



Volume XII, Issue 3

Fall 2021



97th Scottish Rite Conference A Success

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Sovereign Grand Inspector General Orient of Virginia

Illustrious Alan W. Adkins, 33° GC
Scottish Rite Conference of Virginia

My Brethren,

By the time you read this message, the 2021 “Loving Life in the Mountains” Scottish Rite Conference of Virginia held on September 24-25 in Roanoke is now in the history books. Louis K. “Kerry” Campbell, 33°, Personal Representative, David A. “Dave” Dew, 33°, General Secretary, and Patty Reynolds, Office Manager ably assisted the Conference President, William A. “Bill” Parks, Jr., 33° and his wife, Elaine, in carrying out the conference program. The educational content shared by the various speakers was exceptional and well received by those in attendance. Illustrious Brother Parks and the Valley of Roanoke spent many hours of preparation for the Conference and the results were evident. Even the weather cooperated with lots of sunshine!

To me, one of the highlights of the Conference was the presentation from Radford University concerning their RiteCare Clinic. Their Summer Clinic provided five hundred sixty-seven (567) clinical hours to the pediatric clients with language and speech disorders comprising ninety-nine percent of the hours. Through the efforts of the Scottish Foundation of Virginia, five fellowships were awarded to students in their program. I want to share with you some of the comments the students expressed in their letters to the Sovereign Grand Commander, James D. Cole, 33° and myself. One student said, “I have worked with individuals with disabilities for almost five years and have seen the impact that communication, or lack thereof, can have on a person’s life. Thank you for making this dream of mine possible.” Another student said, “I have worked for three years as a newborn hearing specialist at a local hospital. My goal is to become a pediatric speech language pathologist.” Yet another student said, “I plan to work with children from birth to 3-years old. I believe that early intervention is so important. Thank you for this generous gift.”

As you know, the Biennial Session of the Supreme Council last month was restricted in attendance due to the impact of COVID not only in the Southern Jurisdiction but throughout the United States and the World. Therefore, we had an “once in a lifetime” opportunity to confer the 33rd Degree on the fifteen honorees. The Valley of Alexandria with assistance from the Valleys of Norfolk and Richmond conferred the degree on Thursday evening before the start of the Conference. I thank them for the many hours of planning and practice for this degree. Their performance was exemplary! In addition, on Saturday afternoon the Valley of Norfolk conferred the Knight Commander Court of Honor (KCCH) ceremony on twenty-three candidates in a public setting. Four of the candidates were unable to attend and the Valley of Norfolk has offered to perform the complete ceremony. Again, Kudos to them!

I thank each Scottish Rite Mason who attended the conference or played a role in the conference. It was so good to be able to meet in person instead of virtually. The three hospitality rooms were busy servicing good food and beverages and at different times overflowing with members, spouses and guests.

In closing, I want to thank Brother Steven F. Dowd, KCCH, Orient Webmaster, for his outstanding work on the Orient website and to Brother Gerald L. Frey, KCCH, for his editorial skills on the Orient Newsletter, The Virginia Light.

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**Deadline for next issue:
December 1, 2021**

The Happiness of The Lodge



Right Worshipful
Mark Tabbert

Address to Scottish Rite of Virginia banquet

September 25, 2021

Right Worshipful Mark Tabbert

Sovereign Grand Commander Cole, Illustrious Adkins, Brothers of the Orient of Virginia, ladies, gentlemen, brethren all, thank you for inviting me to Roanoke as this evening's speaker. It is an honor to be here. Tonight, I will speak about the happiness of Freemasonry. But before I do, I would like to tell my favorite true Masonic story. I know many semi, true stories, but I know this story is true because it happened to me in Paris.

In the spring of 2002, I was in Paris and had the honor of visiting an English, speaking Lodge: Anglo Saxon Lodge, No.343. It is a small Lodge with about twenty members in attendance. While many of the members were French, I noticed other brothers were English, Irish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Ghanaian, and other nationalities.

During the course of the meeting the Master asked visiting brethren to introduce themselves. I stood up, saluted the Master stated my name and conveyed "the warm Fraternal greetings" from the Master of my Massachusetts Lodge.

The Master, a Frenchman, kindly acknowledged my greeting and replied, "It is always good to hear the American accent, for it reminds me of the soldiers who gave me candy when I was a boy and liberated my country." He went even further. "This Lodge also conveys its sympathy to all Americans for the horrific crime and loss of life last September 11th."

Well, you can image that I was well struck by such a noble reply. I could only nod and sit down. Here I was a foreigner among men from around the world, yet in some small way I was representing my county. Despite being born twenty years after D Day and not being affected, in any real way, by 9/11, my presence allowed the Master and the Lodge to express their gratitude and support. It was a moment of pride and humility.

After this quick exchange the Lodge meeting continued. Some business was conducted, and a young man was initiated an Entered Apprentice. The Lodge was closed in due form. As I watch the work and listened to English spoken by men of different nations and accents, a response to the Worshipful Master welcome slowly developed in my mind.

Now I am a natural born wisenheimer. It is both a curse and a blessing, for every occasion that my smart mouth saved me; it also gave me trouble. But in this case, I could not refuse a response to the Master's kind remarks.

Once the Lodge was closed and members were leaving the Lodge for the banquet room, I approach the Master, thanked him profusely for his warm hospitality and for his kind remarks. I then leaned toward him and said. "But Worshipful Master one thing you said was incorrect. Of all the men in the Lodge who come from around the world, I am the only one who does not have an accent. I am from Iowa and I speak perfect English." To this he laughed out loud and together we went to dinner.

Now, I also know this is true in Virginia. I have listened to Soy. Grand Commander Jim Cole over the years, and just like him, I know all y'all Virginians speak perfect English too!

