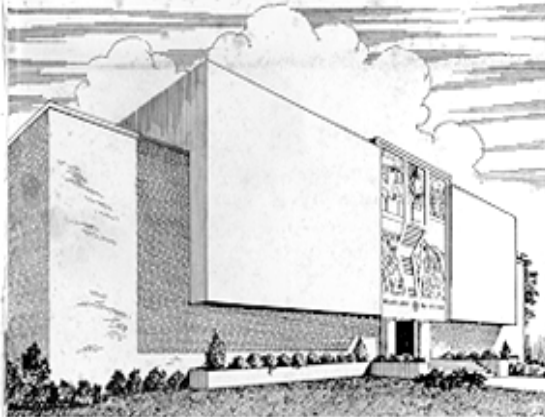
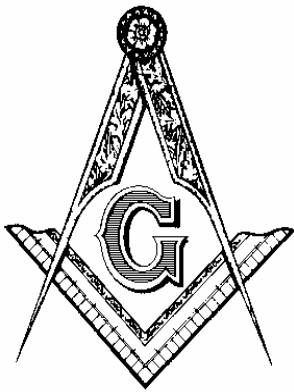


The Alpha

Holland Lodge No. 1 A.F. & A.M.
4911 Montrose Boulevard,
Houston TX 77006
(713) 529-0912
www.hollandlodge.org
December 2008
Volume 39 Number 6
Bill Sessums, Jr. P.M. – Editor



The Next Stated Meeting
December 10, 2008
Dinner at 6:30 p.m.
Lodge opens at 7:30 p.m.
Please join us for a Dinner and
our November Stated Meeting



Stated Meetings are held on the
2nd Wednesday of each month.
Please check the website at
www.HollandLodge.org
for updates & announcements.

There are Degrees and Proficiency Exams
taking place on a regular basis...check the
website for details.

From the East

A while back I received a phone call from Brother Jeff Burnett who mentioned that he had just finished reading an interesting book which he was going to send to me, which he did. The title of that book is "Cracking The Freemasons Code" by Brother Robert L.D. Cooper, a Scottish brother who now lives in Edinburgh, Scotland. Brother Cooper is Curator of the Scottish Museum and Library at Freemason's Hall in Edinburgh. Through that position he is able to access many rare Masonic documents and artifacts. Brother Cooper begins his work by pointing out that the true origins of The Craft are obscure although many theories exist today.

The dominant theory seems to be that modern Freemasonry derives from the medieval order of the Poor Soldiers of Christ and Solomon's Temple founded about 1118, which is more commonly known as the Knights Templar. The Order began in France where they owned the most property. The members lived there in closed communities and followed the rule of the Cistercian Order.

The story goes that the Templars arrived in Jerusalem soon after the founding of the order and were quartered on the Temple Mount which is very near the site of King Solomon's Temple. Within a few years the Order became very wealthy. It was said that they had tunneled under the foundation of the Temple and discovered the treasure of Solomon. Whatever they found there is unknown and undocumented. It is however a fact that shortly after this alleged digging they became extremely wealthy and powerful. Rumors still nag modern day Masonic Scholars as what the Templars actually did find there. It has been suggested that perhaps they may have discovered the Holy Grail, the Ark of the Covenant, the secret teachings of Jesus Christ and the list goes on and on. These theories have been around for many years and did not originate with Brother Cooper.

At any rate The Order did become one of the most powerful bodies in Europe. Interestingly enough it has been noted that the Knight Templar Order probably developed the first international banking system. They owned vast estates and tracts of real estate in Europe and elsewhere including property in Jerusalem. If one were traveling to The Holy land to take part in the Crusades a person, instead of carrying a load of heavy armor through territory that was over run with highwaymen could deposit it in one of the Templar depositories, proceed with their journey to the Holy Land and retrieve a like set of armor at their destination. The same could be done with money or other valuables including certain animals. Of course The Order charged a fee for this service. After the battle of Acre in 1291 when the last Christian outpost in The Holy Land fell The Order was forced to relocate to Cyprus where they set up shop and continued their activity of becoming even richer. Phillip (The Fair 1268-1314) King of France owed the Templars a huge sum of money which he borrowed from the Order to finance several wars in which France had previously engaged. This debt would eventually bring about the downfall of the Order and the execution of Jacques de Molay (1244-1314) which I will discuss in another article, (probably February, 09).

This article I have paraphrased from the writings of Brother Cooper and I admit that some of the phrases used here border on outright plagiarism. But as I have previously mentioned none of the material in the chapter (one) I am reporting upon originated with that writer.

I am looking forward to the next meeting of The Grand Lodge of Texas which meets in Waco during the first week of December. If you have never been there to witness that event it is well worth one's time to do so.

Until then I'll see you at lodge. I'll be the guy with the hat.

