

FROM AFFINITY TO RESEARCH: AN EVOLUTION OF VISION

Captain Jimmie Hobaugh No. 407 Lodge of Research and Information

Brothers—An Important Update

After productive discussions with Grand Lodge leadership, including RW Craig Lehrke, we're excited to share an evolution of our vision that addresses GL concerns while creating something even more impactful for Michigan Freemasonry.

What's Changing?

FROM: Traditional military affinity lodge (degree-conferring)

TO: Lodge of Research and Information (education-focused)

Same mission, better model: We'll still unite veteran Masons, honor Captain Hobaugh, and use the number 407—but now we'll serve ALL Michigan lodges through research, education, and leadership development.

Why This Pivot Makes Sense

- ✓ **Zero competition:** Plural membership only—everyone keeps their home lodge
- ✓ **Zero cost to GL:** No per capita, assessments, or charter fees
- ✓ **Maximum impact:** Resources we create benefit every lodge in Michigan
- ✓ **GL support:** "Veterans are the biggest source of new masons right now and veterans services are a hot topic within the GL" —RW Lehrke
- ✓ **Proven model:** Follows Michigan Lodge of Research #1's successful framework

What IS a Lodge of Research?

- Meets quarterly (not monthly)
- Publishes research and educational materials
- Cannot confer degrees
- Statewide jurisdiction
- Members must belong to a regular lodge
- Exempt from Grand Lodge fees
- Focus: Research, preservation, education

Our Unique Focus Areas

1. **Preserve Veteran Stories:** Document how military service shaped Masonic journeys before we lose these brothers

2. **Develop Leadership Tools:** Create training based on military best practices (AARs, succession planning, effective meetings)
3. **Support Veteran Integration:** Help lodges better understand and support military members
4. **Build Statewide Network:** Connect veteran Masons across Michigan through quarterly meetings

What We'll Actually DO

Year 1 Deliverables:

- Oral history collection program (interviews, transcription, archiving)
- White paper: "Military Leadership Principles for Lodge Officers"
- Mentorship framework based on military models
- Quarterly meetings rotating around state
- "Michigan Veteran Mason" podcast
- Annual Transactions publication

Your Investment

- **Time:** Quarterly meetings (4x/year) plus whatever you want to contribute
- **Talent:** Share your story, help interview others, write, organize, or just participate
- **Treasure:** Proposed \$30 annual dues (no GL fees on top)
- **Primary Lodge:** Keep your current membership—this is plural membership only

FAQ

"I'm not a writer/researcher. Can I still participate?"

Absolutely. We need storytellers, interviewers, event organizers, and brothers who simply show up and share wisdom.

"I don't live near Sault Ste. Marie. How does this work?"

Quarterly meetings rotate around Michigan. Plus, much work happens remotely (interviews, writing, planning).

"How does this honor Captain Hobaugh?"

Preserving veteran stories and developing leaders embodies everything he stood for. The 407 designation still honors his ship.

"What about our website and work so far?"

Mi407.com becomes our research repository. All bios and testimonials support our oral history mission.

"Is this settling for less?"

No—it's achieving more. Instead of one local lodge, we're creating resources that strengthen

Freemasonry statewide.

Next Steps

1. **Town Hall Meeting** (via Zoom, date TBD): Full presentation and Q&A
2. **Commitment**: Need 15+ brothers to sign petition
3. **First Project**: Start collecting veteran stories immediately
4. **Charter Year**: Operate under dispensation while proving concept

Bottom Line

This isn't abandoning our vision—it's expanding it. We'll still have military fellowship. We'll still honor Captain Hobough. We'll still build something meaningful. But now we'll also create lasting resources that help every lodge in Michigan better serve veteran members and develop stronger leaders.

Grand Lodge leadership is enthusiastic. The need is urgent (we're losing WWII/Korea vets daily). The impact is statewide.

Are you in?

To express interest or ask questions:

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