

**ROCKY RIVER LODGE NO. 703 F. & A. M.
20149 LAKE ROAD
ROCKY RIVER OHIO 44116**

April 2018

UPCOMING EVENTS

Upcoming DATES:

- Apr 05 Special Meeting - Rusty Nail Practice
- Apr 12 Stated Meeting - Replace Yourself Program
- Apr 19 Special Meeting - Rusty Nail Degree
- Apr 26 Stated Meeting
- May 03 Special Meeting
- May 10 Stated Meeting
- May 17 Veterans and 1st Responders Night
- May 24 Stated Meeting

**Please join us for dinner on
meeting nights at 6:30 P.M.**

Volume 76 - Issue 03

More Light in Masonry

- www.rockyriver703.org
- www.freemason.com
- www.freemasonuniversity.com
- www.facebook.com/grandlodgeohio
- www.ohiodistrict22.org



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From the East:

Greetings Brethren,
 Spring time is once again upon us to help ease and lift our spirits. This has been a difficult winter to bear. Our fraternity has suffered great losses and many of us have had personal obstacles to over come.

There is always hope for the future if you believe and look for it. The hope I feel comes from the support of the Brethren that show up without fail to keep our lodge doors open for all those willing to attend. I am so very proud of our officer line for their dedication to the craft to ensure we passed our annual inspection with flying colors. Loyalty and dedication is a badge of merit in short supply with today's society.

On April 19th, we will be conferring the rusty nail degree for those who are desirous of rediscovering light in masonry. It is up to you to determine what you would like to receive from being a mason.

It is not a destination. It is a life long journey.

Fraternally,
 William P Ritley

Pay It Forward Program Gives The Gift Of FreeMasonry

The *Pay It Forward* program allows a person to donate up to \$150 towards the initiation fee of a named individual to be used at any Ohio Lodge or of an unnamed individual at a specifically named lodge.

The Process

An individual donates up to \$150 through a local lodge and completes the Pay it Forward form, specifying either a specific future petitioner or a specific lodge. The lodge immediately forwards the donation and form to the Grand Secretary. The Grand Secretary will issue to the donor a Pay It Forward certificate in the name of the specified future petitioner or a certificate to the specified lodge for the unnamed future petitioner.

Upon notification of the death of the donor or at any other time at the request of the donor, the Grand Secretary will send a letter and a copy of the certificate to the individual named on the certificate, notifying him of the wishes of the donor.

“...we Masons are among the fortunate ones who are taught to meet together with others of opposing or competitive ideas and yet respect each other as Brothers.”

– author unknown

Our Grand Master's "Replace Yourself Program"

We've been too quiet about our fraternity! Every Brother needs to become a spokesman for Freemasonry. It's important to talk with non-Masons about who we are and what we do.

Seventy-six percent of new Masons joined because it is tradition in their family, someone they respected was a Mason or their friends or co-workers are Masons. A Brother who knows of a man that he feels would make a good Mason should talk to him about our fraternity.

Help ensure the future of our great fraternity and your lodge...REPLACE YOURSELF! Make your commitment now! Go to the this web page, <http://www.replaceyourself.org/> and complete the form.

First Line Signer

The commitment to replace yourself is one of the most important decisions a Brother can make to ensure the future of this lodge. Replacing yourself by recommending a new member and encouraging other brothers to do the same will have a significant impact toward increasing membership not only for your lodge but for Ohio Freemasonry as well. As a first line signer on a Petition for Degrees you are eligible to receive the Replace Yourself Award once the candidate becomes a Master Mason.

The Lapel Pin

The custom designed lapel pin is truly one of a kind and those who wear it should do so with pride knowing that they have made an important contribution to the future of their lodge and Ohio Freemasonry. As Masons we wear many different pins. However, this one is extraordinary in that it MUST BE earned.

The rules are simple...REPLACE YOURSELF and when your candidate becomes a Master Mason your lodge secretary will notify the Replace Yourself program chairman that you are entitled to receive the award.

Wear it with pride and tell others . . . *REPLACE YOURSELF...I DID! WILL YOU!!*

Ensuring Our Future One Brother At A Time!

From the West

We will also be having the **Replace Yourself Program** on April 12th presented by Wor Bro. David Wilkinson of Mid-Century Lodge, and the **Rusty Nail Degree** on April 19th on April 19th. Mark your calendar for these fun nights. If you haven't been to Lodge for a while it will be a great chance to see old friends.

On May 17th we are going to have a **Veterans and First Responder's Night**. Please join us and help our Grand Master, Most Worshipful Brother Eric R. Shau, as we salute the Veterans and 1st responders of our Lodge. Help us put together a list of our Veterans and First responders and when and where they served.

Mark Rantala, P.M., Senior Warden

The Best Advice

By Brother Martin Berberian, A Brother From New Jersey, USA

Before I knew what I now know about the craft, I did a little research and found a few facts and some information on the Brotherhood as a whole. When I petitioned the Lodge, I knew little more. My presenter was my wife's boss; you see I made the mistake of stepping with my left foot after the passing of my father, which I will always regret.