So tonight, I want to talk about the happiness of that Paris Lodge and the happiness that ought

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to exist in every Masonic Lodge and every Scottish Rite body. Let me begin with three quotes.

The first is from Benjamin Franklin:

“The US Constitution only gives people the right to pursue happiness. You have to catch it yourself.”

The second comes from George Washington in a letter he wrote to King David Lodge in Rhode Island:

“To enlarge the sphere of social happiness is worthy the benevolent design of a masonic Institution; and it is most fervently to be wished, that the conduct of every member of the Fraternity, as well as those publications that discover the principles which actuate them, may tend to convince mankind that the Grand object of Masonry is to promote the happiness of the human race”

How are these two quotes connected? If we are given the right to pursue happiness and Freemasonry’s purpose is to promote happiness, how does Freemasonry achieve its “Grand object”? Some may say through our charities and philanthropic activities. This is true, to a lesser degree, but the Craft’s purpose is to make men charitable.

This I believe is best articulated the third quote by William Preston. The Father of our Masonic lectures he wrote in 1796:

“By the proper use of talents, the wisdom of precepts, and the force of example, the mind is improved, and the brethren are united in social harmony; while the happiness, which originates in the Lodge, disperses its influence to the wide circle of the world.”

The question therefore that I have for you, as members of the Scottish Rite in Virginia: Are you, as Freemasons, creating happiness in your valleys that extends to the wide circle of the world?

And by doing so are you achieving the aim of Virginia’s preeminent Freemason, that of the happiness of the human race?

I will not presume to answer this question, but tonight will simply give you information to help you form your answer.

To start let me review where the Fraternity came from, where it is, and where it might be going. As a historian this is my stock and trade: looking at the past to understand the present so a few predictions can be made.

In the good old days, before 1850, Freemasonry was just about the only game in town, outside church activities and the odd traveling troubadours and theatrical companies, Freemasonry was the way respectable men, who wanted to avoid disgrace, a jealous wife, or jail, could enjoy fun and fellowship.

Freemasonry was the social organization of the local communities. Joining a Lodge or more especially, being accepted into a Lodge, was the path into higher society. Certainly, this is

“A society of Friends and Brother amongst who should no contention should never exist, save that noble contention of who best can work and best agree.”

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why, in part, a twenty, year, old George Washington joined the Lodge at Fredericksburg. The Lodge was a place for conviviality and sociability where men could enjoy each other's company without intemperance.

Here in Virginia and across the continent, freemasonry was a fun night out. The ritual and initiation were the means to strengthen friendship, learn of local events and news, and of course, gossip. Freemasonry grew in the commonwealth grew from only eleven Lodges in 1775 to fifty Lodges in 1800.

In the 1860s this men's fraternal life was joined by the Order of the Eastern Star (OES), as if women did not have other reasons to get together and gossip. Somehow, I guess church functions, quilting bees and canning parties were not enough for women. The OES provided many more opportunities, and many more good intangible things.

Such was the happiness of the Lodge that numerous other fraternal organizations followed suit and spread across the nation. Through the 1800s such groups as the Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, Woodmen of the World, and most especially the Patrons of Husbandry, better known as the Grange, gave social activities and relived the isolation of farmers, miners, fishermen, planters, and merchants. So popular were fraternal orders that by 1900 more than 40% of Americans belonged to at least one, and probably half of those belonged to two or more.

Benjamin Franklin:

"The US Constitution only gives people the right to pursue happiness. You have to catch it yourself."

As Freemasons chartered Lodges, so followed the York Rite bodies and later the Scottish Rite. But growing above them all was the Shrine, formed in New York in the 1870s. The Shrine gained its popularity and its rapid growth in part to attaching themselves to Knights Templar conclaves. That is to say, in the good old days, Shriners would set up along the Knights Templar parade routes and entice young Christian gentlemen with the gaiety of a few beers and the fun of a red fez. So successful were these allurements that by 1900 the Templars order of the Shriners to stay, away from their conclaves.

All this fun and happiness, whether in the Lodge, the Commandery, Valley, or the Shrine, created strong membership loyalty. This loyalty manifested itself through donations and bequests so by 1920 the Fraternity accumulated huge endowments. This wealth, in part, led 20th century Freemasons to turn to great and serious work. Just as American society became more regulated and structured as small factories grew into major manufacturers; or as science and technology encouraged national and international trade.

So, 1920 it was no longer okay to simply meet, confer a degree then have a nice dinner and conviviality. Lodges counted hundreds of members, conferred degrees more often and with more sophisticated costumes, props and effects. New Masonic halls included large kitchens and dining rooms along with ladies' lounges, smoking and billiard rooms. Grand Lodges created larger bureaucracies and more committees as the membership grew and men of differing qualities joined the Craft. This resulted in two profound changes.

First, joining a Lodge brought men into the bottom of a vertically integrated Fraternity. Freemasonry became a conglomerate of sorts. So many big Lodges, York Rite bodies, Scottish Rite pageants, Shrine ceremonies and small affiliated degrees required special buildings. Just as Chrysler Motors needed a skyscraper, Freemasonry needed bigger and grander temples, like those in Philadelphia, Detroit, Atlanta and in just about every larger town. With temples came temple associations with committees and employees to oversee mortgages, rent, insur-

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ance, heating, electrical, maintenance and upkeep, etc.

The second profound change came in the form of relief. By 1920 came the first national charities, led by the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association. In 1919 it was the Shriners who used their wealth and leisure time to build hospitals for crippled children. Between 1920 and 1980 numerous Masonic charities were adopted and developed, and we are continuing this today. Most of the charities are good and important but all place demands or at least strong expectations on Freemasons' time and resources.

