



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

TRESTLEBOARD

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2011



FROM THE EAST

“The Lost Word” Revisited

Those who attended the 2011 Installation may remember that it featured a reading by Bryan Dietrich of the poem he wrote for the occasion: “The Lost Word.” Some recent events have made it timely for me to discuss that poem in this month’s Trestleboard. Firstly, the poem has been published in a leading, nationally known Masonic publication: Philalethes: The Journal of Masonic Research & Letters. This journal introduces “The Lost Word” by saying it was written for the occasion of Culver City-Foshay Lodge’s Ninety-second Installation, which gives our lodge nationwide recognition. This, combined with the fact that Bryan Dietrich is an award-winning, top-selling poet is likely to make “The Lost Word” a highly acclaimed and well known work of Masonic literature. Secondly, the poem is being featured in the short film that members of our lodge have created for a Grand Lodge film competition. Finally, I plan on leading a discussion of the poem at our Social Night in September. In preparation, I have had it emailed to all lodge members. For those of you who may be interested but cannot attend Social Night, I thought it may be helpful to quote and discuss a few lines of it here as a guide to aid in comprehension and enjoyment.

The biggest tip for reading “The Lost Word” is that it follows the Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences represented on the Winding Staircase: Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric, Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, and Astronomy. His theme is to show how in each of these fields is a different way of seeking to fill missing or forgotten truths about ourselves and our universe, rediscovering that which we need to make ourselves whole. Finding the “lost word” that will give completion and meaning to our existence. Ironically, the poem suggests that this search will never be entirely complete. This should be no discouragement, however, since the search is more meaningful and valuable than the answer.

If you find Bryan’s poetry difficult to understand, it is chiefly because of two reasons: 1, he makes use of many references to literature, history, religion, and the sciences that test the knowledge of even highly educated readers; 2, he uses complicated forms of wordplay that involve puns, double-meanings, and metaphors that require unraveling, much like riddles. Surmounting these challenges, however, will increase meaning, line by line. I will explain a few key passages here, and we will discuss more of the poem at the next Social Night.

The first few lines of the poem may be especially frustrating for many readers:

Whitman died chasing Champollion, seeking
grammar for God, a uniform hieroglyphic.
American answers for Egyptian enigmas.
Still, he found no stone, no Virginia Rosetta.

The key here is the history behind the Rosetta Stone, an artifact inscribed with the same text in three forms of writing that enabled scholars to finally read Egyptian hieroglyphics. At this time, roughly the middle of

the 19th century, some people (including many overly enthusiastic Masons) were so in awe of the accomplishments of ancient Egypt that they believed its newly translatable writings would reveal primal, universal truths about God and his relationship with humanity. When many were looking to the past for “lost truths,” the American poet Walt Whitman was creating a revolutionary type of poetry inspired by the newness of America which, he may have believed, would allow him to find a universal form of expression that could reveal great truths about the human condition. Of course, all he found was an American form of expression. And the Hieroglyphs only whispered the dead words of a dead language. Language can only be a tool; it will not produce the lost word out of thin air.

Notice how the next two stanzas discuss logic and rhetoric in much the same way. In these stanzas, you see many names, only some of which you may find familiar. My general advice in reading Bryan’s poetry is that when you see names or proper nouns, look them up on the Internet; don’t stop with just a simple definition. The more you read in each case, the better you will understand Bryan’s purpose in referencing them. I’ll give you one here for free, because you may find it especially interesting. In the second stanza, he refers to Baudrillard, followed shortly by the phrase “the desert of the real.” Jean Baudrillard is an important philosopher in the fields of sociology and communications who argues that we use our systems of media to create an artificial reality. Interestingly, the above quotation, as well as Baudrillard’s book, Simulacra and Simulation, in which it was originally used, were featured in the movie The Matrix, another artistic work involving a search for that which was lost.

