



Trestleboard

April 2009

Culver City Foshay No. 467 F. & A. M.

*A year dedicated in Loving Memory to
Gaylord "Pops" V. Roten
Outstanding Masonic Youth Leader &
Past Master of Liberal Arts Lodge No. 677*



FROM THE EAST

Because of my profession and my participation in Masonry, I come into contact with a good number of people. The majority of these people are searching, searching for a way to improve their lives, not necessarily materialistically, but philosophically and spiritually. This search can, at times, become frustrating, but in Masonry, as I have said before, "Time, Patience and Perseverance Will Accomplish All Things." This also applies to seeking further Light in Masonry.

In Masonry, change comes slowly. There is a reason for that.

Masonry is composed of individuals with their own ideas and concepts, but, just because a man says he wants to receive more knowledge, wisdom or "Light", it doesn't necessarily mean he is ready to receive that knowledge, wisdom or "Light". What we seek is usually right in front of us, but because of preconceived thoughts, ideas or beliefs, we cannot "see, learn or grasp" what needs to be learned, leaving us still in the dark and at the very least frustrated with our progress or the process.

When the feeling of frustration sets in because of the perceived lack of progress, we become unsettled and maybe disillusioned. However, the irony here is, that is when one can make the most progress. How? When this happens, you are forced to look at what is wrong. Is it your concepts or your situation, or maybe a little of both?

There is a solution. When people of like mind come together and are willing to explore different ways to work towards the common goal of obtaining further "Light", the unsettling becomes settled and the disillusionment can turn to wonder.

Here at Culver City Foshay Lodge, our Senior Warden, Jonathan Dilley has put forward a solution by setting aside the 1st Saturday of each month for an informal Masonic Education group dealing with the Degrees, change and further "Light". And on Sunday mornings, the Lodge is open to our members (and non-Masons) who are interested in getting together to hold discussions in general regarding Masonry and "Light", and also for additional candidate coaching.

I'd like to leave you with a little story that was told to me when I was younger, singing with a rock & roll band in Little Rock, Arkansas, by an elderly black gentleman in Newport, Arkansas, after mentioning how much I liked his town and asked what it was like living there. It goes like this:

"A young man, looking for a new place to settle down because of his job, was driving through a small town and really liked what he saw, nice homes with big yards, tree lined streets, convenient shopping malls with theaters. He took his time driving through the town, from the church to the synagogue, the school and the town hall. Everything seemed so peaceful and the people appeared to be warm and friendly.

As he was approaching the outskirts of the town, he noticed an elderly man sitting in a rocking chair on the front porch of his house. He was smoking what appeared to be an old pipe and seemed to be perfectly happy and content. The young man drove his car up to the front of the house, parked, got out of the car and walked over to the elderly man in the rocking chair and spoke to him.

"Good morning sir" he said. "Good morning son" came the reply. "Nice town you have here. I think that I might like to settle down here --- what are the folks like around here?" the young man asked. The elderly man thought for a moment, took a puff from his pipe, looked straight at the young man and said, "Well, let's see now, tell me what the folks are like where you're from." The young man replied, "Where I'm from, the people are busybodies, always have something to say about what you're doing, never taking anything seriously."

The elderly man remained quiet for what seemed a long time after the young man spoke. "You don't say" he replied. "Well, guess I'd have to say the folks around here are like that, too."

The young man, surprised to here the elderly man's response to his question, said as he was shaking his head side to side, "I'm sorry to hear that, guess I'll just keep moving on. Thanks and goodbye" he said as he got into his car and drove off.

About a week later, another young man drove through the same town looking for a new place to live because of his job, and he also liked what he saw, nice homes with big yards, tree lined streets, convenient shopping malls with theaters. He took his time driving through the town, from the church to the synagogue, the school and the town hall. Everything seemed so peaceful and the people appeared to be warm and friendly.

As he approached the outskirts of the town, he came upon the same elderly man sitting in the rocking chair on his front porch that the first young man had stopped to talk with. The second young man pulled his car up to the front of the house, parked, got out of the car and walked over to the elderly man in the rocking chair and spoke to him.