In the 1960s there was such a panorama of organizations, clubs, units, activities and charities that Freemasonry was no longer simply a fun thing to do. Only in certain exclusive Masonic organizations could a Brother be free of fraternal responsibilities. Such complexities caused many brothers to leave the Lodge and pursue happiness in country, golf or hunting clubs. There they only had to pay dues and some fees to have a good time. In short, too much of a good thing soured generations of men toward joining the Craft.

So where are we today? Again, Grand Lodges and the numerous organizations have many good and excellent programs, but when I hear reports at the Conference of Grand Masters or attend Grand Lodge installations and see the number of purple apron appointments I am astonished. Even in small town Lodges, when the Master starts acknowledging the officers representing this, liaisons to that and past presiding what, not of who, knows, what, I am bewildered.

It reminds me of a fire truck with so many darn flashing lights you cannot distinguish its turn signal. You know it is in a hurry, but you wonder if the driver knows where he is going. So, I believe, Freemasonry now has too much business, and maybe plenty of fun and but little real happiness.

During this weekend and in the course of your Masonic life you each learn the many duties and responsibilities as Scottish Rite officers. The specified duties are very important to keep the institution properly functioning, to insure fairness and efficiency to candidates, brothers, widows, and orphans and to the overall health of the valley, orient and the Rite.

But do you remember that charge given at the installation of a Worshipful Master? It reads in part:

“The Happiness of the Lodge members will be generally promoted according to the zeal and ability with which YOU disseminate the genuine principles of our Institution.”

Returning to the ideal of the Lodge let me return to that English speaking Lodge in Paris. While we were from many lands and the ritual was quite different, there were many things universally Masonic in common. During the meeting I observed brothers kibitzing on the sidelines, junior officers confusing floor, work and Past Masters eagerly prompting the Worshipful Master.

But more importantly, I noticed the brethren after the Lodge closed and members dispersed after dinner. What remained was the Happiness of the Lodge. That happiness is called the “after glow”, or “renewing the mystic tie,” this happiness should continue well after Lodge and stay with a man the next day and through the week and until the next Lodge meeting.

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“Masonry unites men of every country, sect and opinion, and conciliates true friendship among those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance.”

The Happiness of The Lodge

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This happiness is similar to going to church on Sunday. A good Christian should expect to leave the service feeling free of sin and happy for twenty-four or forty-eight hours or even until the next Sunday service. Sadly, we usually sin in the first twenty-four minutes and get grumpy by the time we get home and change out of our "Sunday best."

So how do Scottish Rite officers create this happiness? My answer is to offer a comparison between a valley and Andy Griffith's Mayberry. I trust you all know that great 1960s television show that continues in reruns.

Sheriff Andy Taylor "ruled" or maybe shepherded a wide cast of characters in Mayberry, North Carolina. The cast included: Deputy Barney Fife, Aunt Bea, Opie, Floyd the barber, Otis the town drunk, gas station attendant Gomer, his cousin Goober, and weird sort of visitors like the Darling family, Ernest T. Bass and Malcolm Merriwether.

Most episodes revolved around Barney Fife or another character doing something that disrupts the peace and harmony of the small town. At other times the plot focused on some city slicker peddling a bill of goods or a desperate criminal threatening town safety. But perhaps the best episodes were about someone who just plain needed help, had forgotten how to be a good neighbor or took himself too seriously.

Now Andy Taylor always succeeded in ending the disruption or confusion in Mayberry, but he did so without controlling or dictating over folks. Rather, he used his native intelligence, wisdom, kindness and most importantly, respect. He was sort of "King Solomon of the hillbillies."

At the end of each episode, after the problem was solved, one of the characters might confess his mistakes, ask forgiveness or at least understand his errors. But in no way was anyone ever really embarrassed, belittled or humiliated. The happiness of the Mayberry depended on the dignity of each person, regardless of their shortcomings, sins or quirks.

The polar opposite of the Andy Griffith Show was Green Acres. Frankly this was a show I never enjoyed. If you remember, this small town was filled with equally strange characters. But unlike old Andy Taylor, the protagonist, big city lawyer Oliver Wendell Douglas continuously fought a losing battle to bring order out of chaos. He never learned to live in the world of his wife Lisa, Mr. Haney, Fred Ziffel, and Eb. Where Andy used kindness and wisdom to maintain harmony, Oliver failed by insisting on rules, logic, and way too much intelligence.

Perhaps each of you here know Scottish Rite Valleys like Mayberry and Green Acres: filled with weird and wonderful characters. Presiding over these local bodies the officers must also deal with many other Masonic organizations, charities, committees, projects, budgets, visitations, installations, etc., etc. Amongst all this work and concern the question you may ask, are we acting like an Andy Taylor or an Oliver Douglas?

Do you, as valley and orient officers, and do your subordinate officers lead and encourage? Or do they control and demand? As you consider this, I ask you to remember Freemasonry is first and foremost a Fraternity and our first tenet is Brotherly Love. And that:

"Masonry unites men of every country, sect and opinion, and conciliates true friendship among those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance."

"I therefore trust that you will have but one aim, to please each other, and unite in the Grand design of being happy and communicating happiness."

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The Master of a Lodge's job is not to regulate but to encourage the brothers and to love them. And by doing so he encourages and cultivates the happiness of the Lodge. This is not to say Lodge officers must generate the happiness. Oh no. All the brothers of the Lodge must do that. For just as there is a charge to the Master during his installation there is also a charge to the brethren. The installing Master addresses the Lodge and says to the members:

"I therefore trust that you will have but one aim, to please each other, and unite in the Grand design of being happy and communicating happiness."

When I was master of my Lodge in Massachusetts this was not well understood by the brethren. How many times did I see grumpy old men attend Lodge and disrupt the happiness of others? They would sit there expecting others to make them happy.