Jerry Brainard Jones W.M. Holland Lodge

Greetings From the South,
Is it Who do you like, or is it Who is deserving?

We are charged as Masons to keep our Fraternity free of those who would bring contempt and detestation upon this most excellent institution. Guarding the West Gate this duty is sometimes called. This most important duty is to ensure that all those whom we call Brother are of the highest moral and ethical standards; that they are honest and possess an unwavering moral compass.

A bumper sticker I read about says, "Honesty, Integrity, Morality: Freemasonry, It Is Not For Everyone." **Oh, how true.**

The first step – The investigating committee is charged with conducting a thorough investigation of a petitioner. References are to be called, other sources of information that are properly available are to be consulted, a face-to-face interview with the petitioner in his home is of considerable importance to ensure the most accurate personal evaluation.

The second step – after the findings of the investigating committee are read, then comes one of the most important and solemn proceedings in Masonry: the Ballot. The Ballot provides the mechanism by which our most excellent institution is protected and reserved for those worthy to be taken by the hand as a brother. By it, through the ages, now, and for as long as the world turns, we are enabled to ensure that this most venerable and righteous fraternity will endure to unite men of all countries, sects and opinions, to teach and demonstrate our precious tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, to enrich the whole family of our One Almighty Parent by showing all the nations the deepest inculcations of Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice. The Ballot lets us take good men and make them better: for themselves, their families and their neighbors. It also lets us reserve this honorable institution for men of like character.

A possible third step – The "protest." Any candidate for the degrees, or any of them, can be stopped by protests made to the Worshipful Master of a Lodge. A protest has the same effect as a blackball in a Ballot.

As easily seen from the above, we have the means necessary to protect and defend our precious fraternity.

The duty and right to utilize the blackball is one of extreme power. No one, not even the Grand Master can overturn the results of a ballot or a protest. It is a sacred trust.

As Masons it is expected of us that this power be properly used. Before rejecting a candidate, it is necessary to carefully consider the reasons a blackball be cast. The only proper reasons are those that are concerned with the Good of Masonry and of The Lodge.

We test our understanding of "...rendering to every man is just due without distinction." We test our ability to subdue our passions to see if we are capable of knowing when a thought of casting a blackball is mean, petty, or vindictive. We test ourselves to see that we are on the right side of that boundary, or standard of right, beyond which we should never step.

The power of the Ballot is like all power in that it can be misused. To abuse this important and necessary power is a disgrace of the highest order.

The Ballot is secret, you may violate your vows and betray your trust and no one will know how you voted.

Except That All Seeing Eye who will reward you according to your merits.

Let us all take to heart and benefit from the great virtues and tenets of our excellent institution this year.

Sincerely and Fraternaly, Bob Welch, Junior Warden, Holland Lodge No. 1

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Dedication and Fraternity

Over the course of the nearly one-hundred seventy-five year history of Holland Lodge #1 A.F. & A.M., four flags have flown over the land on which it has thrived. In the fifty-five years that Holland Lodge has resided at 4911 Montrose Boulevard, however, no flag has flown over the building, as no flag pole has been available on the property until recently. Proudly, a flag pole was dedicated on Saturday, November 22, 2008 at 1:00 pm, and the Stars and Stripes of our great country were proudly raised thereon.

The new flag pole provides an avenue for us to raise a symbol of our patriotism and unity. Interestingly, the story behind the erection of the flag pole on the property likewise reflects some of the principal tenets of our fine fraternity.

Through the years the Grand Lodge of Texas has urged lodges to increase their visibility in the community in a positive and constructive manner. One common suggestion has been that lodges consider erecting a flag pole on their property and flying the flags of our great nation and state. Several brethren at Holland Lodge have asked in recent years why a flag pole had not been erected at 4911 Montrose Blvd. Shortly thereafter they set out upon a quest to acquire one. Following many avenues of search and inquiry, it was determined that flag poles of the scale appropriate for our lodge building were expensive and the economics of the project were not well received. However, these brethren continued in their mission and learned through Brother Barry Podwin that a flag pole might be available from the Arabia Shrine. Brothers Duncan Chapman DDGM 30A and Barry Podwin, Senior Steward, met with Brother Jerry Grizzle, Potentate of Arabia Shrine, who graciously donated the flag pole to Holland Lodge, provided that they could arrange to remove the pole from the new Arabia Shrine property at 10510 Harwin Drive without damaging an adjacent tree.

The flag pole donation from the Arabia Shrine was brought before the Holland Lodge Masonic Building Association, who voted in favor of acquiring the flag pole, provided that a suitable amount of insurance could be obtained to cover potential claims of loss that might arise from moving the flag pole from the Arabia Shrine property and erecting it at the 4911 Montrose Boulevard property.

