



Pillars of Light



Compiled by the
Editorial Team of the
Grand Lodge Library

Volume 2 Issue 9
September 2006

Editorial

Last month was marked by the re-Installation of our Grand Master, MW Bro. Raymond Barry Brooke, who started the second term as leader of our Craft in this Jurisdiction. In a very dignified atmosphere and in the presence of many of our Ladies and non-Masonic friends, the Grand Master appointed his Deputy and his Assistant as well as the Senior Officers of our G. L. The same day marked the beginning of service to our newly appointed DGLsW, a position which is largely unknown in foreign jurisdictions as it was introduced firstly here around 1890-91 to replace the Provincial / District GMs, with the creation of the UGL of NSW.

The Office of DGIW may be regarded as one of the best in Grand Lodge. It is largely described by those fortunate enough to hold it as the happiest and most interesting years in their Masonic careers. Not every Past Master has the necessary qualifications for the office of DGIW, same as unfortunately, not every Brother has the necessary qualification to become a WM of his Lodge and to carry out that duty. If a nomination is made by a Lodge on personal grounds rather than upon the suitability or capability of the Brother, then the responsibility for not getting the best man available rests upon the Lodge. In spite of various restrictions with which it is limited, the office is a most important one, there being many occasions on which matters requiring sound judgement and a good knowledge of Masonic procedure are referred to the DGIW for advice, and fortunate is he, who is qualified to give it.

We were happy to see our Grand Master as well as all our G L Officers take their positions in such an elating atmosphere, and we had the good feeling of seeing again the right Masons in the right places. After all, we are the sum total of all our experiences. We are today the pattern of our design of yesterday. We lay the foundation for our future happiness and success.

Here in our Grand Lodge Library, we have done all in our power to offer to our members the source of information at all times. To our Grand Master and his Team, we offer the loyal support that is reflected in the achievements of our Team of Volunteers, in bringing the Grand Lodge Library in to the 21st century, by adapting it to the need of our younger generation and enriching it with the electronic modern tools that will provide an easier access to our Hub of Knowledge.

J.V. Haffner

Continued from last month

The expectations of a Candidate. III

What does he expect from Freemasonry? What may Freemasonry expect from him?

After accepting a new brother into our circle, it should be our endeavour to assist him in his absorption and acclimatisation in our Order and to make this process as pleasant as possible. This does not only apply to the Initiation Night but has to be kept up in the course of years. We should welcome the new brother with the same cordiality which we expected as newly initiated brethren. We should also take the blame if the demands of the new brother are not always properly guided and as a result he believes that modernisation of the ritual and a choice of lectures on current topics are the only and unconditional prerequisites for the survival and progress of the Lodge. It should be clear to this brother that even if doubts overcome him in the course of critical periods, his demands for lectures on current topics can only present a poor excuse for his criticism of Freemasonry.

After all it should be safe to assume that this brother had his own reasons joining our Lodge. Most probably these reasons, even if subconscious and instinctive, were primarily the desire to partake in the search for the secret of Freemasonry.

Today, after many years as a member of the Craft, when thinking about, I am reaching the conclusion that Freemasonry as presented in our times, has its effects and therefore also its chance, notwithstanding all difficulties and obstacles. I believe that the matters of ritual and topics should give us food for thought..

Therefore, I believe that now is the time to voice some remarks on our anxiety about the future, however not without making it quite clear that the ritual, the symbols and the regulations of the Craft cannot and must not be changed and are no subject open for discussion.

If a Brother asks: What has the ritual to offer to me? I should like to answer that this ritual, if performed in perfect form, can give a lot to those who are partial to it. After all, we do know the experience of how moving and enthusing its effects can be if you don't just listen to it but try to

absorb it. All the Masonic experience in Lodge is based on the ritual.