But then again that was Massachusetts where most folks are always unhappy, due to its Puritan tradition. Perhaps you may know H.L. Mencken's definition of Puritanism? It is, "The haunting fear that somewhere, someone might be having a good time?"

So, by all means offices need to encourage Brothers to be happy when they come to the valley, or at the least be willing to become happy during the meeting. Without such desire to enjoy the work of the rite, Fraternity falls flat.

Before I conclude, let me say one more thing about the Andy Griffith Show. Andy was never ashamed to be from Mayberry. He was always proud of his town, his family and his neighbors. So should you be proud to be a freemason. So should all freemasons be proud of their valley. To this end, we should never let the world decide what Freemasonry is, nor allow the world to prevent us from being happy.

Fear not! I say, never be ashamed. If you are happy and enjoy the Fraternity, then be proud to be a mason. Not arrogant, but content and confident, and let those who fail to see your happiness, pass on by.

In this way, we should never be selling the Craft. Rather we are to be a good and happy example of the Fraternity. We should be ready to explain the Fraternity and answer questions, but we should never seek to convert others or act un, masonic when they disagree.

All Masonry is local as is all happiness. Masonry must have happiness in the local valleys, or it will not be happy at the top. But even more so, if it is not happy at the top then certainly the local valleys will be diminished.

In order for the happiness of the Craft to spread from the valley "to the wide circle of the world" there must be order yet kindness, work but not enslavement, regulation but also wisdom.

As we gather here today, we remember that the Orient of Virginia is also a Lodge. Not a local Lodge with Brothers from the same neighborhood town or county but Brothers from many communities in the great commonwealth of Virginia.

Because so many events and activities happen at a Scottish Rite session, we often forget the joy of Fraternity. We become like a man who fills his basement with model railroads and

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George Washington in a letter he wrote to King David Lodge in Rhode Island:

"To enlarge the sphere of social happiness is worthy the benevolent design of a masonic Institution; and it is most fervently to be wished, that the conduct of every member of the Fraternity, as well as those publications that discover the principles which actuate them, may tend to convince mankind that the Grand object of Masonry is to promote the happiness of the human race"

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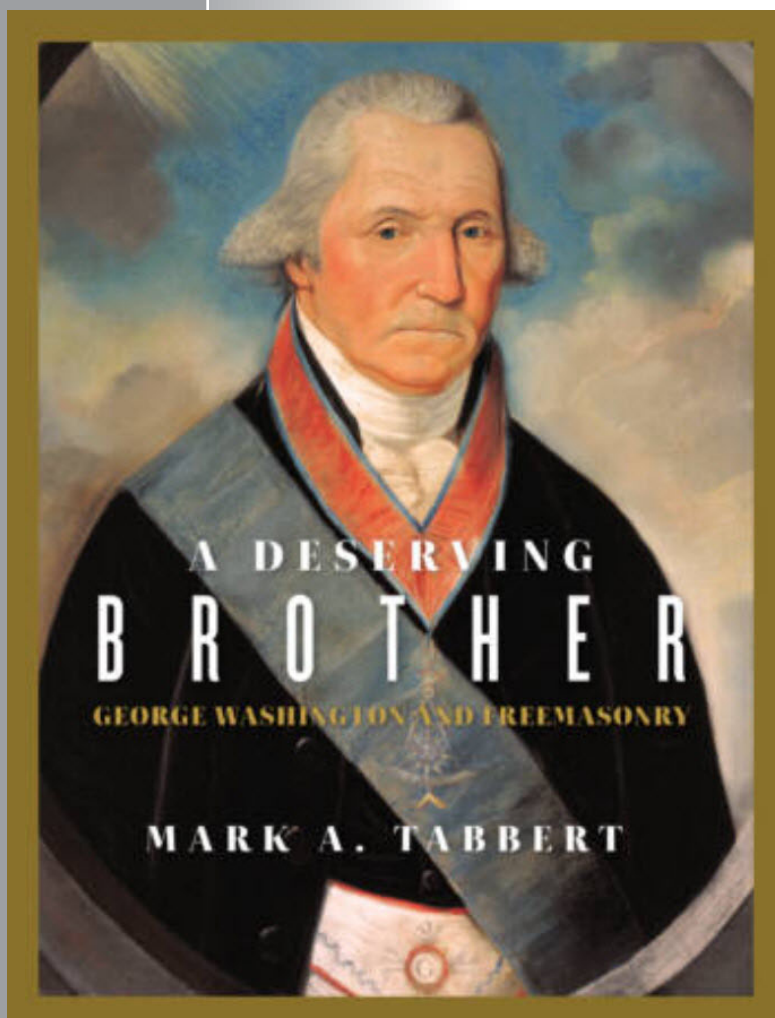
spends all his time and money building, painting, and wiring the train board. In the midst of his complex project, he forgets the joy of his first Lionel train. He becomes a slave to complex labors and forgets the pleasure of childhood beauty.

So, we must all never forget the pleasure of Freemasonry's simple beauty. You ought to take that happiness you felt in your valley and bring it to this weekend.

Perhaps we even ought to think of the Scottish Rite Orient of Virginia as if it is Andy Griffith's Mayberry. No doubt Virginia, and every orient, has its share of characters like Mayberry. I am sure we can find a few Floyd's, Opie's, Aunt Bea's, an Otis', maybe a Gomer and most likely a Goober or two! Presiding over the Rite is Grand Commander Andy Taylor. But this is not to suggest the SGIG should be mistaken for Deputy Barney Fife!

Please remember in the midst of this weekend's busy agenda filled with valuable information on protocols, prerogatives, and charities, we all are part of one big family, or more especially

"A society of Friends and Brother amongst who should no contention should never exist, save that noble contention of who best can work and best agree."