"Good morning sir" he said. "Good morning son" came the reply. "Nice town you have here. I think that I might like to settle down here --- what are the folks like around here?" the young man asked. The elderly man thought for a moment, took a puff from his pipe, looked straight at the young man and said "Well, let's see now, tell me what the folks are like where you're from." The young man replied, "Well, where I'm from, the people are nice. They're friendly, will help you should you need help, why we even can get into some good serious discussions without arguing with each other. The hardest part of moving will be leaving the people of the town."

The elderly man remained quiet for what seemed a long time after the young man spoke. "You don't say" he replied. "Well, guess I'd have to say the folks around here are like that, too."

The young man, smiling, stretched out his hand to the elderly man and said, "Thank you, I think I found my new home."

God bless us all.

Fraternally,

David Francis Philips, Master



FROM THE WEST

If April showers bring May flowers and Freemasonry makes good men better, I have a strong feeling that we have a great year ahead of us! The work continues to roll forward and our Lodge has not slowed pace for even a moments rest. However, speaking on the topic of rest, I am caused to reflect on a moment during the month of March that had a significant impact on me as a Mason. On May 21st, it will have been 10 years since the day I was raised as a Master Mason and during that time I have never been a part of Masonic Services for an onward traveling brother. In March, I had the privilege of attending the Services of Brother Gino Giacinti, a recent 50 year pin recipient. This Brother had touched the lives of so many people and it was amazing to see one friend or relative after another rise to speak kind and inspiring words about the impact of this man on their life and on the lives of those around them. Even our very own Brother Robert Leggio, spoke of this profound impact only having met and known him a short time. Needless to say, I too was touched.

Beyond that which was said at the pulpit by friends and family, I was even more impressed by what I heard directly behind our row where we all sat as a Fraternity, side by side in Masonic fashion. I heard the words, "I never knew Gino was a Freemason!" I then knew instantly how important it was for us to be there representing not only Gino, but also representing our Fraternity. This group of family and friends were watching us, and they were opened to a side of Gino that was never known to them. How important it is for us a Masons to set a good example wherever we are and whatever we are doing.

When people hear that we are Masons, they are watching and they are studying us to find the answer to one of the greatest questions in our time, "What is a Freemason!" This is also reflected in our Lodge as new candidates come knocking on our door and asking the same question. It does not, however, take a knock at the door of the Lodge to invite the question. It only takes the knowledge of who we are and to what Fraternity we belong and the question is already asked. How we choose to answer this question is entirely up to each and every one of us.

Let us all work to not only better our own lives using the tools that Freemasonry has provided to unlock the Mysteries of Freemasonry deep within our hearts, let us also work to unlock those Mysteries in the hearts of others as we live our daily lives. In the case of Brother Giacinti, he is even still, after death, setting an example and sharing with the world the greatest secret of them all, "What is a Mason?" After that day, I feel I have a better idea what the answer to that question might actually be.

Fraternally,

Jonathan Dilley, SW



FROM THE SOUTH

THE ALLEGORICAL LIFE

Beyond the portal whereupon one has knocked, in search of light and truth, lie the Mysteries of Freemasonry. It is the quest of many a man who has participated in the great Brotherhood of Free and Accepted Masons to elevate his mind and expand his understanding by the pursuit of knowledge. The knowledge he may gain is not easily attained elsewhere, for much of it has to do with an experience woven in allegory and explained in symbolisms, uniquely possessed by the institution.

Allegory is especially important because it gives birth to abstract truths that refuse to hatch in the dank realm of the un nourished mind. Like unto the rude matter cut off from the surfaces of stones by the working tools of the craftsman, so through the process of education and purification, our minds are cleared of the superfluties and unnecessary thoughts that give clutter and discourage incubation. Ideas that are too sublime to be appreciated from a mundane plateau emerge to enrapture the postulant on a higher plane, if he has successfully attained his height. Allegory is not merely the valuable lesson taught from the lectern or the useful information extracted from the book, but the sublime and heroic experience that is seldom presented to the ordinary life, yet it is transferred as a seed from generation to generation. Whatever hitherto might have been the cold stones of philosophical inertia will become through this process a spring of scintillating beads of life.