Let us describe this "experience": The Masonic experience is relived when Masonic ritual work causes feelings and spiritual reactions, which cannot be explained but which provoke positive effects in the widest possible sense of the word both in the Brethren present and through them to the rest of us all. This experience, this penetration into the holiest of holies of The Craft, this spiritual union with brethren all over the world cannot be explained even though the printed ritual seems to say much about it. This is the true secret which eternally surrounds us but can be seen by none. Our ritual intends to address the goodness in the human soul but not in the profane manner of teaching. The ideas are not communicated to us in the form of a logical construction plan but by means of symbolic mannerism in which tools, actions and secret words are speaking an impressive language.

Thus we understand that the ritual can offer much more than ever expected. The Brother, in whom the ritual, speaking to his heart and his soul, does not awaken any reaction, unfortunately loses the pleasure of the Masonic experience.

In the ritual of Initiation, hands are extended to the initiate after he is given Light. These hands are symbolic of the eternal and universal brotherly friendship. In other words, the candidate is unconditionally offered a circle of friends. This is definitely not negligible. Naturally such as friendship cannot exist if not shared. It demands reciprocity. If the mutual harmony is missing, very often only a form based on coercion remains.

When planning the Lodge activities and when filling the various offices, every brother should be activated; even the youngest, as taking part in the work is the best guarantee for a regular attendance. We should know how to encourage ambition in those brethren, and in that manner assure their cooperation.

Continued next month



The symbol of Acacia

When asked by the newly raised Master Masons as for the meaning and symbolism of the Acacia we should explain that many symbols are use in Masonry, but amongst them none is more sacredly regarded than the acacia tree.

More than four hundred varieties are known to modern botany, but only two of these are of particular interest to us.

The *Acacia Vera* is indigenous to the Holy Land. It is identified with the "shittah" tree and the "shittim" wood mentioned in the Books of Exodus and Isaiah. It was used in the construction of the Altar and the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant.

In the seventeenth century it was recorded that Freemasons introduced the native American *Robina pseudo-acacia* which is now used instead of the *Acacia vera* originally growing in the Holy Land. This is not the plant to which medieval Masonic tradition refers. Dr. G. Oliver, in his "Discrepancies of Freemasonry", tells us: " The acacia which in Scripture is always called

" Shittim" was esteemed a sacred wood amongst the Hebrews. Of it Moses was ordered to make the Tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant, the Table of Shewbread and the rest of the sacred furniture."

In Mackey's Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry, Dr. Oliver also says: " When a Master Mason exclaims, "my name is acacia"(as the use is in the US) it is equivalent to saying , "I have claim for life everlasting." In the language of the flowers, it is interesting to note that the *Acacia Vera* signifies *Brotherhood and Friendship*. In Freemasonry, the acacia represents immortality, innocence and initiation. Thus it is made to typify the birth, life and transition of the human soul. In our impressive Masonic funeral service it is said: "this evergreen is an emblem of our faith in the immortality of the soul". This reminds us that there is an immortal part within us which shall survive the grave and never die. Again, in the lecture of the Master Mason, we are told that by the "evergreen and ever living sprig" the mason is strengthened "with confidence and composure to look forward to a blessed immortality".

Mackey's Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry tells us: " Initiation is by far the most interesting of its interpretations, and was, we have every reason to believe, the primary and the original, the others being incidental. It leads us at once to the investigation of the significant fact that in all the ancient initiations and mysteries, there was some plant peculiar to each, which was consecrated by its own esoteric meaning, and which occupies an important position in the celebration of the rites, so that the plant, whatever it might be, from its constant and prominent use in the ceremonies of the initiations, came to be adopted as the symbol of that initiation."

The Hebrews always planted a sprig of the acacia at the head of the grave of a departed friend. Ragon says the ancients substituted the acacia for all other plants because they believed it to be incorruptible.

The lettuce was the sacred plant in the mysteries of Adonis, as was the Lotus in the Brahmanical rites of India. The mistletoe was sacred to the Druids. It is noted that these plants were sacred symbols of initiation in the ancient mysteries and that initiation was symbolic of the resurrection, a future life and the immortality of the human soul. In this connection, the acacia is as symbolic in Freemasonry as the lettuce is in the mysteries of

Wages for the Fellow Craft Mason

It is during the second part of the Fellow Craft Degree, that a Mason is presented with the wages of this Degree.