When you, as members of Virginia Scottish Rite, are united in social harmony it will spread happiness to the wide circle of Virginia valleys. And this Masonic happiness will promote the happiness of Virginians and will further encourage us as Americans in our rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Thus, in this way will we uphold George Washington's firm belief that "the Grand aim of Masonry is the happiness of the human race"

A Deserving Brother: George Washington and Freemasonry

Mark Tabbert

Available January 2022

A joint publication of the University of Virginia Press and The George Washington Masonic National Memorial (gwmemorial.org) this book identifies more than sixty Masonic activities in Washington's life, from his initiation in 1752 to his funeral in 1799. The book contains over 100,000 words, 50 full color illustration and extensive appendices.

The Virginia Light - Orient of Virginia





Photographs courtesy of
Worshipful Wesley H. Latchford, KCCH 32 °



The Scottish Rite Research Society

The benefits of membership in the Scottish Rite Research Society are many. Some are intangibles, such as the potential for interaction and discussions with the brightest minds in contemporary Masonic philosophy and debate. The most important benefit is the availability of what we all came here for, which is more light in Masonry. This is manifest most particularly in SRRS publications and Masonic conferences.

The tangible benefits of membership in the SRRS include:

- Access to some of the most thought-provoking ideas in contemporary Masonic research
- A 10% discount on Society books and certain items bought at the House of the Temple or via the on-line Store
- The annual hardback volume of *Heredom*®, the preeminent publication of scholarly Masonic research
- The Society's quarterly research journal, *The Plumblin*e®
- Early notice for upcoming conferences and meetings on issues of Masonic importance
- Your SRRS membership card and lapel pin SRRS Members may also receive:
- Special discounted offers on advanced sales throughout the year
- A bonus book or other item

TO JOIN

There are two levels of membership in the Society.
Annual membership \$52.00 or Life membership available for \$1,300.

In addition to receiving *Heredom*, *The Plumblin*e, and discounts on Scottish Rite merchandise, SRRS members who pay their dues before the end of the year they are due occasionally receive an extra "bonus item" produced for that year. This is our way of saying "thank you" to members who stay dues-current.

Remember to visit the Scottish Rite Research Society section of the Store to see what products are available with your membership discount.

On-line

Join us via our on-line Store and click on "Scottish Rite Research Society."

By Telephone

Call the Scottish Rite Store toll-free at 1-866-445-9196, Monday through Thursday, from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Please have your credit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express, Discover) information ready.

On-line

Join us via our on-line Store and click on "Scottish Rite Research Society."



Certain faculties of man are directed toward the Unknown—thought, meditation, prayer. The unknown is an ocean, of which conscience is the compass. Thought, meditation, and prayer, are the great mysterious pointings of the needle. It is a spiritual magnetism that thus connects the human soul with the Deity. These majestic irradiations of the soul pierce through the shadow toward the light.
Arturo de Hoyos, Ed.,
Albert Pike's *Morals and Dogma*. (Washington D.C.: The Supreme Council, 2011), 77

Time and Tide Waits for No Man

This piece could have been written in any time or culture, but is distinctly truer as time passes. Put another way, every person attempts to interrupt a time long past with contemporary experiences. These are not to be glossed over, to do so is a loss of staggering proportion. This is especially important when something has survived for centuries and appears current, albeit dated. This is absolutely the case with Masonry, its tenets, its ritual, its symbolism, and its culture. To have something of value and not spend the time to determine its worth is tragic, as it is in Freemasonry.

Certainly, times change; steam engines, industrial revolution, gasoline engines, electronics, aviation, well you have the gist of times changing. Yet even with these items they each took years, decades to become everyday items, and longer to be understood, at least in general terms. Books on these topics makes it appear to happen as quickly as you turn the page. Taking a step back and reflecting on the duration of time is illuminating and provides a respect for the dedication of those that pursued their task. For Masonry to endure is likely not the question with its century old rights and benefits, but by not looking at what is in front of us we cannot make a clear track for the future.



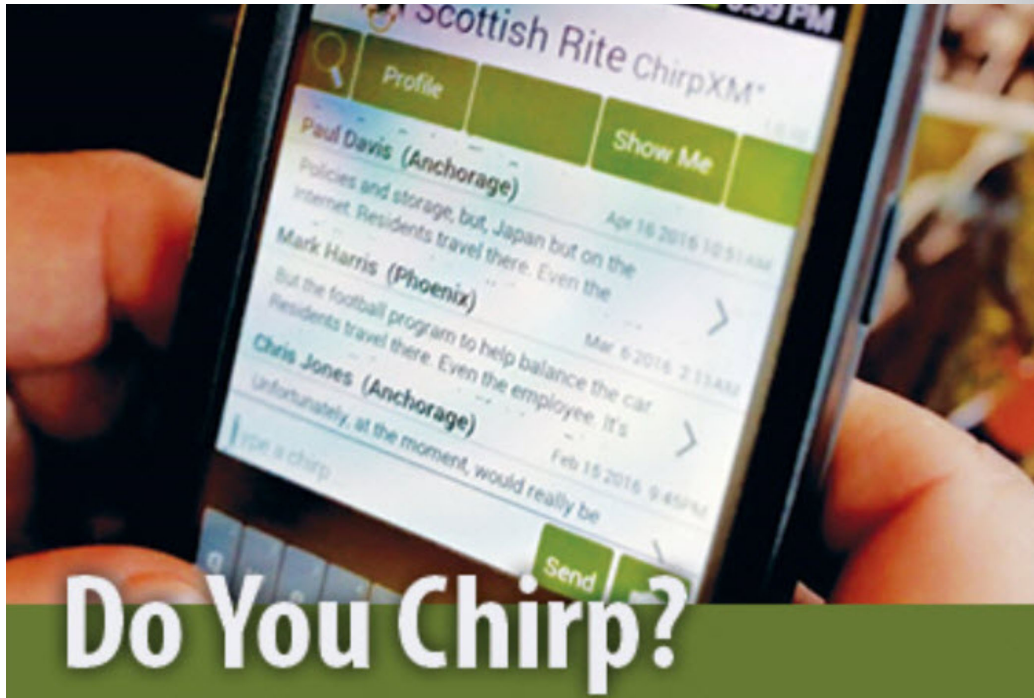
Historical evidence points to the inclusion of not non-stone cutters into their midst. It can reasonably be inferred that from the old charges, the tenets of Freemasonry were in line with the law of the land or with the will of the ruler. Yet these changed arguably making significant changes to the Craft. In England the temporal and spiritual governments routinely invoked the ultimate fate of all in their reach. If needs be, they went beyond their legitimate jurisdiction by way of man hunters for hire who might kill or kidnap their quarry to exact the proper punishment. Neither of these monarchs was to be trifled with, mocked, or tested, upon pain and as likely ruin. Fear ruled the lands.