I have since learned the presenter of my presenter was Brother Roy Rogers. I think that is very neat.

As I approached the Lodge on my first night, men I had never met warmly greeted me, although there were some I had known but did not take to be Masons.

I, along with another candidate, were taken into a room adjacent to a regular and duly constituted Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons. To prove our manhood, we removed all of our clothing except for our underpants, removed all metal objects, redressed in funny clothes and were blind folded with a noose around our necks.

As a sharp instrument was placed upon my naked left breast, I thought, "What have I gotten myself into?" Our first entry into the Lodge is a strange one to say the least! I was lead about the Lodge by my right arm. A friend and brother was my guide. Worshipful Brother Nelson Drobness, who came to my house to examine me, who would in the coming weeks be my instructor, who I now go fishing with and who's voice can not be masked even in a whisper, lead me around the Lodge.

At one point, the string holding my pants up broke and I asked what should I do? He said, "Hold them up and keep going." So there I was - first blind folded, then confused and now embarrassed, holding up my pants with my left hand.

I got through a trying experience and am none the worse for wear. In fact, I think the experience helped me. When I get nervous or apprehensive, I think of that night and how perseverance got me through it and the cause of the apprehension seems to pass. If we have a candidate in Lodge who is a little too nervous, I relate to him my story and it seems to calm him down.

But through all of this, the best advice I ever received and I pass it along to other candidates every chance I get was to make sure I had on clean underpants.

Master's Piece

In the olden time it was no easy matter for a man to become a Freemason. He had to win the right by hard work, technical skill, and personal worth. Then, as now, he had to prove himself a freeman, of lawful age, legitimate birth, of sound body and good repute to even be eligible at all. Also, he had to bind himself to serve under rigid rules for seven years, his service being at once a test of his character and a training for his work. If he proved incompetent or unworthy, he was sent away.

In all operative Lodges of the Middle Ages, as in the guilds of skilled artisans of the same period, young men entered as Apprentices, vowing absolute obedience, for the Lodge was a school of the seven sciences, as well as of the art of building. At first the Apprentice was little more than a servant, doing the most menial work, and if he proved himself trustworthy and proficient his wages were increased; but, the rules were never relaxed, "except at Christmas time," as the Old Charges tell us, when there was a period of freedom duly celebrated with feast and frolic.

The rules by which an Apprentice pledged himself to live, as we find them recorded in the Old Charges, were very strict. He had first to confess his faith in God, vowing to honor the Church, the State, and the Master under whom he served; agreeing not to absent himself from the service of the Order save with the license of the Master. He must be honest and upright, faithful in keeping the secrets of the Craft and the Confidence of his fellows. He must not only be chaste, but must not marry or contract himself to any women during the term of his Apprenticeship. He must be obedient to the Master without argument or murmuring, respectful to all Freemasons, avoiding uncivil speech, free from slander and dispute. He must not frequent any tavern or alehouse, except it be upon an errand of the Master, or with his consent.

Such was the severe rule under which an Apprentice learned the art and secrets of the Craft. After seven years of study and discipline, either in the Lodge or at the Annual Assembly (where awards were usually made), he presented his "Masterpiece," some bit of stone or metal carefully carved, for the inspection of the Master, saying, "Behold my experience!" By which he meant the sum of his experiments. He had spoiled many a bit of stone. He had spent laborious nights and days, and the whole was in that tiny bit of work. His Masterpiece was carefully examined by the Masters assembled and if it was approved he was made a Master Mason, entitled to take his kit of tools and go out as a workman, a Master and Fellow of his Craft. Not, however, until he had selected a Mark by which his work could be identified, and renewed his vows to the Order in which he was now a Fellow.

The old order was first Apprentice, then Master, then Fellow - Mastership being, in the early time, not a degree conferred, but a reward of skill as a workman and of merit as a man. The reversal of the order today is due, no doubt, to the custom of the German Guilds, where a Fellow Craft was required to serve two additional years as a journeyman before becoming a Master. No such

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custom was known in England. Indeed, the reverse was true, and it was the Apprentice who prepared his Masterpiece, and if it was accepted, he became a Master. Having won his mastership, he was entitled to become a Fellow - that is, a peer and Fellow of the Craft which hitherto he had only served. Hence, all through the Old Charges, the order is "Masters and Fellows," but there are signs to show that a distinction was made according to ability and skill.

For example, in the Matthew Cooke MS, we read that it had been "ordained that they who were passing of cunning should be passing honored," and those less skilled were commanded to call the more skilled "Masters." Then it is added, "They that were less of wit should not be called servant nor subject, but Fellow, for nobility of their gentle blood." After this manner our ancient brethren faced the fact of human inequality of ability and initiative. Those who were of greater skill held a higher position and were called Masters, while the masses of the Craft were called Fellows. A further distinction must be made between "Master" and a "Master of the Work," now represented by the Master of the Lodge. Between a Master and the Master of the Work there was no difference, of course, except an accidental one; they were both Masters and Fellows. Any Master could become a Master of the Work provided he was of sufficient skill and had the fortune to be chosen as such either by the employer or the Lodge, or both.

