

# St. John's Lodge No. 9, F. & A. M.

## Trestleboard

APRIL 2021

*Jim Russell, editor*



Serving Seattle since 1860

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## Look to the East

S. Ashley Brinkley, Senior Warden



S. Ashley Brinkley Senior Warden

St. John's will make history in April when we have our first, and hopefully the only, Zoom Installation of Officers in our history. I would venture to guess that our founders could not have even imagined this would be possible, yet here we are with a unique set of circumstances in 2021.

It is tradition at the Lodge Installation that the newly elected Worshipful Master share some words of wisdom. Since we will not be having our Installation in the traditional platform, I have decided that the Trestleboard this month will be my vessel to impart my thoughts that I would have shared on our Installation night.

I have told this story so many times about why I wanted to become a Mason, and never get tired of the telling because I think it is one worth repeating.

My dad was a Mason and he was killed when I was a young boy. My older brothers were grown, and I was being raised by my mother. Our fence was broken and my mother didn't know what to do, so she called on a man who was a Lodge Brother of my father. The man came to our house on a weekend and spent the day fixing up our broken fence. When he finished and started walking away my Mother asked him how much she owed him for all his hard work. The man replied that she didn't owe him anything. My mother again said she really felt she needed to pay him. I still remember him turning around saying, "Your husband was my Brother and you don't owe me anything." At that moment I knew I wanted to be like that man, and like my own Dad, a Mason.

One of the highlights of my Masonic career was years later visiting my Dad's Lodge and sharing that story. Although there were no Brothers in attendance who actually knew my Dad or the man that inspired me to become a Mason, they did know their early Brothers made a difference.

I was able to connect recently with the daughter of the man who had helped my mother and shared my story. Their family was very involved with the Lodge and the Shrine. She cried and said she never knew what her Dad had done for us. She said her Dad had long passed away. Her mother was still living but was now in Assisted Living Memory Care and she was going to share the story with her. I felt it was important that she knew it was her Dad's influence and actions that caused me to become a Mason and a Shriner.

I hope my story will impress upon us how our actions may affect others or motivate others to work to improve themselves. But more importantly that we may never know how our actions will affect others.

It will be my honor to serve as Master of St. John's Lodge for this year and I am looking forward to the time we can all meet in person once again.

## CALENDAR



- **April 14 (7pm): Fellowship Zoom** teleconference featuring VWBro. Jimmy Norton, JGW Candidate
- **April 15 (7pm): Officers meeting**
- **April 21 (7pm) St. John's 9 stated communication** Zoom session will open at 7pm and Lodge will officially open exactly at 7:30pm to **elect and install officers!!**
- **April 28 (7pm): Fellowship Zoom:** "Happiest Place on Earth...Finland" Paul Doak and Pekka Granroth
- **May 5 (7pm): Fellowship Zoom teleconference**
- **May 12 (7pm): Fellowship Zoom teleconference**
- **May 13 (7pm): Officers meeting**
- **May 19 (7:30): St. John's 9 stated communication in-Lodge meeting on Master Mason degree put off to a future month. Greenwood Temple Board has elected to not re-open building at this time.**
- **May 26 (7pm): Fellowship Zoom** Esoterics 101 – The Quantum Series – Robert H. Jonson speaker



## MW Wayne Deming Passes

On April 3, 2021 at the age of 102, MW Bro. Wayne Deming received the last summons from the Grand Warden of Heaven and laid down his working tools. It was 50 years ago (1969-70) when MW Bro. Wayne served our Grand Lodge as its Grand Master. His smile and wit will always be remembered. He emphasized communication during his year as Grand Master, an attribute we can take to heart today as well. MW Bro. Wayne, rest in peace.

## **APRIL ZOOM: ELECTION, INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS**

MWB Chris J. Coffman, Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Washington, recently declared that effective April 1, 2021, all Chartered Lodges under the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Washington will be declared open on the First Degree of Masonry in Ample form for their Stated Communications. Simply put, all Lodges will conduct their stated communications via telecommunication without the necessity of performing the opening and closing ritual.

