

ZOOM TOWN HALL PRESENTATION

Captain Jimmie Hobough No. 407: From Affinity to Research Lodge

SLIDE 1: Welcome & Agenda

- Welcome and opening prayer
- Agenda:
 - Where we've been (5 min)
 - The pivot and why (10 min)
 - What is a Research Lodge? (10 min)
 - Our unique mission (10 min)
 - Next steps & Q&A (25 min)
- Introductions of committee members

SLIDE 2: Our Journey So Far

- **Started:** Military affinity lodge concept
- **Built:** Website, gathered 20+ interested brothers
- **Created:** Petition drafts, support materials
- **Discovered:** Concerns about membership competition
- **Learned:** Veterans = largest source of new Masons

"Sometimes the Great Architect leads us to a better blueprint"

SLIDE 3: Grand Lodge Guidance

- Quote from RW Craig Lehrke:
- "Veterans are the biggest source of new masons right now and veterans services are a hot topic within the GL. I don't think this concept will have too much problem getting chartered."
- GL concerns about traditional lodge:
 - Membership competition
 - Financial burden
 - Jurisdictional overlap
- GL enthusiasm for research approach

SLIDE 4: What IS a Lodge of Research?

Blue Book Section 4.17

- Exclusively for research and publication
- Cannot confer degrees

- Quarterly meetings (not monthly)
- Statewide jurisdiction
- Plural membership only
- NO fees to Grand Lodge
- Examples: Michigan #1, Quatuor Coronati #2076

SLIDE 5: Why This Model Works Better

Traditional Lodge	Research Lodge
Monthly meetings	Quarterly meetings
Local membership	Statewide reach
Degree work focus	Education focus
GL fees required	Zero GL costs
Single location	Rotating venues
Competes for members	Complements all lodges

SLIDE 6: Captain Jimmie Hobaugh (1936-2014)

- **Military:** 37 years Coast Guard, CO of Woodrush (WLB-407)
- **Masonic:** 33°, Past Potentate, Bethel #358 Treasurer
- **Legacy:** Leadership, service, mentorship
- **The 407:** Hull number = available lodge number
- *"Being a Coast Guardsman and being a Mason aren't that different"*

SLIDE 7: Our Unique Mission

"Preserving the past, preparing the future"

1. **Oral History Project:** Capture veteran stories before we lose them
2. **Leadership Development:** Military best practices for lodge officers
3. **Mentorship Programs:** Structured frameworks that work
4. **Veteran Support:** Help lodges serve military members better

SLIDE 8: What We'll Actually Create

Year 1 Deliverables:

- ✓ Digital oral history archive
- ✓ "Military Leadership for Lodges" white paper
- ✓ Mentorship program template
- ✓ Quarterly education programs
- ✓ Michigan Veteran Mason podcast
- ✓ Annual Transactions (ISBN)

SLIDE 9: How It Works

Meetings:

- 4x per year (Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct)
- Rotate: Sault Ste. Marie → Grand Rapids → Detroit → Traverse City
- Saturday afternoons (travel-friendly)
- Virtual participation option

Between Meetings:

- Interview veterans in your area
- Write/research if inclined
- Committee work via Zoom
- Build local connections

SLIDE 10: Membership Requirements

- Master Mason in good standing
- Maintain membership in regular lodge
- Interest in our mission (veteran or not)
- \$30 annual dues (proposed)
- Participate as able—no mandatory assignments

Special Note: Non-veterans who support our mission are welcome!

SLIDE 11: The Urgency

- **WWII Veterans:** Losing 131 per day nationally
- **Korean War Veterans:** Average age 91
- **Vietnam Veterans:** Average age 75
- **Post-9/11:** Youngest cohort needs mentorship

"Their stories will die with them unless we act NOW"

SLIDE 12: Benefits to Your Home Lodge

Your lodge receives:

- Leadership training materials
- Mentorship program templates
- Veteran support resources
- Historical preservation
- Statewide connections
- Zero competition for members

SLIDE 13: Committee Structure

- **Oral History:** Interviews, equipment, protocols
- **Publications:** Bulletin, transactions, web
- **Leadership:** Training modules, workshops
- **Technology:** Podcast, digital archives
- **Events:** Quarterly meetings, special programs

Choose your level of involvement

SLIDE 14: Timeline

- **Tonight:** Gauge interest, answer questions
- **Week 1:** Finalize petition signers
- **Week 2:** Submit bylaws draft for review
- **Week 3:** Collect good standing certificates
- **Week 4:** Submit petition to Grand Lodge
- **Q2 2025:** First meeting under dispensation

SLIDE 15: Your Commitment

We're asking you to:

- Sign the petition as charter member
- Pay \$30 annual dues (after chartered)
- Attend quarterly meetings (as able)
- Share your story or help collect others
- Support the mission however you can

We're NOT asking you to:

- Leave your home lodge
- Attend monthly meetings
- Pay Grand Lodge fees
- Write scholarly papers (unless you want to)

SLIDE 16: Q&A Topics

Ready to discuss:

- Research lodge mechanics
- Oral history process
- Leadership curriculum ideas
- Technology plans
- Meeting locations/schedule
- Committee preferences
- Concerns or suggestions

SLIDE 17: Next Steps

1. **Tonight:** Express interest (chat or unmute)
2. **Email:** Send member # and lodge info
3. **Calendar:** Save Q2 2025 for first meeting
4. **Spread word:** Invite other veteran Masons
5. **Volunteer:** Choose a committee if interested

SLIDE 18: Contact Information

Rob Linn - Committee Chair

- Email: robertwlinn@gmail.com
- Website: Mi407.com (updating)
- Phone: [Your number if desired]

Formation Committee:

- [Other committee members]

SLIDE 19: Closing Thought

"We trained hard, but it seemed that every time we were beginning to form up into teams, we would be reorganized. I was to learn later in life that we tend to meet any new situation by reorganizing... and what a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency, and demoralization."

—Often attributed to Petronius (actually modern)

This time, the reorganization serves a purpose. Join us in preserving the past and preparing the future.

SLIDE 20: Closing

- Summary of ask
- Next meeting date

- Closing prayer
- "Stay on for informal discussion"

SPEAKER NOTES

Key Messages to Emphasize:

1. This enhances, not replaces, our original vision
2. GL is supportive of veteran-focused research
3. Urgency of preserving stories
4. Practical value to all lodges
5. Low commitment, high impact
6. Honor Hobaugh through education/preservation

Anticipated Questions:

- Can non-veterans join? (Yes)
- Travel requirements? (Quarterly, rotating)
- Writing requirements? (None—many ways to contribute)
- Costs beyond dues? (Personal travel only)
- How different from Michigan #1? (Veteran focus)