What a rite or ritual, if any, accompanied the making of a Master in the old operative Lodges is still a matter of discussion. In an age devoted to ceremonial it is hard to imagine such an important event without its appropriate ceremony, but the details are obscure. But this is plain enough; all the materials out of which the degrees were later developed existed, if not in drama, at least in legend. Elaborate drama would not be necessary in an operative Lodge. Even today, much of what is acted out in an American Lodge, is merely recited in an English Lodge. Students seem pretty well agreed that from a very early time there were two ceremonies, or degrees, although, no doubt, in a much less elaborate form than now practiced. As the Order, after the close of the Cathedral-Building period passed into its speculative character, there would naturally be many changes and much that was routine in an operative Lodge became ritual in a speculative Lodge.

This is not the time to discuss the origin and development of the Third Degree, except to say that those who imagine that it was an invention fabricated by Anderson and others at the time of the revival of Masonry, in 1717, are clearly wrong. Such a degree could have never been imposed upon the Craft, unless it harmonized with some previous ceremony, or, at least, with ideas, traditions and legends familiar and common to the members of the Craft. That such ideas and traditions did exist in the Craft we have ample evidence. Long before 1717 we hear hints increase as the office of Master of the Work lost its practical aspect after the Cathedral-Building period. What was the Master's part? Unfortunately we cannot discuss it in print; but nothing is plainer than, that we do not have to go outside of Masonry itself to find the materials out of which all three degrees, as they now exist, were developed.

Masonry was not invented; it grew. Today it unfolds its wise and good and beautiful truth in three noble and impressive degrees, and no man can take them to heart and not be ennobled and enriched by their dignity and beauty. The First lays emphasis upon that fundamental righteousness without which a man is not a man, but a medley of warring passions - that purification of heart which is the basis alike of life and religion. The Second lays stress upon the culture of the mind, the training of its faculties in the quest of knowledge, without which man remains a child. The Third seeks to initiate us, symbolically, into the eternal life, making us victors over death before it arrives. The First is the Degree of Youth, the Second the Degree of Manhood, the Third the consolation and conquest of Old Age, when evening shadows fall and the Eternal World and its unknown adventure draw near.

What then, for each of us today, is meant by the Master's Piece? Is it simply a quaint custom handed down from our ancient brethren, in which we learn how an Apprentice was made a Master of his Craft? It is that indeed, but much more. Unless we have eyes to see double meaning everywhere in Masonry, a moral application and a spiritual suggestion, we see little or nothing. But if we have eyes to see it is always a parable, an allegory, a symbol, and the Master's Piece of olden time becomes an emblem of that upon which every man is working all the time and everywhere, whether he is aware of it or not - his character, his personality, by which he will be tested and tried at last. Character, as the word means, is something carved, something wrought out of the raw stuff and hard material of life. All we do, all we think, goes into the making of it. Every passion, every aspiration has to do with it. If we are selfish, it is ugly. If we are hateful, it is hideous. Williams James went so far as to say that just as the stubs remain in the checkbook to register the transaction when the check is removed, so every mental act, every deed becomes a part of our being and character. Such a fact makes a man ponder and consider what he is making out of his life, and what it will look like at the end. Like the Masons of old, apprenticed in the school of life, we work for "a penny a day." We never receive a large sum all at once, but the little reward of daily duties. The scholar, the man of science attains truth, not in a day, but slowly, little by little, fact by fact. In the same way, day by day, act by act, we make our character by which we shall stand judged before the Master of all Good Work. Often enough men make such a bad botch of it that they have to begin all over again. The greatest truth taught in religion is the forgiveness of God, which erases the past and gives us another chance. All of us have spoiled enough material, dulled enough tools and made enough mistakes to teach us that life without charity is cruel and bitter.

Goethe, a great Mason, said that talent may develop in solitude, but character is created in society. It is the fruit of fellowship. Genius may shine aloof and alone, like a star, but goodness is social, and it takes two men and God to make a brother. In the Holy Book which lies open on our Altar we read: "No man liveth unto himself; no man dieth unto himself." We are tied together, seeking that truth which none may learn for another, and none may learn alone. If evil men can drag us down, good men can lift us up. No one of us is strong enough not to need the companionship of good men and the consecration of great ideals. Here lies, perhaps, the deepest meaning and value of Masonry; it is fellowship of men seeking goodness, and to yield ourselves to its influence, to be drawn into its spirit and quest, is to be made better than ourselves. Amid such influence each of us is making his Master's Piece. God is all the time refining, polishing, strokes now tender, now terrible. That is the meaning of pain, sorrow and death. It is the chisel of the Master cutting the rough stone. How hard the mallet strikes, but the stone becomes a pillar, an arch, perhaps an altar emblem. "Him that overcometh, I will make a pillar in the Temple of my God." The masterpiece of life, at once the best service to man and the fairest offering to God, is a pure, faithful, heroic, beautiful Character.

by: Unknown