Given this, St. John's Lodge No. 9 will be holding our April Stated Meeting on Wednesday, April 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:30pm on Zoom. As we will be holding elections and installation of officers, we have been granted permission to open on the *third* degree. Following elections and before the installation ceremony, the Master will declare the Lodge "off session" to permit the public to view the (installation only) proceedings.

Under protocol announced by the Grand Master, we will be permitted to conduct our usual business except balloting on petitions for the degrees or for affiliation or plural membership; conferring of degrees; recitation of the posting lecture or other portions of the Standard Work or any other esoteric work.

VWBro. Ashley Brinkley has made it known that he is prepared to move to the East; WBro. Blair Neuman has agreed to serve in the West. WBro. John Louderback is available for election to the South. VWBro. Chuck Brockway's term as Trustee has concluded and he is available for that office.

Master Masons and members of St. John's who desire to make themselves available for elective office are encouraged to notify these brethren or the Secretary.

Access to the Zoom meeting has been provided by email or previous Trestleboards. Per MWB Coffman's guidance, only esoteric (cypher) work is prohibited. Memorials, the Closing Charge, installation ceremony and other monitorial work is allowed.

These meetings on the third Wednesday shall be considered stated communications as defined by our Lodge bylaws. Brothers are asked to dress accordingly, including the adornment of your red bow tie (if you possess one).

Haven't joined us on Zoom? Don't know HOW to join us on Zoom? Call the Secretary at 206 623-0261 for instructions or enter the [Zoom portal](#).

### **LODGE FEATURES FINNISH GUEST APRIL 28**

Freemasonry first made its appearance in Finland in Stockholm in 1737. The first Lodge intended for Finland, St. Augustin, also was founded there in 1756. But a series of political events and edicts soon caused the demise of the Finnish Craft until the Grand Lodge of Finland was founded with the support of the Grand Lodge of the State of New York in the early 1920s. One of its first tasks was to acquire the recognition of the United Grand Lodge of England and thus gain an official status as a recognized regular Grand Lodge. This was achieved in 1927, since when fraternal relations have been established with official recognized Grand Lodges all over the world.

Over the past year of Virtual meetings, we have been very honored to have VWB Pekka Granroth of Savo Lodge No. 14 of the Grand Lodge of Finland be in regular attendance at our virtual gatherings. (Getting up before 5am local time to be on Zoom with us).

This April 28th, we have a presentation entitled "The Happiest Place on Earth...Finland" by Bro. Paul Doak followed by an "Ask a Finn" session with Bro. Pekka gladly answering any questions about Finland and its people.



## **To pay the Craft their wages, if aught be due....."**

Masonic wages are those which are paid in love and brotherhood and mutual help and information and inspiration and charity and assistance and being pals.

They are worth much more than money. Take the Masonic wages out of a Lodge and you would need to revise the whole fraternity. The payment Masons make to Masons is the most valuable which a man can receive.

## **Table of Contents**

Look to the East Sr. Warden Message .....	page 1
St. John's Calendar .....	1
MW Wayne Deming Passes .....	1
April Zoom: Election, Installation .....	2
Lodge Features Finnish Guest April 28 .....	2
To pay the Craft their wages .....	2
Master and Junior Warden's Messages .....	3
Masonic Code: Election Of Officers .....	3
St. John's Trip to Boston .....	3
Zoom Fellowship Every Wednesday .....	3
Stated Communications Open Virtually .....	4
Is There a Special Procedure for the Installation? .....	4
From the Secretary .....	4
April Birthday Celebrants .....	5
St. John's 2021 Scholarships .....	5
Master Masons Raised in April .....	5
Grand Master's Tie and Coin .....	5
Esoteric Freemasonry May 26 Zoom Subject .....	5
Sickness & Distress – Masonic Outreach .....	5
We Work in Speculative Masonry .....	6
Fires Set at Masonic Lodges in Vancouver B.C. ....	8
Didja Know? 1918 Influenza .....	8
When You Disagree .....	8
A Brother's Prayer .....	8

## Master's Message

WBro. Blair Neumann



Brothers, after a long 16 months, my year in the East is near its end. I appreciate more than ever this opportunity to have served you, Brethren, and I hope that I've served you well.

