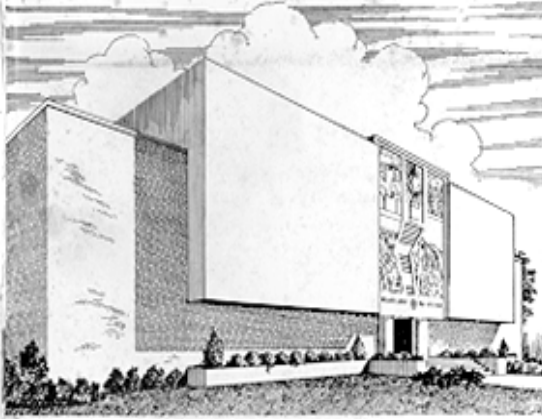


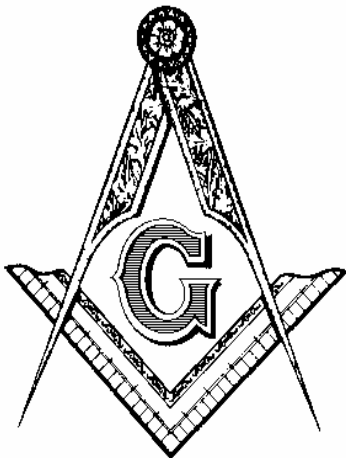
# The Alpha

**Holland Lodge No. 1 A.F. & A.M.**  
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**[www.hollandlodge.org](http://www.hollandlodge.org)**  
**March 2008**  
**Volume 38 Number 9**  
**Bill Sessums, Jr. P.M. – Editor**



## **The Next Stated Meeting** **March 12, 2007** **Dinner at 6:30 p.m.** **Lodge opens at 7:30 p.m.**

Please join us for a great dinner and Stated Meeting where we will have the



Brethren,

Again, I would like to call to your attention a number of things that are going on at Holland and to try and encourage you to come down and participate. The lodge is a fun place as of late and I can't help but feel that you might be missing out.

First, in early February we hosted the Grand Master's Regional Conference and I have never seen the lodge room so full of people. The night before we had to move chairs into the lodge room to accommodate all the demand. We used up every single one of our folding chairs to create rows two deep along the sides of the lodge room, and then added 20 or 25 of the wooden Holland Lodge chairs to the center of the room in-front of the Senior Warden's station. All told I think we had just over 300 seats and were at a loss to find room for more.

The number of brethren that showed up for that conference was truly a testament to the Grand Master. I also feel the need to thank a few people. Obviously, it goes without saying that the individual who coordinated the event deserves a fair degree of credit, who is our own District Deputy Grand Master Duncan Chapman. While I know he did a lot, I think it was the other brothers who contributed immensely to the smooth running. First, there was Greg Butter, Kurt Kasper, and Ron Adams who helped move chairs. In the morning during breakfast, Kurt Kasper, Michael Meier, Ron Adams, Barry Podwin, and Wael Semaan held down the fort managing coffee, donuts and kolaches. Bro. Secretary was also running around providing technical assistance to the members of the Grand Master's committee to make sure that everything was set up. I would certainly be amiss if I didn't mention Bro. Enmon who worked diligently in the kitchen to prepare a sumptuous meal of fried shrimp and gumbo. He was assisted the night before by Bro. Stephens, Bro. Adams, and Bro. Chapman in making sure all the shrimp got peeled.

In all I think that the Lodge displayed itself well that day. It was such a positive event that during the February Stated Meeting we authorized the availability of our location to the Grand Master for his regional conference in the future. I would earnestly recommend that next year you all attend this event.

Another set of activities that I feel I need to call your attention to is the vast amount of degree work that we expect to be doing. In February we voted on four brothers to receive the mysteries and we have one that was back-logged. Of course this is quite simple math, but we have 5 future-brothers who will need degree teams for 3 degrees, 5 brothers that will need instructors and 5 brothers which will need to experience the good fellowship that a Masonic lodge can offer in order to keep coming. If you can help with any of these tasks, I implore you to come visit and alert us to your availability.

Also prior to the February Stated Meeting we were able to present a 50 Year Service Pin to Brother Larry Bernard. It was the first presentation of a pin that our District Deputy did and based on the reviews from both the District Instructor and our Committee on Work member he's going to be allowed to do one again.

I sometimes feel like a broken record, in the fact that every month that I write that Holland is going through a revival and picking up momentum. In the last month we have had two brothers who have visited decide to affiliate. Bro. Podwin is one, and has almost been absorbed immediately into the kitchen. In the past month he's made paella, and assisted in so many various other capacities in that realm that he's been made the 5th or 6th steward. The ranks there seem to swell every month and I am having trouble keeping up. We also had another brother from across the pond, Bro. Armitage who decided to affiliate. I terribly nice guy who we hope has found a home here in Houston. He is quite active over in the UK and hopefully he will continue to send favorable reports back to England.

