



Trestleboard

January 2010

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

As we approach the end of my term as Master of Culver City Foshay Lodge #467, I would like to thank the membership, especially the Officers, for their unqualified trust and support throughout the previous year. It has been an extraordinary and wonderful experience working with the Officers and Past Masters of the Lodge. And I must add that the year has been a successful one, not because of any one person, but because we all worked together as a team.

We Initiated 10 candidates, Passed 5 to Fellowcraft and we Raised 4 to Master Mason this year and I am proud to say that everyone has been working on or has given their proficiencies and are all advancing on their way to becoming Master Masons. This is a side benefit result of the hard work that the Officers have been doing in working on the Ritual and further developing their leadership abilities. Based on this, the future of Culver City Foshay Lodge #467 looks very bright.

Our Installation is scheduled for Sunday, January 10th, 2010 at 4pm and I look forward to seeing you there, supporting your Lodge and Lodge Officers, when we will install Brother Jonathan Dilley, Senior Warden as Worshipful Master of Culver City Foshay Lodge #467 for the ensuing Masonic Year.

God Bless Us All
Fraternally,
David Francis Philips, Master



FROM THE WEST

Happy New Year!

It has become my mantra and motto when speaking with the brethren as of late, and when I say that, "we are going to have a great year," I really mean it!

I have received countless calls from the members of our Lodge and also from members of other Lodges expressing their excitement over the Culver City Foshay Lodge and the New Year. The best part is the fact that many of these members are young and recently initiated Master Masons!

When looking at our newly obligated Masters, I can't help but take a deep breath of pride while thinking

privately and sometimes not so privately that we have some of the best quality candidates coming into the Lodge and a rock solid line of Officers to bring them through.

I would especially like to thank the effort and great work of our newest Past Master and Past Past Master many times over, Worshipful David Francis Philips, in that our ritual is clean and polished, our candidates have made it through the work alive, each becoming Masters, and we have a solid bond being nourished among those who have been actively attending our meetings.

If you have not had the pleasure of attending a recent meeting or degree, please take the time to stop by and see the excitement that is manifesting and the quality of the work being done.

Also, if any brother has been offended by another brother or if a brother has been disgusted by the politics of years gone by within the Lodge or for any other reason whatever, I say to you, come back! This is the year to be active in the Lodge! This is the year to put the past where it belongs and to embrace the future.

During the year, I have many goals that I hope to set in motion or accomplish as Master, however, the key to the continued success of the Lodge will be in the pro-active desires and involvement of the members.

Discover your passion in Masonry and please bring it with you when you attend your next Masonic event, dinner, degree or activity in the Lodge or elsewhere and share your passion with your brethren that the light of Masonry can continue to shine from one Mason to another in a continuance of unbroken Illumination!

Finally, as I have said many times and will continue to say over and over and over again, until my year is done and a new Master sits in the East, please call me with your thoughts and feelings, my door will always be open and my phone line will be as well: (310) 920-3510.

May the Great Architect of the Universe continue to bless us as Masons and above all else, let us never forget that as Masons, we are family and as family, we are brothers! So mote it be!

Fraternally,
Jonathan P. Dilley, Master-Elect



FROM THE SOUTH

The Light on The Staircase, part V
They send for Masons on every side, cunning in geometry.
Henry Bradshaw, 1513

Now we are ready to discuss geometry, the study of number in space. The sacred science. Consider that phrase for a moment: “sacred” is a term of religion, which today is considered to be completely divided from science. However, the origin of the phrase “sacred science” harkens back to a time when science and religion were deeply intertwined, a time that corresponds with the mysterious beginnings of Freemasonry.

In the Fellowcraft Degree, we are told about the many practical uses of geometry, but its sacred meaning lies deeper. In a way, geometry is a form of magic. With just a compass, a simple straight edge, and a pencil or marker, along with a basic knowledge of geometric technique, a person can draw a perfect square with precise right angles and sides of exact length. Similarly, many other complex structures can be created with great precision. Geometry first allowed humans to create shapes with a level of perfection that did not exist in nature. It must have seemed to the first geometers that their new art had given them access to a hidden

dimension of ideal forms. It is not surprising that the Pythagoreans, whom we previously discussed, believed that geometry was a powerful form of magic that allowed humanity to aspire to the perfection of the gods.

Although many ancient cultures discovered various principles and techniques of geometry, its true beginning as a formal “science” began with the Pythagoreans and Euclid. Last month we discussed Euclid and his great work, Elements. The foundation of his book was five postulates:

1. A straight line segment can be drawn joining any two points.
2. Any straight line segment can be extended indefinitely in a straight line.
3. Given any straight line segment, a circle can be drawn having the segment as radius and one endpoint as center.
4. All Right Angles are congruent.
5. If two lines are drawn which intersect a third in such a way that the sum of the inner angles on one side is less than two Right Angles, then the two lines inevitably must intersect each other on that side if extended far enough.