Looking forward, we'll be in good hands with VWB Ashley Brinkley at the helm, then I hope to be re-elected for a more regular year in the East in 2022. The challenges of this annus horribilis have been formidable and we have worked together as a Lodge of Brothers to endure the loneliness of self-isolation and to help our families and our communities thrive or at least survive despite our incredible circumstances.

As we reboot our Lodge around that altar and Great Lights, under the protecting folds of the flag of our country, let us each reflect upon all that we've learned about ourselves and our values throughout our ordeals in these times. I suspect not one of us has been unscathed this year, and so we each have reason to appreciate our Brothers who have our backs forever in Harmony and with Brotherly Love.

### Washington Masonic Code: Election Of Officers

**Who May Vote.** Only Master Masons who are members in good standing of the Lodge holding the election are entitled to vote.

**Officer Qualification.** All Officers of a Lodge, either elected or appointed, shall be Master Masons in good standing who are voting members thereof, and who shall have passed a proficiency on the Third Degree. Exception: The Chaplain, Musician, and Tyler, who may be members of other Lodges.



**Holding Two Offices.** No Member shall hold two offices in a Lodge at the same time except that a Lodge may at its discretion elect one member to the combined offices of Secretary and Treasurer. No Member may be installed as Worshipful Master or Warden in more than one Lodge at the same time.

**Election.** Election of officers shall be by written ballot. A Brother receiving a majority of all votes cast is duly elected. A blank ballot is not a vote. A show of hands is not permitted for an election of officers.

Find more information about the St. John's trip to Boston – cradle of American Freemasonry – Sept. 21-27. Contact VW John Adamson at [John2601@aol.com](mailto:John2601@aol.com)

## Junior Warden's Message

WBro. John Murray Louderback



It is noble to wish others around you to be happy. However, they will most likely not be happy if you're not happy.

People tend to think that if they have this or that, obtain wealth, achievement of fame or fortune, have a certain job, marry a special person, have a great car or beautiful home – that they will be happy. Happiness is not something external. Happiness is when we are able to cultivate compassionate love and understanding in every moment of our lives. All the external things in our lives can change suddenly in a moment.

We may suffer or feel lost and confused without clear understanding and direction. We may ask ourselves, what am I supposed to do with my life that is meaningful?

Happiness becomes possible when we know we are on the right path. Happiness is not the attainment of some goal or arrival at some perceived destination. Happiness is in the here and now – not something to be attained at some future time. Live mindfully in every moment of your life. This will make you happy as well as the people around you.

Join us on Zoom  
**Teleconferencing Fellowship**  
**every Wednesday**

**at 7pm**

*We're having a great time exchanging ideas and  
Masonic enlightenment*

### **Coming dates:**

*April 14, 2021*

**April 21, 2021 (stated meeting night)**

**Elections. Installation of Officers**

*April 28, 2021*

*May 5, 2021*

*May 12, 2021*

**Sessions open promptly at 7pm**

**\* Fellowship**

**\* Check on our brothers and widows**

**\* Masonic Enlightenment & Education**

- Use Meeting ID **981 655 9198** to join our Fellowships
- If asked, use passcode **1776**

**Here's more about how to use Zoom Meetings:**  
<https://www.context.org/help/zoom-quickguide/>



## ***Stated Communications Now Open Virtually***

Questions and answers concerning Virtual Stated Communications:

### **1. May a Lodge read petitions at a virtual Stated Communication?**

A Lodge may *read* a petition, but it will not be able to vote on the petition until we can hold in-person communications. Further, the WMC Sec. 19.01 B.L. implies that the Lodge vote on the petition at the meeting when the investigating committee submits its report. This will not occur until in-person meetings are allowed. Lastly, the Lodge is not currently allowed to perform degrees.

### **2. A Lodge is required to provide 20 days written notice to the Brothers of the first Stated Communication. Must 20 days written notice be provided for subsequent Stated Communications?**

The initial notice must include a statement of how subsequent meeting information will be made available, but that does not mean it must be a new 20 day written notice.