Brethren, we may be working hard, but we are never working too hard to be happy to see you when you come down. I believe that I can safely say that me and my officers are looking forward to it.

Until then, **Fraternally Patrick Porter, W.M.**

## From the South...

Who were the Knights Templar?

The **Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ and of the Temple of Solomon** (Latin: *Pauperes commilitones Christi Templique Solomonici*), commonly known as the **Knights Templar** or the **Order of the Temple** (French: *Ordre du Temple* or *Templiers*), were among the most famous of the Western Christian military orders. The organization existed for approximately two centuries in the Middle Ages. It was founded in the aftermath of the First Crusade of 1096 to ensure the safety of the many Europeans who made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem after its conquest.

Officially endorsed by the Roman Catholic Church in 1128, the Order became a favored charity across Europe and grew rapidly in membership and power. Templar knights, in their distinctive white mantles each with a red cross, were among the best fighting units of the Crusades. Non-combatant members of the Order managed a large economic infrastructure throughout Christendom, inventing or adapting many financial techniques that were an early form of banking, and building many fortifications across Europe and the Holy Land. The Templars' success was tied closely to the Crusades; when the Crusaders were defeated and lost the Holy Land, support for the Order faded. Rumors about the Templars' secret initiation ceremony created mistrust, and King Philip IV of France, deeply in debt to the Order, began pressuring Pope Clement V to take action. In 1307, Pope Clement condemned the Order's members, having them arrested, tortured into giving false confessions, and burned at the stake. In 1312, Pope Clement, under continuing pressure from King Philip, disbanded the Order. The abrupt disappearance of a major part of the European infrastructure gave rise to speculation and legends, which have kept the "Templar" name alive until the present.

With their military mission and extensive financial resources, the Knights Templar funded a large number of building projects around Europe and the Holy Land. Many of these structures are still standing. Many sites also maintain the name "Temple" due to centuries-old association with the Templars. For example, some of the Templars' lands in London were later rented to lawyers, which led to the names of the Temple Bar gateway and the Temple tube station. Two of the four Inns of Court which may call members to act as barristers are the Inner Temple and Middle Temple.

Distinctive architectural elements of Templar buildings include the use of the image of "two knights on a single horse", representing the Knights' poverty, and round buildings designed to resemble the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

**Modern Templar organizations:** By papal decree, the property of the Templars was transferred to the Order of Hospitallers, which also absorbed many of the Templars' members. In effect, the dissolution of the Templars could be seen as the merger of the two rival orders. The story of the secretive yet powerful medieval Templars, especially their persecution and sudden dissolution, has been a tempting source for many other groups which use alleged connections with the Templars as a way of enhancing their own image and mystery. For instance, since at least the 1700s the York Rite of Freemasonry has incorporated some Templar symbols and rituals, and has a modern degree called "the Order of the Temple". The Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem, founded in 1804, has achieved United Nations NGO status as a charitable organization.

**Fraternally, Wael Semaan, Junior Warden**

## From the Kitchen...

What's Going On!

Springtime again and time marches on. Spring your clocks forwards on March 9th for the future continues budding brightly. Our M.:W.: Griffin and our DDGM Chapman made several official and unofficial visits to our lodge and building lately. We conferred more degrees upon worthy candidates. We hosted the Grand Master's Conference for the Houston area. We entertained many lodge visitors from near and far, including some from across the "pond" and a family from Brazil. We have more York Rite Masons and had the 100th anniversary of Houston Council #1 R&SM. The Houston Scottish Rite had a reunion in our rooms. Our young men in DeMolay have "run the legislature" in Austin for a weekend. Happy events continue.

Houston Chapter #201 Order of DeMolay will exemplify their ritual(s) on Wednesday evening April 2nd. These fine young men continue winning ritual competitions from local to international levels. All Master Masons, Senior DeMolays, Active DeMolays, and other persons 22+ yrs of age (with a simple promise of secrecy) are welcome to attend. Bring along your interested family members and friends. 25 yr and 60 yr DeMolay Service Awards are scheduled the same evening for Senior DeMolay Chapman and Senior DeMolay Elmore among others. Yes, John joined DeMolay in 1947! See the seed of, "Once a DeMolay, always a DeMolay!". It is often well said that the young men in DeMolay are our future.