(The last postulate, which doesn’t seem as obvious and the other four, was later simplified into the Parallel Postulate, which basically states that parallel lines never meet but remain the same distance apart.)

From these five basic statements, along with 23 definitions and five “common notions,” Euclid was able to create a large body of geometrical truths and develop powerful techniques which could be used to test or solve complex mathematical problems. For more than 2000 years, geometers and mathematicians continued to add to this body of knowledge, perhaps most notably Newton, whose profound book Principia revealed many of the universe’s secrets and laid the foundation for the Industrial Revolution and even, eventually, space travel. The power of geometry extended beyond its own field: its rigorous system of proofs and inquiry also provided a sound model for logical systems; therefore, the very ways in which we think are shaped in part by this ancient art.

As Masons, we are encouraged to study the “47th Problem of Euclid,” (illustrated above) also known as the Pythagorean Theorem, the famous statement that defines the relationship between the sides of all right triangles: $A^2 + B^2 = C^2$. Why is this considered so important to Masonry? For several reasons. On a practical level this theorem, as early as the Babylonian culture, was useful as a tool for dividing parcels of land, giving landowners a reliable way to delineate exact sizes of their properties, thus reducing conflict over boundaries and improving social harmony. On a more esoteric or philosophical level, the theorem demonstrated an important point about general truths. Right triangles can come in an infinite number of sizes and can vary somewhat in shape, yet this single mathematical/geometric statement holds true for all of them. One can imagine how reassuring this was to the ancients; even though they were surrounded by a multitude of incomprehensible mysteries in nature, the certainty of the Pythagorean Theorem offered the promise that the universe was governed and ordered by underlying principles, and that humans had the ability to discover and comprehend these rules and even, to some extent, use them for the purposes of humanity. In at least a limited sense, geometry gives humanity the ability to aspire to the knowledge and powers of the divine. Thus, the sacred science.

Another reason geometry seemed magical was that its seemingly abstract and idealized language was reflected over and over in nature. For example, the shape above is called the Golden Rectangle, a rectangle whose long sides are 1.618 of the short sides (illustrated above). When divided in the right place, the shape yields a perfect square and another smaller Golden Rectangle, which can be divided again and again into smaller and smaller squares and rectangles to the point of infinity. The ratio between the sides also corresponds to a sequence of numbers called the Fibonacci Sequence, where each new number is generated by adding the previous two: 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21 . . . However, this amazing shape is more than a clever trick; the ancient Pythagoreans discovered that nature uses the ratio as a building block in many ways. These are just a few examples of many: the number of petals on flowers, rings of seeds in pine cones, and the rings of scales on certain animals is often a Fibonacci number. The spiral that connects the corners of the nested rectangles is the

same spiral that shapes nautilus shells and determines how seeds are placed in the faces of sunflowers.

With each progression of geometry, we have discovered new ways in which its principles are employed in the structure of the universe. In the 19th century, the brilliant mathematician Bernhard Reimann developed a new form of geometry based on the idea that parallel lines, instead of maintaining an equal distance, curved away from each other. At first, this was seen as an interesting but rather abstract notion with little connection to our physical universe; however, this form of geometry turned out to be the last piece in the puzzle that allowed Albert Einstein to comprehend and describe the space/time continuum—the very fabric of our universe. In the 20th century, a new field emerged called fractal geometry, which was based on the idea of incremental dimensions existing between the regular 1st, 2nd, and 3rd dimensions that we observe. Fractal geometry has allowed us to understand the complex, multifaceted outlines of mountain ranges and coastlines, to define the seeming random branchings of tree limbs and blood vessels, and to develop antennae that allow cell phones to have multimedia functions. More importantly, for Masons interested in the esoteric and sacred, fractal geometry has revealed beautiful forms as large as the universe itself that exist within the fabric of mathematics. See for example: <http://www.math.utah.edu/~pa/math/mandelbrot/mandelbrot.html>

What does all of this mean? Many see the principles of geometry in nature as proof of a carefully designed and constructed universe. Others suggest that these geometric symmetries are bound to arise naturally and randomly from any three dimensional universe with the same characteristics as ours. Masonry's Hermetic precursors saw in nature's geometry an esoteric, occult language that, when properly read, could reveal the nature and purpose of all creation. As Masons, we use geometry in a largely symbolic fashion. We look to its symmetry and order as a model to emulate. The order, in all its forms, built into our lodges and rituals shows us the way to bring order to our own lives. In a sense, geometry teaches us to govern ourselves, emotionally, ethically, and socially, with the same rigorous symmetry that determines the angles and lines of squares and triangles and all other perfect shapes.

Fraternally,
Curtis S. Shumaker, Senior Warden-Elect

Chaplain's Prayer

Eternal God; A New Year,a New Beginning. The earth is anew.
Let us celebrate it's glory. May the good Lord look down upon us all,and protect us.
May we all learn to live together,in peace and harmony.
May the joy of the holidays,still flicker in our hearts.
May good cheer and prosperity begin today.
We pray to you, O Lord, for this. Amen

Ed C.,Chaplain