### **3. Do Lodges have to wait until April to send notice of the Virtual Stated Communication?**

No. The reason for having an April 1 start date is so Lodges can provide that notice before the start of Virtual Stated Communications.

### **4. May Lodges include in their notice of a Virtual Communication that Lodge elections will be held?**

Yes. The specifics of how to conduct Lodge elections and Installations have been issued.

### **5. May a Lodge perform memorials and other Monitorial work, like the Closing Charge, during a Virtual Stated Communication?**

Only esoteric (cypher) work is prohibited. Memorials, the Closing Charge, installation ceremony and other monitorial work is allowed.

### **6. Must the Secretary report the actions taken by the Lodge's Executive Committee during the time when Lodge Communications were not held?**

Yes, both MWBro. Charles Wood and MWBro. Chris Coffman directed that those activities must be reported to the Lodge at their next Stated Communication.

### **7. May a Lodge admit guests and candidates to parts of the virtual Stated Communication?**

Guests who are Masons may attend a Lodge's virtual Stated Communications. The Lodge just needs to be sure that they are, in fact, Masons. As to Candidates and prospective Candidates, if the Worshipful Master declares the Lodge off session for social or educational purposes, then the Candidates and prospects may be admitted. They will need to leave the meeting before closing. Alternatively, the Lodge could complete its business, close and then admit the visitors.

### **8. How does the Worshipful Master close the virtual Stated Communication?**

The Worshipful Master should just declare the Lodge closed.

## **Is there a special procedure for the Installation?**

The installation ceremony shall be conducted according to the public ceremony found in the Standard Work starting on page 4-14 with reasonable modifications to account for the use of a virtual platform and the conditions imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Specifically, the following modifications are necessary:

The Worshipful Master-elect shall have a Volume of the Sacred Law open with the square and compasses properly displayed on which he can take his official obligation.

The Installing Officer will "symbolically" present the Worshipful Master the various items listed on page 4-17 of the Standard Work.

The Installing Officer will symbolically invest officers with the jewel (and rods) of their office.

The officers to be installed must attend the virtual meeting to be installed.

The incoming officers are not required to wear the apron of the office to which they are to be installed.

Lastly, this is still an installation of officers *so the Brothers should be properly attired.*



## **Now's the Chance to Get Involved**



**From  
The  
Secretary's  
Desk**

Before all this Covid-19 stuff started, many St. John's Brothers had already "social distanced" by no longer having the energy or vision-worthiness to drive to and from Lodge in the darkness of night. So, once what was the joy of brotherly fellowship became isolation and forgotten habits of third Wednesday St. John's brotherhood.

But, voila! The opportunity of over-the-internet Zoom participation has made it possible to connect with fellows of the Craft once again. And now we can see and talk to one another, find out what's happening in our families, join in Masonic Enlightenment, and more.

What's the "more" part of it? Volunteer to call on our Widows. Check with our elderly Brothers. Make use of our knowledge to present a program of interest. Interview a Brother to contribute to our biographical histories.

Learn a lecture or teach a lecture to a younger Brother.

There's a lot that can be done from home to keep us all involved in Masonic communion. As Robert H. Johnson of the Midnight Mason has written, "If you've been mulling it over, waiting for a reason to get involved, go for it. Let's walk down to the quarry together and get back to work."

## APRIL BIRTHDAY CELEBRANTS

Day

- 6 Louis L. Turner
- 9 David J. Holdsworth
- 10 S. Webster Kavanaugh
- 10 K. Eric Koteles
- 11 Morris R. Capeluto
- 14 Joshua A. Skinner
- 16 Gale H. Kenney
- 17 Carl L. Alexander
- 18 Gregory E. Knapp
- 19 Louis A. Van Der Wel
- 19 Frederick A. Eastman
- 21 Michael J. Davis
- 22 Paul K. Doak
- 23 Martin L. Burgess
- 25 Howard C. Harris, Sr.
- 26 Kenneth W. Macarthur
- 27 Craig L. Catli
- 28 Boe E. Lindgren
- 30 Thomas R. McClain



## St. John's 2021 Scholarships

Again St. John's will be awarding scholarships to assist those who will be attending college or trade school. This year we have set aside \$30,000 to be distributed.