With this brief glance at the past it is curious that Masonry seeks a Renaissance or Enlightenment views on these two topics, when the old charges were clear, even harsh. For the purpose of brevity religion is the focus, it being the moral compass of any society.

Let us begin with the often referenced, seldom read, and routinely misquoted Anderson's Constitutions, *The Constitutions of the Free-Masons (1734)*.

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Scottish Rite Chirp



The Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction is making a new tool available exclusively to Scottish Rite Masons, known as SR Chirp. This is a personal communication and messaging utility which operates as a mobile phone application and is unique to the Scottish Rite.

Maintaining meaningful personal communications in today's fast-paced and technology intense day can be challenging. Smartphones are everywhere, and a variety of services including Facebook, Twitter, and text messaging make keeping in touch possible using many different methods.

Each popular technology provides benefits as well as challenges. With so much information available to us, it's often hard to keep track of some of the messages that are most important.

The name "Chirp" was selected by the application's developer, which has other business-to-consumer projects apart from the Scottish Rite. SR Chirp messages are known as "Chirps."

Using the application, Scottish Rite members may to "Chirp" to each other and share their experiences, day-to-day interactions and thoughts, updates from their local Valleys and Orients, or simply stay connected throughout the jurisdiction.

The application enables Scottish Rite Masons to quickly and conveniently communicate and interact. Although SR Chirp is similar to text messaging in some ways, because SR Chirp is usable only by Scottish Rite members, it becomes simple to separate communications with brothers from the sometimes overwhelming number of messaging that are part of our personal and business lives.

The Scottish Rite of Freemasonry—Southern Jurisdiction is making a new tool available exclusively to Scottish Rite Masons, known as SR Chirp. This is a personal communication and messaging utility which operates as a mobile phone application and is unique to the Scottish Rite.

SR Chirp is a Smartphone app that enables Scottish Rite Masons to communicate quickly and conveniently.

Time and Tide Waits for No Man

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“But though in ancient Times Masons were charg’d in every Country to be of the Religion of that Country or Nation,”

To paraphrase hold to the state religion and follow unquestioningly the government. With life literally hanging in the balance, it is remarkable that Masonry decides to take on a unique standard for the Craft, tolerance. Tolerance in a unique stance to take in an age of totalitarianism. The influence of Voltaire, Bayle, and Rousseau stand out at very nearly direct contributors to the novel notion of tolerance, especially religious tolerance. Surging those that failed to believe the religion of the state were done with overwhelming force of arms. England in particular seemed a rag doll being bashed by which ever religion a monarch decided upon, catholic or protestant. No religion or spiritual believe found haven for long.

The Constitutions of the Free-Masons (1734) printed by Benjamin Franklin provided another view of this in the American Colonies. The follow-on portion of the above extract is, “... whatever it was, yet ’tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that Religion in which all Men agree, leaving their particular Opinions to themselves; that is, to be good Men and true, or Men of Honour and Honesty, by whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be distinguish’d; whereby Masonry becomes the Center of Union, and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must else have remain’d at a perpetual Distance.”

Freedoms find their fullest measure when knowledge and understanding converge to form tolerance. Masonry, long before nations collided for nine years in the French and Indian Wars (1754-1763), War for Independence (1775-1783), or England’s Slavery Abolition Act 1833. Long before these altering events took place the largest fraternal order in the history of the world adopted and established religious tolerance. Indeed, it was first published in 1723 Most Worshipful Brother Franklin would publish a little of ten years later in Philadelphia. Its importance is underscored by its positioning in the Charges, it is first of the Charges.

The Charges have six sections, with the sixth section having six items addressing Masonic behavior

The General Heads, viz.

- I. Of God and Religion.
- II. Of the Civil Magistrate supreme and subordinate.
- III. Of Lodges.
- IV. Of Masters, Wardens, Fellows, and Apprentices.
- V. Of the Management of the Craft in working.



VMAP Working Tools

Your Guide to News & Best Practices

From the VMAP Committee Chairman

Greetings Brethren!
Welcome to VMAP 2020 and the return of the VMAP Working Tools newsletter!

The 2019 VMAP workbook is available for download. Based on the feedback from members at the 2019 Workshops some significant changes have been made to improve program for all Valleys, regardless of size.

A new workbook means a new Working Tools. The

newsletter will be a bimonthly event. The first issue of each month will share news from around the Jurisdiction about how VMAP is being implemented in, and impacting, local Valleys.

In the second issue of each month members of the Supreme Council VMAP Committee will share a best practice or lesson learned from actual 2019 workbook submissions. These will be items that successful Valleys

are using to improve their members experience and strengthen their Valley.

We hope that you will enjoy this new newsletter format, and we would love to hear your questions, stories, and feedback, so drop us a note at vmap@scottishrite.org.

