thing five days later for his 90th year down in N. Fort Meyers, Florida. Never one to forget a Past Master, W.B. Claude Rowan punches up 81 big ones this year and Fred Stover, Ed Lefko, Charles Erickson, Richard Johnston, David Lynn, Carey Coleman and Edward Geist round out the remainder of the months 10 celebrants.

Mighty decent that you all stayed around to celebrate one more, Happy Birthday brethren.

WB Bill Gay, Secretary

(Continued from page 2)

becoming a Master. No such custom was known in England. Indeed, the reverse was true, and it was the Apprentice who prepared his Masterpiece, and if it was accepted, he became a Master. Having won his mastership, he was entitled to become a Fellow - that is, a peer and Fellow of the Craft which hitherto he had only served. Hence, all through the Old Charges, the order is "Masters and Fellows," but there are signs to show that a distinction was made according to ability and skill.

For example, in the Matthew Cooke MS, we read that it had been "ordained that they who were passing of cunning should be passing honored," and those less skilled were commanded to call the more skilled "Masters." Then it is added, "They that were less of wit should not be called servant nor subject, but Fellow, for nobility of their gentle blood." After this manner our ancient brethren faced the fact of human inequality of ability and initiative. Those who were of greater skill held a higher position and were called Masters, while the masses of the Craft were called Fellows. A further distinction must be made between "Master" and a "Master of the Work," now represented by the Master of the Lodge. Between a Master and the Master of the Work there was no difference, of course, except an accidental one; they were both Masters and Fellows. Any Master could become a Master of the Work provided he was of sufficient skill and had the fortune to be chosen as such either by the employer or the Lodge, or both.

What a rite or ritual, if any, accompanied the making of a Master in the old operative Lodges is still a matter of discussion. In an age devoted to ceremonial it is hard to imagine such an important event without its appropriate ceremony, but the details are obscure. But this is plain enough; all the materials out of which the degrees were later developed existed, if not in drama, at least in legend. Elaborate drama would not be necessary in an operative Lodge. Even today, much of what is acted out in an American Lodge, is merely recited in an English Lodge. Students seem pretty well agreed that from a very early time there were two ceremonies, or degrees, although, no doubt, in a much less elaborate form than now practiced. As the Order, after the close of the Cathedral-Building period passed into its speculative character, there would naturally be many changes and much that was routine in an operative Lodge became ritual in a speculative Lodge.

This is not the time to discuss the origin and development of the Third Degree, except to say that those who imagine that it was an invention fabricated by Anderson and others at the time of the revival of Masonry, in 1717, are clearly wrong. Such a degree could have never been imposed upon the Craft, unless it harmonized with some previous ceremony, or, at least, with ideas, traditions and legends familiar and common to the members of the Craft. That such ideas and traditions did exist in the Craft we have ample evidence. Long before 1717 we hear hints increase as the office of Master of the Work lost its practical aspect after the Cathedral-Building period. What was the Master's part? Unfortunately we cannot discuss it in print; but nothing is plainer than, that we do not have to go outside of Masonry itself to find the materials out of which all three degrees, as they now exist, were developed.

Masonry was not invented; it grew. Today it unfolds its wise and good and beautiful truth in three noble and impressive degrees, and no man can take them to heart and not be ennobled and enriched by their dignity and beauty. The First lays emphasis upon that fundamental righteousness without which a man is not a man, but a medley of warring passions - that purification of heart which is the basis alike of life and religion. The Second lays stress upon the culture of the mind, the training of its faculties in the quest of knowledge, without which man remains a child. The Third seeks to initiate us, symbolically, into the eternal life, making us victors over death before it arrives. The First is the Degree of Youth, the Second the Degree of Manhood, the Third the consolation and conquest of Old Age, when evening shadows fall and the Eternal World and its unknown adventure draw near.

What then, for each of us today, is meant by the Master's Piece? Is it simply a quaint custom handed down from our ancient brethren, in which we learn how an Apprentice was made a Master of his Craft? It is that indeed, but much more. Unless we have eyes to see double meaning everywhere in Masonry, a moral application and a spiritual suggestion, we see little or nothing. But if we have eyes to see it is always a parable, an allegory, a symbol, and the Master's Piece of olden time becomes an emblem of that upon which every man is working all the time and everywhere, whether he is aware of it or not - his character, his personality, by which he will be tested and tried at last. Character, as the word means, is something carved, something wrought out of the raw stuff and hard material of life. All we do, all we think, goes into the making of it. Every passion, every aspiration has to do with it. If we are selfish, it is ugly. If we are hateful, it is hideous. Williams James went so far as to say that just as the stubs remain in the checkbook to register the transaction when the check is removed, so every mental act, every deed becomes a part of our being and character. Such a fact makes a man ponder and consider what he is making out of his life, and what it will look like at the end. Like the Masons of old, apprenticed in the school of life, we work for "a penny a day." We never receive a large sum all at once, but the little reward of daily duties. The scholar, the man of science attains truth, not in a day, but slowly, little by little, fact by fact. In the same way, day by day, act by act, we make our character by which we shall stand judged before the Master of all Good Work. Often enough men make such a bad botch of it that they have to begin all over again. The greatest truth taught in religion is the forgiveness of God, which erases the past and gives us another chance. All of us have spoiled enough material, dulled enough tools and made enough mistakes to teach us that life without charity is cruel and bitter.

Goethe, a great Mason, said that talent may develop in solitude, but character is created in society. It is the fruit of fellowship. Genius may shine aloof and alone, like a star, but goodness is social, and it takes two men and God to make a brother. In the Holy Book which lies open on our Altar we read: "No man liveth unto himself; no man dieth unto himself." We are tied together, seeking that truth which none may learn for another, and none may learn alone. If evil men can drag us down, good men can lift us up. No one of us is strong enough not to need the companionship of good men and the consecration of great ideals. Here lies, perhaps, the deepest meaning and value of Masonry; it is fellowship of men seeking goodness, and to yield ourselves to its influence, to be drawn into its spirit and quest, is to be made better than ourselves. Amid such influence each of us is making his Master's Piece. God is all the time refining, polishing, strokes now tender, now terrible. That is the meaning of pain, sorrow and death. It is the chisel of the Master cutting the rough stone. How hard the mallet strikes, but the stone becomes a pillar, an arch, perhaps an altar emblem. "Him that overcometh, I will make a pillar in the Temple of my God." The masterpiece of life, at once the best service to man and the fairest offering to God, is a pure, faithful, heroic, beautiful Character.

by: Unknown