**Chairman WBro. Eric Koteles asks for brethren to recommend worthy student applicants.**

The last day to apply for scholarships is April 30th. Applications should be submitted to our scholarship email address [sjl9scholarship@gmail.com](mailto:sjl9scholarship@gmail.com). If applicants don't hear back within 48 hours, please contact chairman Eric Koteles directly. [eric.koteles@gmail.com](mailto:eric.koteles@gmail.com).



## MASTER MASONS RAISED IN APRIL

### Date Raised:

- 4/30/1949 Arthur P. Jentoft
- 4/4/1966 Alvin W. Jorgensen
- 4/26/1967 Stephen F. Weiss
- 4/28/1973 Thomas R. McClain
- 4/28/1973 Mark A. Lentz
- 4/24/1976 Craig R. Messett
- 4/20/1978 Neil P. Quinn
- 4/15/1981 Kenneth M. Lane, Sr.
- 4/19/1983 George O. "Bob" Smith, Jr.
- 4/18/1984 S. Ashley Brinkley
- 4/19/1984 Albert K Gustafson
- 4/23/1996 Mark A. Campbell
- 4/22/1998 Thomas Ray Everts
- 4/12/2007 Anthony Kent Porter
- 4/15/2015 Kemal Alaeddinoglu



## GRAND MASTER'S TIE AND COIN



One of the unfortunate results of our "stay-at-home," no Masonic meetings or visitations, is the inability or difficulty in supporting our Grand Master's designated

charities this year. The profit from the ties and coins and any donations received from pins is to be used to support the Shriner's Hospital in Spokane and the Seattle King County Health Clinic's Vision Program. Shown here is a picture of the Grand Master's lapel pin. The tie (\$30) and/or coin (\$10) may be purchased directly from MWBro. Coffman (payable to Chris Coffman). Please send the request along with your check to

MWBro. Chris Coffman  
M.W. Grand Lodge of Washington, F. & A.M.  
4970 Bridgeport Way W.  
University Place, WA 98467

This year's tie will repeat next year (2021-22) during soon-to-be MW Cameron Bailey's term. The tie displays small forget-me-not flowers spread on a field of blue.

### Esoteric Freemasonry May 26 Zoom Subject

St. John's has booked WBro. Robert H. Johnson for May 26<sup>th</sup> at 7pm for a Zoom-based presentation on: "Esoterics 101 – The Quantum Series," designed to be a beginning look into the deeper mysteries of Freemasonry. This is a beginning exposure to the concept of "Esoteric Masonry." Schools of wisdom, hidden symbolism and hints at an ultimate Revelation will be explored.

Esoteric Masonry is the personal exploration to some of the less mainstream areas of the fraternal society. Some of these aspects include personal development, spiritualism, mysticism, and so on. The esoteric side of Masonry seeks to find additional sources of wisdom and understanding.

Interest in Esoteric Masonry is starting to make a comeback. Not that its pursuits ever disappeared, certainly aspects have shifted in focus. It looks at aspects of personal resonance with the symbols of Freemasonry and helps to develop one's own faith.

### Sickness & Distress – Masonic Outreach Services is Here to Assist

Do you know a Mason, Masonic widow, or member of our Masonic family who needs assistance due to age, illness, disability, or hardship? Maybe you could use a little help yourself? Masonic Outreach Services' Care Coordinators and Certified Senior Advisors spend time visiting with our clients to tailor solutions that help them lead dignified and meaningful lives by remaining independent or finding the right solution for their daily needs.

