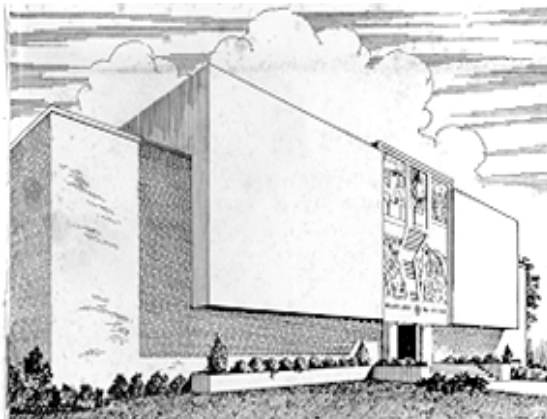


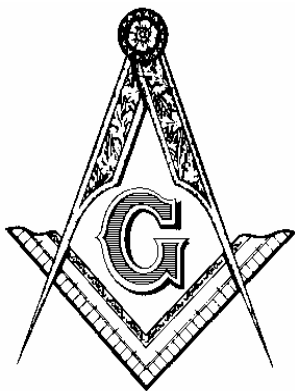
The Alpha

Holland Lodge No. 1 A.F. & A.M.
4911 Montrose Boulevard,
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www.hollandlodge.org
November 2008
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Bill Sessums, Jr. P.M. – Editor



The Next Stated Meeting
November 12, 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

Well, Brethren! The last thirty days have somewhat resembled a tooth-ache to say the least. When Hurricane Ike passed through Houston most of us who are old enough to remember Hurricane Alicia seem to have forgotten how destructive these things can be. Holland Lodge came through it with little of no serious damage. As I mentioned in last month's article we lost a tree which fell on our air conditioning unit just outside the kitchen door. Within a couple of days Brother Philip Von Stephens, Duncan Chapman and others began to remove the upper limbs of the tree with chainsaws taking some of the weight off the A/C unit. Because of the power loss we lost several thousand dollars worth of food. Within a very short time it began to go bad. Brothers Von Stephens and John Elmore took upon themselves the unpleasant task of emptying the refrigerators. When I say unpleasant I mean it was a serious drag! The smell was bad enough to gag a maggot! Later in the week Brother Mark Miller and his crew removed the rest of the tree making it possible for the electrical contractor to begin repairing the cooling unit which took about a week until new parts could be found. Brother Kenneth Amador who is a master plumber managed to squeeze through the small hatch that serves as a means to gain access to the roof. He made it up there with his equipment and after several hours managed to clean the water-spouts which allow water to drain from the roof. They were clogged with leaves and other debris from the storm, which then caused leakage, which ordinarily, would not have occurred. The existing roof works well in its present condition during a normal rain event, but with several tons of water trapped up there problems come about. We did get some water in the York Rite side of the building because of this blockage. Brother Meier spent the night during the storm mopping the floor to keep the whole floor from flooding. Within two weeks the Otis Elevator people got the elevator running again. The shaft had flooded and ruined some of the equipment that makes it go up and down. Our insurance should pay for this work but the contract which Holland Lodge has had with Otis for the last fifty years states that their warranty does not cover "acts of God".

As time passed many of our brother masons arrived at the lodge to help out in any way they could. Not just members of Holland Lodge but also members of the other bodies that use Holland for their own purposes. I received many phone calls from our members asking about the building, and many asked about my personal home (which received no damage from the storm). But most of our brethren did sustain damage to their homes, and all that I know lost power, (some for weeks) therefore losing the contents of their refrigerators, but they still came to the lodge in spite of their own personal problems.

It doesn't take a hurricane to demonstrate the closeness and brotherhood that exist in the fraternity, When I mention the fraternity I am not referring only to Holland Lodge. I have heard many examples of the spirit of Freemasonry from other members of other lodges. When the going gets tough Masons are there to help their brethren. And that's what it's all about.