If you have not turned in your 2019 workbook yet it's not too late, send that in ASAP!

We want to hear from YOU. Do you have a story about how VMAP is working in YOUR Valley? Perhaps you have questions or need advice. Please send an email to vmap@scottishrite.org.

VALLEY MEMBERSHIP
ACHIEVEMENT
PROJECT (VMAP)



The Virginia Light - Orient of Virginia

Rite Care Centers in the Orient of Virginia

Norfolk Scottish Rite Foundation, Inc.
Norfolk, VA

Scottish Rite Childhood Language Center
Richmond, VA

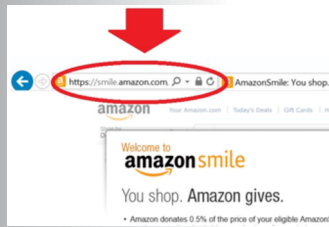
Scottish Rite Foundation of Virginia
Shawsville, VA

Portsmouth Scottish Rite Foundation, Inc.
Portsmouth, VA

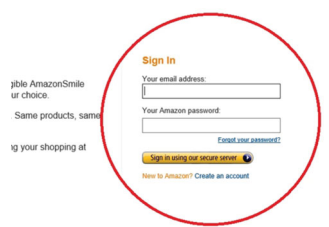
Tidewater Scottish Rite Speech and Language Foundation,
Newport News, VA

Roanoke Scottish Rite Language Disorder Clinic, Inc.
Roanoke, VA

House of the Temple Historic Preservation Foundation, Inc.
Washington, DC



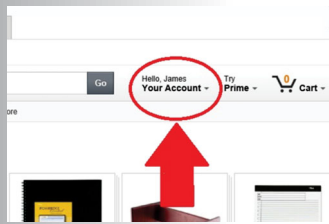
1-Go to <https://smile.amazon.com> (You must always use this address instead of amazon.com. The Masonic Home of Virginia will not receive money if you do not.)



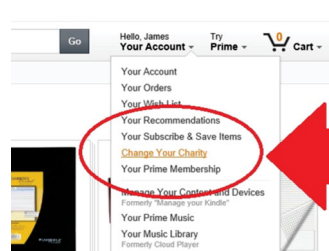
2-If you already have an Amazon login, log in here.



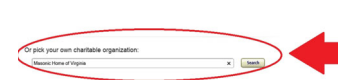
3-If you do not have an Amazon login, create an account by clicking on "Create an account."



4-Once logged in, click on "Your Account."



5-Select "Change Your Charity" from the drop-down window.



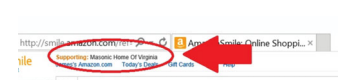
6-Type in the blank, Masonic Home of Virginia, as illustrated.



7-Click the "Search" button.



8-Make sure you choose a Rite Care by clicking the correct "Select" button.



9 -Verify your choice by looking at the "Supporting:" field near the top left of the page.

10-Remember. You must always log in to <https://smile.amazon.com> in order for the Rite Care charity to receive funds.

11-This wonderful feature is being made possible by Amazon, at no cost to the buyer.





Twenty-sixth Degree “Prince of Mercy”

Summary

Practice forgiveness! Be tolerant! Masons are to respect all beliefs that do not dirty sacredness. Masonry is not a religion, nor do its members belong to one religious order, or any one religion. It embraces the truth in every belief and respects all of them. The truths of Masonry are contained within the religions of the world. Our task is to love all mankind; to be faithful to the agreement between the GAOTU and ourselves - we should trust that we can attain His boundless affection and compassion, the mercy in the degree’s title -- that is, we can attain God’s love.

“Prince of Mercy”

DUTIES:

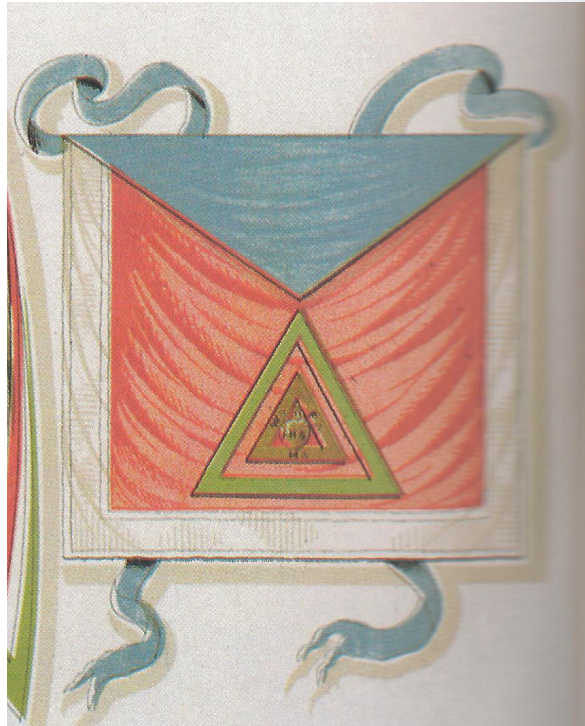
Practice mercy (forgiveness).
Be tolerant.
Be devoted to the teaching and diffusion of the true principles of Masonry.

FOR REFLECTION:

“What is truth?” (Pontius Pilate, John 18:38).

IMPORTANT SYMBOLS:

The numbers 3 and 9, triple interlaced triangle (9 pointed star), arrow, tessera or mark, the colors red, green and white.



The apron is scarlet, with a wide border of white. In the center is an equilateral triangle formed of green bars. In the center of this is the jewel, embroidered in gold. The colors green, red and white symbolize the Masonic Trinity. Green is an emblem of the infinite wisdom; red of the supreme energy, force or power; and white, produced by the mingling of all colors, of the divine harmony.