He is told the reward for the Freemason who has observed the moral and divine law and not wasted his time in idleness or vice, is to be: corn, wine and oil.

Such wages were indeed true in ancient days when corn, wine and oil represented wealth and were used instead of money.

The Fellow Craft Freemason receives these wages, not in a literal sense, but symbolically.

In ancient days, "corn" was not what we think of as corn today.

Instead it was a grain such as wheat or barley, which was called corn. Thus, an ear of grain (corn) represents plenty. It is also a symbol of nourishment.

Wine is mentioned in Psalms 104 as something "that gladdens the heart of man" and, as such can symbolize health and refreshment of body and spirit. On another level, wine can represent the completed and perfected human life. Wine starts as an inferior juice when newly pressed from the grape, representing youth or immaturity. But with time and trough fermentation, it can become a completed product - wine. Wine represents the maturity of mind and spirit we should strive to obtain in our relationship with God, while the fermentation process symbolizes the struggles of life we encounter in developing that relationship.

The oil is olive oil, which was a necessity in ancient times as it served multiple purposes. It was used in the preparation of food, served as a medicine both internally and externally, and provided a source of light in ancient oil lamps. In this view, oil can represent nourishment, health and peace. As a food item, oil symbolizes nourishment for our physical bodies but also the moral development we as Masons should be striving to obtain. As a medicine or remedy, it represents physical health and the spiritual health (or joy) we obtain in our relation to God. As a source of light, oil represents the physical and spiritual peace we obtain by overcoming the vices of life.

Taken as a whole, the corn, wine and oil represent both the physical and spiritual nourishment, refreshment and joy the Mason receives for living an industrious life devoted to the service of God and his fellowmen.

The faithful Fellow Craft Mason is assured that his wages, his reward, shall not be just sufficient but plentiful to supply all of his physical, moral, and spiritual needs. He will have health of body, mind and soul. He will enjoy peace in this life, in the hour of death, and in the life to come.



Dear Grand Librarian,

*I am quite confused, when told that the Volume of the Sacred Law is the "Book of one's faith". I understand that for Christians and Jewish members, it is ok to take their Obligation on the Bible, but for the others, what is their Volume of the Sacred Law?
A newly raised Master Mason.*

Firstly let us establish, that the Volume of the Sacred Law that is accepted for use in Lodges, the same that is on the pedestal in front of the Worshipful Master, is the Bible encompassing both the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. The Bible is the Volume of the Sacred Law and all references made in our ritual are directed to it. Therefore it is accepted by all members of our Craft, for any Ritual in Lodge.

The Grand Lodge, in its wisdom, understands the needs of each member of other faiths, and, it allows the Obligation to be taken on the book of one's faith.

It is generally understood that the following are the Books of "one's faith":

- The Bible - Old and New Testaments for Christians brethren
- The Bible - Old Testament for Jewish Brethren
- The Kuran for Muslims Brethren
- The Dhammapada for the Buddhists Brethren
- The Gita for Hindu Brethren
- The Granth Sahib for Sikhs Brethren
- The Zend Avesta (or Khordeh Avesta) for parsees and Soroastrian Brethren

All these Sacred Books allude to a Supreme Deity and therefore are compatible with the teachings and Precepts of Freemasonry.

Is there any difference between the Worshipful Master or the Installed Master's Apron and the Past Master's Apron ? I have difficulties to identify any difference.

There isn't any difference. It is the same distinctive apron with which the Installed Worshipful Master is invested on the Night of his Installation to signify that he has been elected to be for the next year "primus inter pares"- the first amongst equals.

But there is something about a Past Master's Apron that gives a feeling of accomplishment, a feeling of a job well done. It becomes sort of a reward, a certificate showing that, for a certain period of time he has given much of his time and talents to masonry and all the things for which masonry stands.