Jerry Brainard Jones W.M. Holland Lodge

Greetings From the South

In the Fellowcraft degree, before we pass through the porch or see the winding staircase we are reminded of a passage of scripture which says:

“Thus he showed me; and behold the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand. And the Lord said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? And I said a plumb line. Behold I will set a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel. I will not pass them by anymore.”

These words are attributed to Amos who emerged as a prophet in the middle of the 8th century BCE. Israel had achieved the pinnacle of its geographical growth and prosperity.

It's people had lost the fear of God, forgotten their covenant with the Almighty and engaged themselves in the enrichment of the elite to the detriment of the poor. It was a time of idolatry, immorality, legal and social corruption. Amos used the above mentioned wall metaphorically to represent the chosen, who, built like a wall made by Master Masons, were created strong, upright and square, but through time and neglect to the commandments had begun to crumble, tilt and fail. Too long had the Lord not tested them, but the Lord now was taking the measure of Israel, as an engineer would test the actual structure with a plumb to find imperfections between the physical structure and the architect's designs.

Amos' concern was not only for the overall morality of his people, but for the tremendous injustice and social oppression practiced by the rich against the common man. His warning was not heeded and the Assyrian exile was soon to come.

Through this story the Plumb, the builder's tool, an implement of architecture, became the metaphorical measure which admonishes us to walk uprightly before God and Man.

Amos' metaphor, it is to be noted, concludes that we will be continually tested against the plumb. Will we measure up? Are we truly practicing that rectitude of conduct so essentially necessary? Are we inculcating the timeless lessons of our craft?

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

Sincerely and Fraternally,

Bob Welch, JW Holland Lodge No. 1

From the Secretary

Grand Lodge Reservations are now being taken. We have seven rooms set aside for December 4, 5, & 6th. All the rooms are non-smoking and two brethren per room. Cost for the two days at Grand Lodge in the Hilton Hotel is \$170.00 per person. Includes dinner on Thursday evening, breakfast on Friday & Saturday morning and pre-registration. If wife goes along add \$170.00.

CEDAR. What was the source of the cedar trees used in building the Temple?

And Solomon sent to Hiram King of Tyre saying, now therefore command thou that they hew me cedar trees out of the Forest of Lebanon, so Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and fir trees according to all his desire. 1 K 5: 2-10.

HISTORICAL BRETHERN

By T. J. Burnett, Jr., P.M.

One of the anomalies found within the foundation stones of the establishment of the Freemasonic Order is discovered in the year of our Lord, 1751, in London, England. One unhappy morning, that year the Mother Grand Lodge of the world discovered that some true and trusty brethren had concluded that it was not holding to the ancient landmarks and then proceeded to form a rival group which they referred to as “the Antient Grand Lodge” dedicated to returning to its Freemasonry) original principles.” To the original Grand Lodge they scornfully referred as “Moderns.”

A leader of this activity was an Irishman named Lawrence Dermott, whose influence on the Craft was felt for the next 62 years, when the United Grand Lodge and reconciliation was at last achieved.

Dermott was described as “sarcastic, bitter, uncompromising” and on the other hand “the most remarkable mason that ever existed.” He was a member and past master of Lodge Number 26, in Dublin, in 1746, shortly before his move to London. Within 5 years h, and other disenchanting brethren (moston Irishmen) would change the face of English Masonry forever.

A leader by nature Bro. Dermott was soon elected grand secretary of the newly formed Antients Grand Lodge and, as such, wrote its book of constitution, which he called Ahiman Rezon, and which he managed to not only author but own and sell, for profit, with blessing of the Antients. He even advertised it in Gentlemen's Magazines in 156. One wonders if his efforts were driven by his commercial or his altruistic motivation. IN either case the work has survived these last two and on half centuries and on the title page its stated object is “to help the young brother and to shew (sic) the mistaken part of the work– the true principle of Free-Masonry and to walk humbly before God.”