The fourth stanza suggests that arithmetic alone cannot provide the answers because it may be improperly utilized to support false models of physical reality. This stanza may sound like nonsense, but it is actually an accurate summary of a wild theory by a mad astronomer named Velikovsky. He posited, with “correct” mathematical proofs, that an unknown planet he called Pong created Venus out of Jupiter and was responsible for biblical miracles. Notice how Bryan blends the mythology of the Gods Jupiter and Venus with their planetary equivalents.

In the geometry Stanza, Bryan observes how geometric shapes define each other, and he extends this concept into a metaphor describing how we shape our world, even as our world shapes us. With music, he connects the Renaissance idea of the music of the spheres to the supposed radio waves that will bring us evidence of extraterrestrial life. In turn, he speculates how we look to hypothetical superior alien civilizations as sources for all the answers we seek, including the ultimate question:

. . . The name of the name
of the being who best knows God?

The complexity of the next few stanzas will have to wait for our September discussion, but the final stanza, which is the part we used for our Grand Lodge film, encodes references that any Mason should easily recognize. It also casts light on the true meaning of the last, lost word:

. . . All but the one
we have sought. All but the right word, the one
we lost before the rest. The name, the name
of the one who made us, laid us brick by brick,
set us on the level, encompassed our corners,
rounded what was rough, set square that which
strayed, the one who tamped us, tested us,
smiled upon us, deep as the deepest temple.

Fraternally,

Curtis Scott Shumaker
Master



FROM THE WEST

Greeting Brethren

September has now arrived and I realize that we are approaching the last three months of the year. I promised that I would be writing about our candidates coaching program; how it works and how its methods can be applied to officers leaning their large lectures. I also shared with you the effective methods of some of our skilled officers, in hopes that their knowledge would assist and motivate other brothers involved with our ritual. I will be gratified to learn that at least some of our success can be traced to this sharing.

To date, we have seen three brothers prove their proficiencies as Master Masons. Five of our Apprentices have been elevated to the Degree Fellow Craft and four brothers have been raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason. This indicates very good progress. I believe that by the end of the year, the record will show even greater progress.

It is clear that the Sunday morning open house sessions have provided excellent space in which candidates could seek coaching and receive inspiration in meeting their challenges. These sessions, open to masons and non-masons seeking to learn about our craft, have included coaching as a one of its fraternal features. Having been present at all these sessions, I can gage well the opportunities that continue to be provided.

Although I have now concluded my comments on the “Candidates Schools of Instruction,” I would still offer this as a last suggestion: “Be just, be faithful, be true, and believe in yourself. This is the message that was delivered to all Master Masons. We waited for you to receive the Light of Masonry, and we shall be sitting with on the Level among Brothers.

Good luck!! Dear Brother Entered Apprentices and Fellow Crafts

Fraternally,

Masato Francis Taguchi
Senior Warden



FROM THE SOUTH

Reflect on the year almost gone

As we are nearing the end of yet another successful and fruitful year we should reflect back on our accomplishments and shortcomings. Not so for nostalgic purposes but rather how we can better ourselves in the coming year by continuing our good deeds and refraining from engaging in the not so positive aspects of our behavior. After all the first lesson we are taught in freemasonry is Truth. To be truthful to others we have to learn to establish our own boundaries and define what we know to be true. Although being true does not have to be attached to any time frame, but we as humans are conditioned in our civil societies to organize our actions and thoughts by assigning them to time constraints. Therefore if we can use that to look back at what we have perhaps not done as best as we should have, then this would be the time to take corrective action and right the wrongs. Masons live by this creed and it is the one lesson we should never forget and never abandon. To do so is tantamount to not believing in the Supreme Architects, however it may be. The one freedom we Mason have in the US is that of speech. We should try hard to use this supreme given right as our most cherished possession and use it to bring out the truth, or in many cases expose the injustices and untruthfulness perpetrated by others to others. If we can exercise this right then we have truly accomplished the promise we took on the holy book at the altar.