But when a Master relinquishes his Chair, and he is presented with his Past Master Jewel, it is expressly understood that this is not a remuneration to cover everything he has done for his Lodge and Masonry during that time. It would be impossible to define in precise terms just how much good the man has done. The intangible aspects of Masonry are complex and difficult to explain. Masonry is not an exact science, nor does its ideology demand that each man be rewarded in direct proportion to the good he has done. For that very reason the jewel remitted to him can only be of a token nature. His real reward must remain spiritual. A man's Masonic worth is measured, not by what he gives, but the spirit in which he gives it – for the spirit will determine the extent.

And to thank him is only a form of recognizing that he has fulfilled his duty. So, for him to proudly wear his used Apron.

Dear Rt.Wor.Bro. Joseph Haffner,

I look forward every month for your very informative and newsy edition of the Pillars of Light. If only all Brethren could avail themselves of the Deep knowledge you produce, we could have many, many more young freemasons learning, with the result of achieving an Ideal society which we as Masons would love to see, world wide.

I was Initiated some 49 years ago and still learn from the articles you produce.

Congratulations and may good health and prosperity be with you in the future.

God Bless,

Brian N.R.Halstead. PGIW (Victorian Constitution.)

Dear Librarian,

I was told about a "Mystic Tie" in Freemasonry. What kind of tie is it?

Your question, my Brother, seems to be relating to a tie – as in silk tie or bow tie, and as such it does not exist, when reference is made to that very special Mystic Tie.

The Mystic Tie is that sacred and inviolable bond which unites men of the most discordant opinions into one band of brothers, which gives but one language to men of all nations and one belief to men of most religions, is properly, from the mysterious influence it exerts, denominated the "mystic tie", and Freemasons, because they alone enjoy its benefits, are called "Brethren of the Mystic Tie."

Q: Where did the custom of 3x touching ones left breast, sign of F. at closing of Lodge, come from?

A: The sign is known in our jurisdiction for all the years as remembered by my brethren. The oldest record that I could find in the Codifications, dates from 1941. Some say that it originally was the repetition of the word F. without the movement of the hand. Others say it is a customary gesture that was brought in from Country Lodges. So no precise answer to this one except that it seems to be a usage of English Masonry and maybe especially restricted to Australia.

We need you !!!

Do you have thoughts on Masonry to share or expand?

Do you want to express your views and enlarge our knowledge?

Then come and join in our Study Circle.

Call the Grand Librarian, (02) 9284 2825

e-mail: library@uglnsw.freemasonry.org.au



Enlightened Pillars of the Grand Librarian

Any Questions? Ask the Grand Librarian-POL edited by Rt Wor Bro J. V. Haffner

Speculative Masonry, why is it so called?

The word is used in the sense that the Masonry of today is theoretical, not practical building. That it is a pursuit of knowledge, not of the construction of edifices.

Speculative masonry began with the practice of admitting to membership in operative Lodges men, who were not practical builders, stonemasons, architects, etc., but who were interested in the moral, ethical and philosophical teachings of the Fraternity.

The Age of Masonry

The question is not answerable unless Masonry is defined. Some form of organization of Builders existed as early as the 10th century, according to the oldest Masonic documents, the Regius or Halliwell Manuscript, dated approx 1390. Freemasonry, as distinguished from any other organization of practical builders, probably began among the cathedral builders of the middle ages –tenth or eleventh century. The first Grand Lodge came into existence in 1717 in London.

So Mote It Be, why do we use it?

“So Mote it Be” are the final words in the Regius Poem. “Mote” is old English (Anglo-Saxon “Motan meaning “to be allowed”) for “may”. Masons have used the phrase since the beginning of the written history of the Craft. Freemasonry includes many other words, now obsolete, which bring the sanctity of age and continuity of ritual from ancient days to modern times

The oblong square

The oblong square is a rectangle with its length greater than its breadth, or, as applied to the shape of a Lodge Room, the east-west dimension being greater. In ancient times the world was supposed to be shaped like an oblong square, surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. Symbolically this is the form of the Lodge Room.

Symbolism of Freemasonry

It is the use of tools and terms of the builder’s trade to express invisible or spiritual ideas and to hereby illustrate moral concepts and basic truths in the life of mankind.