The remarkable work was further dedicated to: The excellency of secrecy; The principles of the Craft; What sort of men ought to be initiated and what sort of masons are fit to govern lodges; Prayers used in Jewish and Christian Lodges; Old and new regulation; The manner of chusing (sic) and installing Grand-Master of officers; Masons Songs (60 in all); King Solomon's Temple; an Oratorio. Quite a book! Please note that the spelling of “Antients” is correct as then used.

Lawrence Dermott devoted his entire life to the Antients Grand Lodge and became its Deputy Grand Master in 1771. Also to this zealous man the Masonic world owes the advancement of the Royal Arch which he held to be “the root, heart, and marrow of Masonry.”

In 1791 after a lifetime of dedication to his concept of Freemasonry Bro. Dermott laid down his working tools for the last time. Much of his legacy lives on today.

Brethren, this article from P.M. Burnett appears in the September/October 2008 Alpha as well. Due to Hurricane Ike, that Alpha was never mailed and while it is posted on Holland Lodge's website, I wanted to be sure that Brothers who are not online had the opportunity to enjoy Bro. Burnett's article so it is published here once again.

Thank you Bro. Burnett for your contribution!

SEARCHING FOR PATTERNS

Finding order in the cosmos

The first systematic observations of the Sun and Moon are shrouded in the mists of prehistory. Scored bones from 40,000 B.C. display lunar number cycles while the famed Venus of Laussal links the Moon with the number thirteen.

Repeated cycles such as frill moons, eclipses, and planetary conjunctions revealed a cosmology to ancient astronomers that was both numerical and geometrical, and which imbued creation with order and meaning — "God is a geometer." The delphic adage "as above, so below" suggests that cosmic patterns are reflected in earthly life, becoming a source of revelatory information.

The Great Pyramid (2480 B.C.) epitomizes this approach. Built to the points of the compass, with passageways aligned to stars, its base and height fit the "squared circle" of Earth and Moon.

This archaic approach to cosmology is today discarded as worthless, and has been replaced by modern astronomy. Yet most people know almost nothing about the Sun, Moon, and Earth system, despite our total dependence on its rhythms.

SOME EARLY SOLUTIONS

From megaliths to the Maya

Skywatching is an ancient art. Stone circles date from 3000 B.C., aligned megaliths even earlier. The Egyptians were using accurate surveying and a precise metrology for both sky and Earth. The Great Pyramid enshrined its date of construction through astronomical alignments to fixed stars. The Sumerians recorded astral cycles from 2200 B.C. and later defined the 24-hour day and 360-degree circle. Chaldean and Chinese astronomers knew of the Saros eclipse cycle. Various calendars were in use.

From 600 B.C., the Greeks inherited this ancient wisdom. Eratosthenes measured the size of the Earth and Eudoxus devised a solution for the complex motion of the Moon. In the fourth century B.C., the nineteen-year cycle of Sun and Moon was described by Meton. The Romans gave us our modern calendar in 45 B.C.

When the Empire collapsed around A.D. 500 the Arab world kept the torch of learning burning as Europe sank into the Dark Ages. Following the Crusades this material returned, seeding the Renaissance in Europe. Copernicus showed that the Earth orbited the Sun, while Galileo's telescope revealed moons orbiting other planets. Kepler published the three laws of planetary motion in the early seventeenth century, when Newton used data about the Moon to quantify his universal laws of motion and gravity in 1687, thereby spawning our modern world. In the next century, Harrison's chronometer greatly improved timekeeping and navigation.

Thank you Bro. Meir for the contributions!

Hurricane Ike and the Alpha

Brethren, thank you for the many calls and emails regarding the publishing of the Alpha in the last couple of months. Hurricane Ike apparently wiped out our publishing company and they are not expected to be back any time soon.

After many attempts to locate them I finally got the story.

Now for the good news, the mailing house has arranged a deal with a printer who will print our Alpha and deliver it to the mailing company to post it.

The back two Alphas are on the Lodge's website at www.hollandlodge.org

I hope that this new arrangement will allow us to go forward on the normal publishing routine and you will receive your Alpha and enjoy the insights and information.

Officers Of Holland Lodge No. 1

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