Continued on page 15

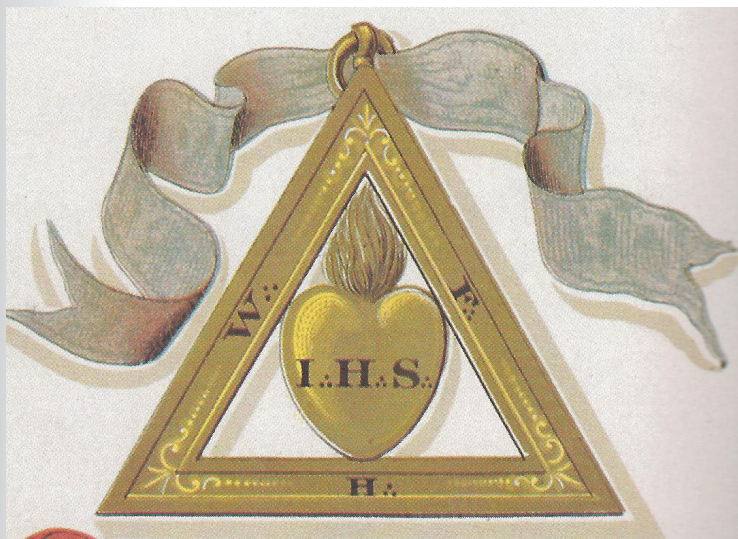
Twenty-sixth Degree “Prince of Mercy”



Continued from page 18.



The cordon is a broad tri-colored ribbon, green, white and red, worn from right to left.



The jewel is an equilateral triangle, of gold bars, with a flaming heart of gold in the center. On the heart are the letters 'I', 'H', 'S'; and on the respective sides of the triangle 'W' on the right, 'F' on the left, and 'H' at the bottom. This jewel is suspended from a small collar of watered purple ribbon and hangs on the breast. The last three letters stand for wisdom, force and harmony; the first three are traditional Christian initials for Iesus Hominum Salvator (the letters 'J' and 'I' are interchangeable in Latin) but which may also be read as Sapientia, Imperium, Harmonia. Thus, their Masonic meaning is the same meaning as the three upon the bars.

Continued on page 20.

Twenty-sixth Degree “Prince of Mercy”

Lessons of the Degree

“The trinity of Deity belongs to no single religion.

The truths of Masonry are contained within the religions of the world.”

Continued from page 19.

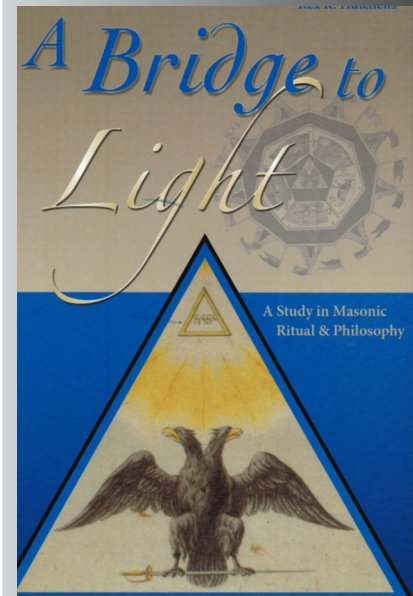
We read in the Holy Writings:

“In the old rituals this degree was also called Scottish Trinitarian. This older version was heavily modified by Pike who reduced the emphasis on the Old Testament and Hermetic philosophy, expecting its recipients to study the Legenda. Although criticized by some for the modifications he made in the old rituals, Pike’s changes were welcomed by Albert Mackey as an improvement and resulted in an enticing degree.

The Mysteries studied thus far have not addressed Christianity. History informs us that the early Christians also disseminated their great truths through initiation in stages or degrees. They were forced to hold meetings and initiations in private places surrounded by great secrecy. We know that the labyrinth of catacombs under Rome provided a place for conveying these Christian Mysteries to the worthy. The catacombs are underground passages and galleries, probably resulting from the excavation of rock for building. They were also used for burial tombs.

Three classes of initiates existed: the first, the Auditors were novices who were instructed in the dogma of Christianity; the second, the Catechumens, received baptism; and the third, the Faithful, were taught the profound Mysteries, such as the nativity, passion and resurrection of Christ, in a celebration called the Mass of the Faithful.

The candidate represents a Catechumen who seeks to become one of the Faithful; he assumes the name Constans; which means ‘constant, steady, faithful, resolute.’ History also provides us with additional information to better understand this degree. Constans was the name of the Roman emperor from 337 to 350 A.D. and an ardent Christian. Unlike his father Constantine the Great, Constans was a vigorous opponent of Arianism, a sect of Christianity which questioned the divinity of Christ. Constans supported the Nicene Creed developed in 325 A.D. which recognized as official doctrine the belief that Christ was the Son of God and fully divine. It also propounded the concept of the Trinity in Christianity. This historical parallel is not intended to suggest those not of the Christian faith should exclude themselves from the degree, for its purpose is to teach the universality of many of the doctrines and beliefs of Christianity. The Christian can only have his faith strengthened by knowledge of the ancient wisdom contained in Christianity. The non-Christian should desire knowledge of other faiths and what they teach; from such knowledge comes toleration and understanding.” (Hutchens, pp. 228-229)



A Bridge to Light
Dr. Rex R. Hutchens, 33°, G.C.

An introduction to the Scottish Rite’s Degrees and symbolism, this book is the most popular exposition available, by one of the Rite’s most articulate philosophers and writers. The 4th Edition of this classic work includes the changes introduced with the adoption of the Revised Standard Pike Ritual; the official Ritual of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction, U.S.A. Highly recommended by the Grand Archivist and Grand Historian.

Softbound version; illustrated. 343 pages.