Blue Lodge (the origin of the expression)

There are several theories of which two have the most adherents. Some believe that operative Masons felt that blue, the colour of the sky both by day and by night, was associated in their minds with the purity of Deity, which Masons attempt to emulate. Others refer to the change made by speculative Masons shortly after the establishment of the original Grand Lodge of England when blue was substituted for white as the official Masonic colour, presumably because it was the colour of the Order of the Garter of which a number of Masonic leaders were members.

Entered

When a candidate receives the First Degree of Freemasonry he is said to be *entered*. It is used in the sense of *admitted, introduced as in “listed in the Book of the Lodge”*. It is a common as well as a Masonic employment of the word, as when we say, “the youth *entered* college”; or, “the soldier *entered* the service”

High Twelve

The hour of noon or twelve o’clock in the day, when the sun is high in the heavens, in contrast to *low twelve* or midnight, when the sun is low, down beneath the earth. The expression is always used in Masonic language, to indicate the hour of noon, at which time, as the tradition tells us, the Craft in the Temple were called from labour to refreshment. The phrase was used in the earliest lectures of the eighteenth century.

Point within a Circle

This is a symbol of the greatest interest and importance, and brings us into close connection with the early symbolism of the solar orb and the universe, which was predominant in the ancient sun-worship. The Lectures of Freemasonry give only exoteric explanation of the symbol, in telling us that the point represents an individual Brother, the circle the boundary line of his duty to God and Man and the two perpendicular parallel lines the patron saints of the Order – St. John the Evangelist and St. John the Baptist, or, Jesus and Moses. It might be true but it is not the entire story. One should go and explore deeper in the Masonic Literature available, to better understand the esoteric meaning of this symbol.

THE TEMPLARS SECRET ISLAND

THE KNIGHTS, THE PRIEST AND THE TREASURE

By Erling Haagensen and Henry Lincoln

Published 2002 UK ISBN 1-84188-190-2

The authors of this book have for the past 10 years been studying the peculiar layout of 15 Medieval Churches on the small Baltic Island of Bornholm (approx.20x10 miles).

The book describes how the four Round Templar Churches combine with the other churches in a particular geometric form, that of a basic circle with enclosed geometric figures from the triangle to the hexagon and all oriented to true North. Can this be the basis of the key to the secret of the Holy Grail, the knowledge of Geometry handed down through centuries to be hidden in the vaults under Solomon’s Temple in Jerusalem, rediscovered by the Templar Knights and brought to light on Bornholm with other Templar churches in Europe built when the Templars were basically murdered and exiled from Europe.

What has been hidden on this remote island, what is the connection with the original Knights Templar Churches built there and the hundreds of standing stones which date back to a remote antiquity?

This book is a journey of great breadth and complexity which spans Europe, reaches into ancient Palestine and casts a new light on some of the most important enigmas of modern science exposed in the construction of Medieval European Churches and Cathedrals.

Henry Lincoln has devoted some three decades to writing and presenting historical documentaries and books on the secrets of Rennes-le-Château and further reading of his books – Key to the Sacred Pattern, The Holy Blood and Holy Grail, and Messianic Legacy is recommended as further explanation of the geometrical nature of our ancient mysteries. W.Bro. David Irvine



To all our brethren of the Jewish faith, wishes for a
Happy New Year 5767 of Health, Prosperity and
PEACE.

Get well over the Yom Kippur fast



VW Bro Rabbi Dr. Samuel Tov-Lev

Grand Chaplain of the UGL of NSW and the ACT

THE PILLARS OF MIND AND SOUL

The unique meaning of the coming High Holy Days in the Jewish faith requires our attention as to the place of the creature towards his Creator and the benefit of our own involvement in strengthening the connection between Mind and Soul.

The significance of Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year) relates to five major and interconnected themes:

- a. The Jewish New Year
- b. The Day of Judgement
- c. The Day of Remembrance
- d. The Day of Shofar
- e. The Day of Atonement

Rosh Hashanah, literally means – The Head of the Year. This is the Pillar of Mind by which man has to use his intellect and examine his past behaviour and deeds, to calculate the reward and punishment and do something about it, rationally. The Head with all its faculties has to aid the person towards a better future. For this purpose one has to prepare himself and do a good "Home Work" before facing ...