Please, if you know someone who can use our assistance, help them connect with us by calling, toll free, (844) 288-3531 or [outreach@masonscare.org](mailto:outreach@masonscare.org)



Robert H. Johnson



# LET'S LOOK AT THAT A LITTLE CLOSER

*As Masons we recognize the fact that one man glimpses the truth but partially. But by speculating with others, we can see more aspects of the truth of any situation if we will listen with unbiased respect and eager curiosity to hear another's point of view. Consequently, there are no final answers to the question, "Does every newly-made Mason really speculate after receiving the three degrees?"*



## WE WORK IN SPECULATIVE MASONRY

Short Talk Bulletin Vol. XLVI No. 2 — February 1968

Our title is readily identified as part of the Middle Chamber lecture. This statement is intended to put the candidate "in tune" for the series of instructive and philosophical discourses he is about to hear. It contrasts the kind of "work" done by modern members of the Fraternity to the manual labors performed by stone-cutters, masons, and builders in the days of operative Masonry.

In the eighteenth century, when Speculative was first used in this monitorial expression, it had a rather clear and definite meaning for the average member. He certainly wasn't misled by the image of a man taking a chance in the stock market. Speculative doesn't "register" with candidates today as it did two hundred years ago. Consequently, the statement in our title often "falls flat" for twentieth-century Fellowcrafts.

This is regrettable, since the word is so often used to describe Freemasonry and has great value for preserving a tradition of Masonic

development. We really can't do without the expression, Speculative Freemasonry, even though Symbolical Freemasonry might be a more descriptive term today.

The eighteenth century, in which that kind of Masonry was organized, is known as the Age of Reason, or the Age of Enlightenment. In England this was the period which saw the flowering of new ideas, new methods, and rediscovery of the ideas of the ancient classical world. Scientific investigation and invention became the leading activities of men of learning in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The Royal Society was organized in 1660 to promote "Physico-Mathematicall Experimental Learning." The great architect of the Restoration, Sir Christopher Wren, was a member. The Rev. Dr. John T. Desaguliers, the "Father of modern Speculative Freemasonry" and third Grand Master of the Premier Grand Lodge in London, lectured in "Experimental Philosophy" at Oxford and Westminster. He studied the science of gunnery and is credited with inventing a sponging apparatus for a breech-loading "12 pounder" cannon. One of the most important functions of the Royal Society was the performance of experiments before the members. Scientific equipment in those days was referred to as "philosophical apparatus."

The studies and experiments of those investigators were referred to as "speculation." They were speculative men, i.e., they observed, sought, examined, contemplated and meditated on new facts or knowledge by experimenting with what was already known. They exchanged that knowledge with each other. Freemasonry, therefore, originally meant an "experimental" search for Light, or Truth.

That characteristic was the new element which made the Fraternity different from what it had been before. Brotherly love, moral training, and relief had always been emphasized in the lodges of operative Craftsmen. Architectural knowledge had always been imparted to develop master workmen; but as a Speculative Craft, Freemasonry in the eighteenth

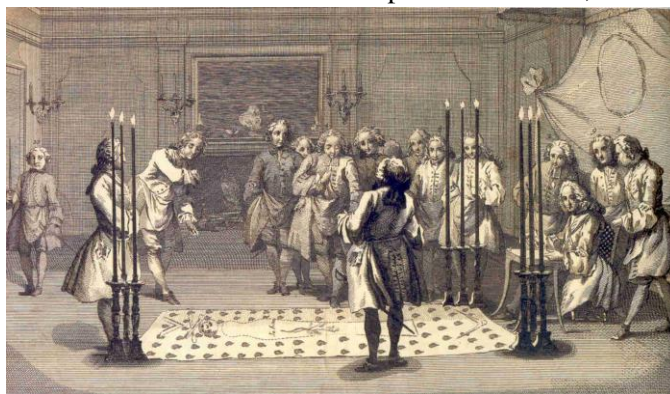
century placed its greatest emphasis on "experimental philosophy" and knowledge of the Truth to which all learning leads. Therefore, to be true to its origins, Freemasonry must be an educational institution in the broadest sense.

Much of Masonry's ritual and lectures are the result of William Preston's studies of existing rituals and ceremonies in Masonic lodges, and of his embellishment of these with the knowledge of classical art, mathematics, and philosophy which he had acquired by independent study. His famous *Illustrations of Freemasonry* appeared in London in 1772. It was the basis of much of the "work" produced in America by Thomas Smith Webb and Jeremy L. Cross.