A number of knowledgeable and gracious brothers made the transition of the flag pole from the Shrine property to the Holland Lodge property possible. Brother Dennis Hughes (Past Master of Memorial Lodge 1298) kindly excavated the flag pole from the Arabia Shrine property free of charge. The flag pole (35 feet in length) was then transported by Past Potentate and Past Master of Houston Lodge 1189 Mark Miller from 10510 Harwin Drive to 4911 Montrose Boulevard, a total distance of approximately 11.5 miles requiring heavy equipment, police escorts and the knowledge to safely manage this laudable undertaking. Brother Miller likewise provided his time and service free of charge. A brief window of opportunity existed for the move of the flag pole, which required Brother Chapman to call upon several brethren from Holland Lodge on short notice to excavate a hole in which the pole could be erected at 4911 Montrose Blvd. Brothers Roy Gal, Nick Garner, Kurt Kasper, Matt Murphy, Barry Podwin and Bob Welch quickly arrived to assist Brother Chapman in the work around 5:30 pm. Due to the sweltering heat of the evening, a tent was erected to provide some shade for the workman, while refreshing water and sodas, county music and tools for the excavation were provided by Brother Chapman. The feverish work of the brethren piqued the interest of a number of folks who visited with them to see what was happening. This provided an excellent opportunity to talk about Freemasonry in general and Holland Lodge in particular with those in the community at large. Even Brother Marvin Peterson dropped by to visit with the brethren as they worked. At approximately 9:45 pm a sixty-four cubic foot hole was prepared, and Brother Mark Miller skillfully placed the pole in the spot with his tractor. The pole was finally set at approximately 10:30 pm.

Brother Barry Podwin graciously donated a new halyard and clamp hooks for the flag pole, while Brother Marvin Peterson and Brother Andy Deas kindly donated the flags of the United States of America and of the State of Texas. These were put into service on Saturday, November 22, 2008 as Old Glory was raised upon the flag pole. The flag pole dedication and flag raising ceremony sparked a great deal of interest from passers-by and has already improved the visibility of our lodge and our great fraternity in the community.

Please make every effort to thank the several brothers who donated the flag pole, material, transportation and labor to selflessly erect this flag pole at our lodge.

May the flag pole stand as a shining example of the fraternal bond that exists within our diverse fraternity.

Holland Lodge was the grateful recipient of that spirit of camaraderie, generosity, and wonderful brotherly love that exists within the different bodies of our organization. It serves as a classic example of brothers working together and helping each other for the good of the order.

Article Provided by: Brother Duncan Chapman P.M., Brother Kurt Kasper S.W.

From the Secretary

Subject: Grand Lodge will begin on December 5, 2008.

Dues cards will be mailed during the second week of December. We intend to enclose a membership roster to each member this year. All dues cards are now printed by the Grand Lodge. Replacement must be order through your secretary. Endowed Memberships are now \$1,200.00 at Holland Lodge, please call for an application.

Upcoming events are listed on the web at www.hollandlodge.org or you can contact your secretary at secretary@hollandlodge.org

CEMENT. What is the mystic tie of Fraternalism?

The symbolic tie that binds men together, the cement of brotherly love.

The lodge is strongly cemented with love & friendship, & every brother is duly taught secrecy & prudence, morality & good fellowship.

Officers Of Holland Lodge No. 1

		<u>HOME</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>e-mail</u>
Worshipful Master	Jerry Jones	713-667-2817	713-201-0366	Worshipfulmaster@hollandlodge.org
Senior Warden	Kurtis Kasper	832-216-3519	713-348-3027	Seniorwarden@hollandlodge.org
Junior Warden	Robert Welch	713-526-0029	713-941-7800	Juniorwarden@hollandlodge.org
Treasurer	Emile A. Bussemey	713-729-1348	713-260-7453	Treasurer@hollandlodge.org
Secretary	Phillip von Stephens	713-723-2009	713-723-2009	Secretary@hollandlodge.org
Chaplain	Henry Gonzales	281-799-2045		Chaplain@hollandlodge.org
Senior Deacon	Michael Meier	713-729-6426	713-529-0912	Seniordeacon@hollandlodge.org
Junior Deacon	Ronald Adams	713-681-7359	713-882-3823	Juniordeacon@hollandlodge.org
Senior Steward	Barry Podwin	713-723-5883	281-728-1310	SeniorSteward@hollandlodge.org
Junior Steward	Michael Enmon	281-213-8606	281-728-1310	JuniorSteward@hollandlodge.org
Marshal	Nicolas Evanoff			Marshal@hollandlodge.org
Mstr. Of Ceremonies	Carl Reiley		713-645-7200	Masterofceromonies@hollandlodge.org
Musician	Rodney Elliott	713-236-0359	713-236-0359	Musician@hollandlodge.org
Tiler	Budd Baumgardner	713-666-3625	713-666-3625	None
Immediate P M	Patrick Porter	713-796-1131	713-294-3704	ImmediatePM@hollandlodge.org

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