Truth is the one weapon in our arsenal whereby we can bring peace to all without a drop of blood. It is up to us masons to make sure this implement is used wisely and it properly exposes those who do harm to humanity.

Fraternally,

Mahmoud Ghaffari, P.M.
Junior Warden

Louis Senter: 50 years in masonry A Biography (part II)

We needed to expand and therefore we moved to 6317 S. Normandie, Los Angeles into a building built for us. This was late in the year September of 1950. During the time we were on Normandie, some famous people worked for me such as Lou Baney, Ed Pink and Jim Kavanaugh. On Normandie we had a retail Speed Shop, a Machine Shop, a Mechanical Department where we did custom installations and a Mail Order Department. We were on of the first shops to sell “used” speed equipment along with new equipment. During this period I raced dragsters, sprint cars, midgets, and boats while conducting business six days a week. We worked with George Barris for years and helps build special cars for the movie industry. Some of our cars were the Munster Car and the Coffin car. We did a great deal of work on the Barris cars for the famous Oakladd Show each year (near San Francisco).

While on Normandie we developed the first Floorshift Conversion Kit which removed the column shift to the floor for more positive shifting. It was called the “Posi-shift”. Hot Rod Magazine was doing an article on our Posi-shift

and George Hurst was there observing the installation. He liked the idea and later came out with the Hurst Shifter. At the Normandie facility we expanded our line of Model A & B equipment and had many, many patterns for making manifolds, side covers, etc. We converted Pontiac rods for Model A's to accept inserts. We made a small catalog solely for the Model A & B products for which we were so well known.

While on Normandie we built many engines for racing boats along with our won engine for Ed Olsen, Roy Vachon (original owner of Appliance Industries) and many others. We had cracker box boats, E-boats and 266 hydroplanes. My 266 hydroplane won the championship with Bud Meyer's son driving it.

While on Normandie, the ¼ Midget Race Car for children became popular as many racers now had children started making handmade cars. We formed a company known as "Ans-craft" with a friend, Don Kischel, and started making ¼ Midgets complete with engines and fancy paint jobs. These duplicated the full size race car. We built over 500 cars. My daughter Marsh Senter (Scully) drove #55 and won many races. Many of the famous Indy drivers today started in ¼ Midgets.

In approximately 1950, I along with other manufacturers of high performance equipment formed an organization known as Specialty Equipment Manufacturers Association (SEMA). The organization was designed to formulate safety standard in the high performance industry as well as organize the manufacturers for representation in Washington, D.C. Their Representative in Washington kept SEMA informed as to legislation being introduced which would affect our industry. Again, we ran out of room and needed to expand to larger quarters.

We purchased vacant land in Gardena and built our own new building at 13715 S. Western Avenue in 1963-64. The property on Western Avenue in Gardena was the original site of Western Speedway. Our building was built in front and the speedway as in the rear (¼ mile track). During this period many famous drivers such as Bobby Unser, Parnelli Jones, Johnny Rutherford and many other greats left their cars at our plant while they were in town. All the racers know they had a free facility to work out of. Iskenderian Racing Cam and Howard Racing Cams had their facilities in close proximity to our Gardena Plant. We had a gala grand opening and invited a large segment of the high performance industry. Many of those famous in the industry showed up such as J.C. Agajanian of the Ascot Speedway in Gardena; Don Hawley world famous motorcycle champion; Bill Kretch owner of Inglewood Tire and the famous Posi-traction Racing Tires; Johnny Tolin, race driver; Keith Black; Lou Banny; Ed Olsen and many others.