To a self-made scholar like Preston, knowledge was the principal means for achieving wisdom and power. To him, working in Speculative Masonry was acquiring useful knowledge for self-improvement. For this reason he developed the lengthy lectures which characterize his writings. His was an age in which few men had the chance to acquire scholarly learning. He tried to make of Speculative Masonry a university for the common man.

"Without much instruction, and more exercise, no man can be skillful in any art; in like manner, without an assiduous application to the various subjects treated in the different lectures of Masonry, no person can be sufficiently acquainted with the true value of the institution." Thus wrote William Preston.

In his day, the exercise of the speculative art was consciously practiced in Masonic Lodges. It was not confined to demonstration by the officers in the conferring



of degrees. All the members participated in discussions which grew out of questions and challenges.

Initiates were not excused or ignored. They were drawn into the speculations by direct questions, not merely while the Lodge was at labor, but also at refreshment; the Table Lodge was an integral part of every meeting.

For example, a new member might be asked to explain the symbolism of the Tyler's sword, not because he was expected to give a "correct" answer, but to afford him a chance to exercise his speculative power, his ability to give expression to the symbolic meanings he saw in a particular Masonic tool or implement. At the same time, it gave opportunity to his fellows to make sure that he realized that in Masonry the sword is always a defensive, not an offensive weapon. In this way they could help him to improve his speculative skills and Masonic understanding. Such discussions extended to all sorts of questions about art, life, manners, morals, etc.

This kind of intellectual "give and take" was one of the "images" of Freemasonry which attracted outstanding men into its ranks in the eighteenth century. Benjamin Franklin modeled his Junto Club on this activity; he wanted to associate with speculative men who liked to pursue knowledge and discuss it dispassionately "for the good of mankind."

Our "ancient brethren" of that era were much more inclined to such activities than we are. They "practiced" more. They observed certain "rules of the game." They didn't shout down the opposition. They didn't resent disagreement; they provoked and encouraged it. They looked forward to the exchange of ideas that brought them a different point of view. They delighted in the clever and well-reasoned rebuttal.

For one thing, they had more time. For another, they really tried to subdue their passions, especially the prejudices which offended their brethren. They were genuinely interested in the pursuit of Truth - the truths of fact and demonstrated experience - the truth for its own sake, regardless of whom it might prove right or wrong.

Speculative Masons really tried to observe, to see and to describe the moral principles which the working tools of Masonry symbolize; to ponder their applications and uses in their individual intellectual, moral, and spiritual activities; to acquire moral and spiritual knowledge through study and contemplation; - i.e., to speculate on ways to establish genuine brotherhood and to seek the Light.

As suggested by one slight example above, the Masons of Preston's day were generally interested in the

"give and take" of intellectual exercise. They saw to it that initiates and new members were drawn into that activity. They worked in Speculative Masonry.

How often, one might ask, is a present day initiate asked a question to stimulate his speculative power? At the end of the third degree, he may be invited to say a few words to explain his reactions to his initiatory experiences. After a long evening of degree work, however, most of the brethren hope he is "speculative" enough to realize that a few words of appreciation will be more than adequate.

This leads us to a broader question for which there is no complete or "correct" answer, but which may stimulate some speculation among us. Are we really working in Speculative Masonry?

There will be those who point out that we still adhere to the Ancient Charges and that we continue to perform the ceremonies of the Craft in the rituals that have come down to us through the centuries. We have preserved the ancient landmarks. We teach the lessons of the degrees. We work hard to transmit the wise and serious truths of Freemasonry unimpaired.

But, conceding that all this is done skillfully, "letter perfect," completely, let this question also be asked. "In the way we are doing all these things, are we working speculatively, or merely in due form?" In the ceremonies of primitive tribes, repeated over and over again, without questioning, without change, the ceremonial actions were

rigidly maintained, but their significance forgotten. When Masonic teaching becomes a stylized performance in which words are repeated over and over again without speculation, without questioning, the "labors" of our Lodges became boring performances which intelligent men avoid.