Somewhere and sometime began the initiatory process which has carried the allegory, subjecting it to cultural metamorphoses, but never losing hold of the particular value it has in terms of human growth, the life out of death transformation at the core of the process which the candidate is induced to simulate. Its exact germination is not detectable because earthly archives have rarely recorded its events. It acts as a ghost before the collective psyche, inciting that portion of humanity, which is sensitive to it; and to the sensitive indeed, it is a spirit always present. Masonic philosophy is, therefore, highly speculative in nature, considering things which are impalpable by ordinary means of measurement and analysis. The impalpability is in reference to the spiritual aspirations of our being, which our usual faculties and material awareness are by themselves inadequate to serve. The tools and implements of freemasonry capable of measuring stones to be fitted for the builder's use can also probe the empyreal and spiritual worlds. Morally they may impress upon the memory wise and serious truths. The great aspiration of the ancient builders was to befit their temples for the presence of Deity. So perfect was their art by necessity, that no less than the science of the spheres and of the astronomer would serve the will of the architect. So unto us also, they act as tools to bridge the material and spiritual. Such tools help us to abandon the limitations of ordinary language and cultural distinctions and express what is truly sublime and, because they are symbolical as well as functional, they aid us also to exceed the conception of ordinary form and thus to fill our minds with insight into eternity.

Merrick Rees Hamer, P.M.,
Junior Warden



FROM THE BETHEL

We are very excited to announce we have a new member in our Bethel. Miss Alyssa Johnson, who had been our first JD to Bee in several years, was initiated into the Bethel on Friday, March 13. This ceremony was held on short notice, but we would like to thank all of the masons who came to support this special event.

Our regular Stated Meetings are every second and fourth Monday at 7:00 pm. Any Master Mason is welcome to join us, and we appreciate seeing you at our meetings.

April Stated meetings:

Monday, April 13th

Monday, April 27th

Our Bethel's fun activities coming up in April are:

On Sunday, April 19th we are having a fun Archery Day.

We will be going to El Dorado Park in Long Beach to have a day of archery fun and games. We will be learning how to shoot from three-time Olympian and private coach, Janet Dykman.

This is open to all Daughters and JDs to Bee, and we will be inviting the Bellflower, Long Beach, and Redondo Beach Bethels to join us for the day and we will enjoy a potluck lunch in the park afterward.

On Friday, April 24th we will be hosting our Iron Chef Dinner.

This dinner is a big hit for the girls and the diners as well. We form two or three teams of our girls, and a few days before the dinner we announce a "secret ingredient". Each team picks a recipe with the ingredient in it, and the diners get a serving of each team's dish. All diners are given a ballot card on which they vote for their favorite dish. The winning team is announced and our Iron Chef perpetual trophy is engraved with the winning team's name.

Come have fun with us, have a great dinner and vote for your favorite dish!

In April we will be going to a Los Angeles Dodgers baseball game,. As of this writing the date has not been set.

For more information on these and other activities visit our website: www.bethel2.org

FROM THE BEE HIVE

Our Bee Hive meetings are held on the second Monday of each month. These meetings are for the young girls who are 9 years old. They participate in crafts and games and begin to learn what it means to be a Job's Daughter.

The International Order of Job's Daughters is an order for the young daughters, granddaughters, sisters and nieces of Master Masons. Just like you, we need new members to grow, thrive and continue. All of our activities are perfect opportunities for any and all prospective members to get to know us and have to a good time together.

Joyce Strader, Bethel Secretary
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THE CHAPLAIN'S PRAYER FOR SPRINGTIME

O'GREAT AND POWERFUL GOD. SPRINGTIME IS HERE.

A TIME FOR REFLECTION.

A TIME FOR RENEWAL.

MAY ALL GOD'S CREATURES, PROTECT ONE ANOTHER.

MAY THIS COME TO PASS WITH YOUR BLESSING. AMEN.

By CHAPLAIN Ed Calzaretto

(Note the prayers in last month's trestleboard were also by Ed.)