You already hold a blue season ticket for 2008. Excellent degree work is steadily ongoing within your lodge. Savor a meal, and watch the Work. The calendar is online at <http://www.HollandLodge.Org>

Every member of Holland Lodge (including you!) is worthy. We continue recognizing birthdays before meals. Dine with us and receive your token cake and your token gift for YOUR birthday, and we will together sing for others.

Brother Adams, Brother Reilly, Brother Podwin, and myself remain honored serving as your Holland Lodge Stewards and we continue ongoing mealtime happy surprises. Join with us early and often to sample our meals and experience everything happening within Holland Lodge. We have impromptu Kitchen Klatches most Wednesday (and some Monday) evenings wherein all Free Masons are welcome to polish The Work, visit, and generally have a Masonicly good time. Holland Lodge remains YOUR home!

We continue looking forwards to shaking your hands and filling your plates.

Fraternally and Sincerely, Brother Meier

## Why is the Bible known as the Book of the Law?

Known Masonically as the Book of the Law, when opened at its proper place in Lodge, because it is diffusing the proper light among the brethren. The passages on which it is opened differ in the various degrees. The history of the Masonic symbolism of the Bible is interesting. Although referred to in the manuscripts before the revival of 1717, as the book upon which the covenant was taken, it was never referred to as a great light. In the oldest ritual that we have, that of 1724, a copy of which from the royal Library of Berlin is given by Krause, there is no mention of the Bible as one of the lights. Preston made it a part of the furniture of the Lodge; but in the rituals of 1760 it is described as one of the three great lights. In the American system, the Bible is both a piece of furniture and a great light. Ps 133 (597); Am 7:7-9 (836); Ec 12: 1-7 (633); Jos 1: 8 (224)

Thank you Brother Phillip von Stephens for the contribution.

## Lodge Activities/Calendar

**March 12, 2008**

Stated Meeting

**April 9, 2008**

Stated Meeting

**May 14, 2008**

Stated Meeting

**Please be sure to check the website at**

**[www.HollandLodge.org](http://www.HollandLodge.org)**

**for updates & announcements.**

**There are Degrees and Proficiency Exams taking place on a regular basis...if you would like know when, please check the website or call or email your Officers.**

## We will miss our departed Brother

**John Evan Kavsh, Jr.**

**Born 9-23-1918, Raised 9-25-1968,**

**Died 2-7-2008.**

## Welcome to Our Newest Affiliated Member

**Barry Ray Podwin**

**of Sam B. Crawford No. 1418,**

**Affiliated on 2-13-08.**

## *Masonic Poem*

When he can look out over the rivers, the hills, and the far horizon with a profound sense of his own littleness in the vast scheme of things, and yet have faith, hope, and courage -- which is the root of every virtue.

When he knows that down in his heart every man is as noble, as vile, as divine, as diabolic, and as lonely as himself, and seeks to know, to forgive, and to love his fellowman.

When he knows how to sympathize with men in their sorrows, yea, even in their sins -- knowing that each man fights a hard fight against many odds.

When he has learned how to make friends and to keep them, and above all how to keep friends with himself.

When he loves flowers, can hunt birds without a gun, and feels the thrill of an old forgotten joy when he hears the laugh of a little child.

When he can be happy and high-minded amid the meaner drudgeries of life.

When star-crowned trees and the glint of sunlight on flowing waters subdue him like the thought of one much loved and long dead.

When no voice of distress reaches his ears in vain, and no hand seeks his aid without response.

When he finds good in every faith that helps any man to lay hold of divine things and sees majestic meanings in life, whatever the name of that faith may be.

When he can look into a wayside puddle and see something beyond mud, and into the face of the most forlorn fellow mortal and see something beyond sin.

When he knows how to pray, how to love, how to hope.

When he has kept faith with himself, with his fellowman, and with his God; in his hand a sword for evil, in his heart a bit of a song - - glad to live, but not afraid to die!

Such a man has found the only real secret of Masonry, and the one which it is trying to give to all the world.

By: Rev. Joesph Fort Newton

**Thank you to Brother Brad Reel for the submission.**

Bro. Brad Reel has organized monthly "snowball" visitations. Each month a group of Holland Lodge members are visiting another lodge. While visiting each month's lodge, we will recruit two members from that lodge to join us on upcoming months lodge visits. Our "snowball" will grow until June, 2008 when we will have our final visit at Holland Lodge! Each month, there will be a new sign up sheet. Members will only be committed for the month that they sign up to participate. Each month the number of Holland participants will decrease to accommodate the growing number of "snowballers". Join in the fun, contact Bro. Brad Reel at [bradreel@gmail.com](mailto:bradreel@gmail.com) for information on the next visit!

## Officers Of Holland Lodge No. 1

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