Does every newly-made Mason really speculate after receiving the three degrees? If the answer is yes, what evidence is there that the reply is substantially true? What speculative activity, not including degree work or ritual rehearsals, goes on in the lodge? Undoubtedly you have speculated silently about Masonic symbols and ceremonies; but when did you last speculate on those things with another Brother, or a group of them?

As Masons we recognize the fact that one man glimpses the truth but partially. But by speculating with others, we can see more aspects of the truth of any situation if we will listen with unbiassed respect and eager curiosity to hear another's point of view. Consequently, there are no final answers to the questions raised above.

But in the speculative spirit, be challenged by our question. Gather together your speculative Brethren and ask each one to answer the question, "Do we really work in Speculative Masonry?"





## Man arrested after fires set at three Masonic Lodges in Metro Vancouver B.C.

*Police are investigating after fires broke out at Lynn Valley Lodge and the Capilano Lodge Masonic Centre on Lonsdale Avenue. A third fire at a Masonic Lodge in Vancouver broke out minutes after the first two at the corner of 29th and Rupert Street.*



North Vancouver Fire Department battle a fire at the Duke of Connaught Lodge No. 64, also called the North Vancouver Masonic Centre

A man, a “flat earther” named Ben Kohlman (42), has been arrested and police are recommending arson charges in connection with three fires at Masonic Lodges in Metro Vancouver Tuesday morning. A search of social media turned up a Facebook profile where someone with the same name as the suspect appeared to take credit for the fires.

Police say fires were intentionally set at two Lodges in North Vancouver and another in east Vancouver.

Shortly before 6:45am, North Vancouver RCMP were notified of a structure fire at the Lynn Valley Lodge at 1371 Lynn Valley Rd.

Just a few minutes later, at around 7am, a second fire broke out at the Duke of Connaught Lodge No. 64, also called the North Vancouver Masonic Centre, a heritage building located at 1142 Lonsdale Ave.

Then around 7:30am crews were called out to a Masonic lodge in Vancouver, on the corner of East 29th Avenue and Rupert Street.

Vancouver acting assistant chief Mike Sereda said the fire was in the lobby and there was little damage to the building. He confirmed it was considered suspicious and said police were on scene.

Although police have not announced a motive in the arsons, Kohlman’s Facebook page contains anti-Freemason attacks that he shared from conspiracy pages, particularly pages about flat earth theory.

The incident wouldn’t even be the first time in recent years that a flat earther attempted to burn down a Masonic Lodge. An Australian flat earth convention went off the rails in 2018 when an organizer was accused of the same crime.

## Didja Know

By the time Germany surrendered in November 1918, [949 Washingtonians](#) had given their lives during the war. Monuments and memorials were created in their honor, but just as the state was grieving its war dead, an [influenza pandemic](#) was sweeping the globe. By the time it ran its course, it is estimated that the “Spanish” flu killed millions more people than died in the “war to end all wars.” In Washington state alone, the flu took more than 4,800 lives, five times the number of war dead.

## When You Disagree...

When you disagree with someone, focus on getting a resolution to the issue – rather than on winning the argument. When you “win” an argument, it often means you haven’t solved the underlying problem. Getting at the underlying problem may mean compromise on your part. But it’s worth it in the end.

## Great Architect of the Universe

**and guide over all time: past, present and future:**

**We come before you, asking a blessing upon us and all regular Masons, together with family and friends. We lift up all who are troubled**

**in body, mind and spirit.**

**A year ago, we did not realize that these gatherings**

**would become a highlight of our week. We celebrate**

**the opportunity to open in Ample Form, to elect and install officers and to conduct business.**

**We ask a blessing on deliberations and our new officers for the ensuing year.**

**We celebrate the principles of brotherly love, relief and truth, and gather, again, to gain further light in Masonry**

**as we continue our search for wisdom and understanding.**

**Help us to continue to be worthy of our calling as Masons, even as we seek to be faithful in our responsibilities to others in the relief of suffering and need.**

**Thank you for this opportunity to be together...**

**to work together... and to make a difference in world in need of harmony, light, peace and love.**

**AMEN**

Written by Rev. Bro. Fred Hutchinson, M.Div., MSHS, BCC  
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