Our catalog grew to over 100 pages with hundred of items in it. We developed a forged piston and forged steel rod. We also developed an aluminum connecting rod. Later we sold our Piston Department to Nick Arias who is still making pistons today. We sold the Rod Department to Miller Rods who at one time worked on our counter. Another winner was our Safety Bell Housing which was compulsory at all drag strips to prevent flywheel shrapnel from injuring the driver should it explode. Wally Parks insisted this was a must for all drag strips as a safety factor. We sold thousands of these. Our original building had a special Dyno room in the rear. At that time midget racing was very strong and required different motors other than Office and the V8-60 so we developed the Chev. 2 for 225 horsepower. Everything was built in our shop: head side covers, injection system and front drive assembly. This was an 8-port aluminum head. This engine was very competitive and changed the entire concept in racing for the inexpensive engine. We compiled a special catalog just for the Chev. 2 engine and components.

During this period of time, Halibrand was making his famous mag wheels for racing only. We decided to build an aluminum wheel for race cars (one-piece and two-piece) and through promotion in Hot Rod Magazine, we developed our Sprint Wheel for any type street car from 6" to 12" wide by 14, 15 and 16" diameter. One of the first casting machines which I designed and built was known as a centrifugal casting machine and later became a popular method of making wheels. It was duplicated by others in the industry. The Sprint Wheel was a big success. We needed more room, therefore we added another large building on the same property which was 13705 S. Western Avenue.

In 1969 we sold out to Whittaker Corporation. We built a building across the street 120,000 square feet to house Ansen Automotive. After selling out, I stayed on until 1974. I retired for 3 weeks and then became a consultant for W.R. Grace (Appliance Industries, Gasket, Lakewood, Hickey). When Vans started to become popular, I headed up a group for Grace called "Van Stuff". We made up a complete catalog of accessories devoted strictly for vans (fiberglass fenders, running boards, internal wood products, windows, seats, and couches). This turned out to be another giant success for the high performance industry. I continued to work for WR Grace from April 1974 thru June 1975.

In 1978 I was inducted into the SEMA Hall of Fame. In 1978 I started designing products and importing them

along with doing a lot of consulting work for various firms in the industry such as Hickey Off Road van people, Bazz-Houston company, etc.

In 1981 I joined in with Richard Cholakian (Glendale Speed Center) who originally was a good customer of Ansen Automotive and we formed an importing company known as Richlou, Inc. We designed and had many products manufactured overseas. We sold them to prominent firms in the high performance industry such as Edelbrock, Diest, Gasket, Hickey, etc. We were big in van products such as sea recliners and seat slides. Don Alderson of the firm know as MULDOON was a part of our firm.

While I was with Richlou, I developed a new company called Sendel who made only aluminum one-piece wheels. The name Sendel was derived from Senter and Del Manufacturing. I worked for 3 ½ years and then left both Bendel and Richlou in 1988 to start my own wheel company in East Los Angeles. I called it SEC or Senter Engineering Corporation. I became heavy in one-piece racing wheels, spun and stamped. I developed many, many new designs for aluminum street wheels and also racing wheels. The racing wheels were spline wheels and a bead lock so you could use a low tire pressure without losing a tire. This became a large factor for safety. We developed the first 2 and 3-piece wheel which was used for both racing and street use. The wheel I developed in the early 1950's now caught on and was very dominant.

I retired from active participation in the wheel business and am working with my grandson who has already developed a great love for racing. Shane Scully (my grandson) started out driving TQ's for two year and has now graduated to full size midgets. His first race was at the famous Chili Bowl in Tulsa, Oklahoma which had 144 of the bet midget drivers in the U.S. competing during the month of January, 1995. I was very proud and his first time out he made the Friday night feature.

- 1978 - SEMA Hall of Fame
- 1997 - Hot Rod Magazine Hall of Fame
- 1999 - Dry Lakes Hall of Fame
- 2009 - National Sprint Car Hall of Fame



CHAPLAIN'S PRAYER

We meet, we act, we are Masons all.
What we do should benefit others first, then ourselves.
May we always reach out and help each other.
May the sands of time be kind to us all.
May we use our God given gift for the good of mankind.
Let Masonry be the watchword for all that is right in the world.
And may we forever be in the hands of God.
Amen

Ed Calzaretto
Chaplain