The Day of Judgment, where the arguments of pro and con are taking place. The defender and the accuser are presenting their cases and trying to convince the Almighty, rationally. This is the time of amending self-behaviour through Repentance (Teshuvah), Prayer (Tefilah) and Charity (Tzedakah). Like in every case we have to look back to past good deeds to speak in our favour, to expose the good character of the accused by worthy witnesses and this process relates to ...

The Day of Remembrance. The nostalgia to a beautiful past and the merit of our ancestors are the solid monuments in our defence. In order to connect the Pillar of Mind to the Pillar of Soul and raise our full attention to the seriousness of our present situation, the instrument which we are utilizing for that purpose is ...

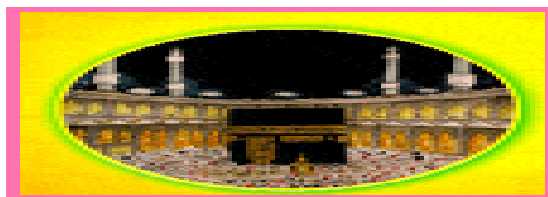
The Day of Shofar (Ram Horn) blowing. Though one faculty in the head performs the sound, its penetration is beyond limit. The trembling sounds of the Shofar are piercing the soul and causing the Head to think better with more feeling. The culmination of Mind and Soul appears ten days after the New Year - when all the body is taking part in this process. This is called ...

The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). The main feature here being a Day of total Fast. The hunger which is now added to the prayers gives to the body the experience of emotions into the rationality of the Mind. It helps the Head to think constantly and positively about the merit of good deeds and self improvement.

These two Pillars are the legs of the human being on which we are able to stand firm with confidence in the tribulation of our world and not to be shaken by the negative forces hovering all around us.

How beautiful and useful to go through this motion, every year to set the person right for a better future and true happiness.

To all our Brethren of the Muslim faith
Wishing you a blessed Ramadan
May Allah accept your Offerings



A research by Bro. Shad Hassen

THE MEANING OF RAMADAN

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Muslim calendar and is a special month of the year for over one billion Muslims throughout the world. It is a time for inner reflection, devotion to God, and self-control. Muslims think of it mostly as a kind of tune-up for their spiritual lives. There are as many meanings of Ramadan as there are Muslims.

The third "pillar" or religious obligation of Islam (Islam means "submission"), fasting, has many special benefits.

Among these, the most important is that it is a means of learning self-control. Due to the lack of preoccupation with the satisfaction of bodily appetites during the daylight hours of fasting, a measure of ascendancy is given to one's spiritual nature, which becomes a means of coming closer to God.

Ramadan is also a time of intensive worship, reading of the Quran, giving charity, purifying one's behaviour, and doing good deeds.

For Muslims (Muslim means Submitter), Ramadan is an opportunity to gain by giving up, to prosper by going without and to grow stronger by enduring weakness.

As a secondary goal, fasting is a way of experiencing hunger and developing sympathy for the less fortunate, and learning thankfulness and appreciation for all of God's bounties. Fasting is also beneficial to the health and provides a break in the cycle of rigid habits or overindulgence.

Ramadan derives from the Arabic root: ramida or ar-ramad, meaning scorching heat or dryness.

Since Muslims are commanded to fast during the month of Ramadan, it is believed that the month's name may refer to the heat of thirst and hunger, or because fasting burns away one's past sins. Muslims believe that God began revealing the Quran to Prophet Muhammad during Ramadan (in the year 610 C.E.).

The Quran commands:

"O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (learn) self-restraint... Ramadan is the (month) in which was sent down the Quran, as a guide to mankind, also clear (Signs) for guidance and judgment (between right and wrong). So every one of you who is present (at his home) during that month should spend it in fasting..." (Chapter 2, verses 183 and 185).

Fasting during Ramadan did not become an obligation for Muslims until 624 C.E., at which point it became the third of the Five Pillars of Islam. The others are faith (Shahadah); prayer (Salah); charitable giving (Zakah); and the pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj).