

Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin
Lodge No. 45 F.A.A.M

bulletin

Volume XCVIII • Number 5
May 2023

Takoma Masonic Center
115 Carroll Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20012
Meets Second Tuesday of each month except July and August (no meeting),
and December, (second Sunday)

2023 GRAND VISITATION AND AWARDS NIGHT

MAY STATED COMMUNICATION

THE GRAND LODGE, F. A. A. M.
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



Samuel Gompers – Benjamin Franklin Lodge No. 45 next Stated Communication on Tuesday, May, 9th 2023, at 7:30 pm. The Lodge will **open on the 1st Degree** and the program is **OPEN** to all masons. The dinner before the meeting is open to brethren and guests.

You will not want to miss this important program, when our Grand Master and the Grand Officer Line visit our Lodge. Following the remarks of our Worshipful Master and the Grand Master, we will conduct our annual awards for service to our Lodge. This year there are significant 70 Year Awards that will be made.

Please reserve the date and notify the Secretary of plans to support your brethren by attending.

Dinner will begin at 6:30 PM and end at 7:15 PM and the stated communication will follow.

6:30 - 7:15 pm: Dinner at the refectory.

7:30 – 8:00 pm: Lodge opens on the 1st Degree.

8:00 – 9:00 pm: **Grand Visitation**

9:00 – 9:30 pm: Lodge Service Awards

As this is a catered dinner, **please RSVP by Sunday, 5/07/23** via the Evite.

Dress Code: Business (dark suit, white shirt, and tie); Officers (Tux, white shirt).

Compliments of
**SAMUEL GOMPERS-BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
LODGE NO. 45, F.A.A.M.**



Your father or uncle
may have been a Mason

Your grandfather probably was a Mason

To learn more about Masonry:
**We meet the second Tuesday night
at Takoma Masonic Center**

Raymond Horn, *Worshipful Master*, wm@sgbf45.org
Robert Greenwald, *Senior Warden*
Jerry Keilsohn, *Junior Warden*

2B1  ASK1

Light From the East

WM Allen Levy 2023



The profession that I have been in for most of my life is that of Computer-Aided Drafting and Design (CADD). The software that I use is AutoCAD and Revit which is published by the company Autodesk. For the last 18 years, I have worked for an Autodesk software re-seller. What that means is my company is like an automobile dealership, selling licenses of software to customers. And just like an automobile dealership, if a customer needs help fixing or servicing a car, the dealership has mechanics to do that. I am like that mechanic. I help our customers fix, use, and implement the software we sell to them.

Our customers mostly come from the Architectural, Engineering, and Construction (AEC) industry.

One of the main services we provide is setting up a customer's CADD standards. This involves creating and establishing the graphic look and feel of the output created with the software in the form of drawings. A lot of the graphics and symbols used in AEC drawings have been established by several associations, like The United States National CAD Standard, The American Institute of Architects, and the Construction Specifications Institute. These standards help maintain consistency with the way drawings are created and utilized within this wide-ranging industry.

This concept of standards reminds me of how

Masonry has kept its rituals and ceremonies consistent, especially within all the lodges of the District of Columbia. In recent years, the Grand Lodge has had the goal of restoring the protocols, etiquette, and traditions of our Craft which have been established for well over 200 years now.

I feel an important reason for this is to ensure that all Brothers meet on the level, and the term "level" can be interpreted as a "standard" that all Brothers adhere to.

I mention this because we will have our Grand Visitation at our next Stated Communication on May 9th. Much has been made of the Grand Master and his decision in March expressing the desire that we as Masons are properly attired when we meet on the level. I feel this is something that should not be controversial.

As I deal with providing standards for Computer-Aided Drafting to my customers in my profession, I think the Grand Master is trying to do the same for Masonry here in the District of Columbia.

I hope to see you there for his visit to our lodge and our anniversary night.

Allen

Happy Birthday

The following Brethren observe their birthdays on the **MAY** dates shown. Be sure to wish them well on that day.

Joel Shulman2
Charles G. Meyers.....5
Craig D. Oppenheim.....8
Randall A. Schoch.....9

Thomas A. Ebilane10
Lee R. Silverman.....12
Richard J. Sincoff.....12
Zivan Cohen.....17

Brigham D. Callem18
Samuel Bauman.....19
Gerald Herson.....21
Lee B. Barton23

April Special Communication – Entered Apprentice Degree

Meet Our Newest Brother. On Sunday, April 16th, our Lodge celebrated a SPECIAL COMMUNICATION where we conferred the ENTERED APPRENTICE DEGREE on our newest Brother, Lee Silverman. We held an excellent degree. Following the degree, a number of our Brethren joined Bro. Silverman across the street at Bus Boys and Poets to toast his joining our lodge.

The cast for our EA Degree:

Candidate: Lee Silverman

Cast:

WM Derek Gould
SW Aaron Kamerer
JW Ryan Simon
SD Jeff Greenwald
JD Chuck Oshinsky
SS Burt Levy, PM
JS Jerry Keilsohn, PM
Sec: Raymond Horn
Trea: RWB Christopher K. Mahaney

Lecture: RWB Christopher K. Mahaney

Charge: GL-E Sheldon I. Rappeport



Bro. Lee Silverman with WM Allen Levy



Attending our Special Communication. Front and center: Bro. Lee Silverman with WM Allen Levy. Across the back row, Left to Right: WM Kirk Ney (Susquehanna Lodge #130), Bro. Jeff Greenwald, Sheldon I. Rappeport, PM, Bro. Alan Karpas, Bro. Derek Gould, Bro. Ryan Simon, Jerry Keilsohn, PM, Bro. Brigham Callem, Allen Wright, PM, Bro. Aaron Kamerer, Burt Levy, PM, Raymond Horn, PM, Robert Greenwald, PM, Bro. Chuck Oshinsky, Michael Greenwald, PM.

Bro. Derek Gould at Bus Boys and Poets



Passover Baskets Service

Jeff Greenwald



Participating in this community service event: WM Allen Levy and his wife Jessica, Steve Deckelbaum, Jerry Keilsohn, PM, Jeff Greenwald, Ryan Simon, Hal Henig (not pictured), Raymond Horn, PM.

Once again, our Lodge came through to help JSSA distribute the baskets to a long line of delivery drivers. Participating in this community service event: WM Allen Levy and his wife Jessica, Steve Deckelbaum, Jerry Keilsohn, PM, Jeff Greenwald, Ryan Simon, Hal Henig, Raymond Horn, PM. We arrived at the Berman Hebrew Academy on Arctic Avenue early on the early morning of April 5th to facilitate an amazing fete. Over 500 bags loaded with Passover goodies were lined up inside the building and needed to be brought outside and transferred to the many cars that delivered these bags to needy families of the Greater DC community.

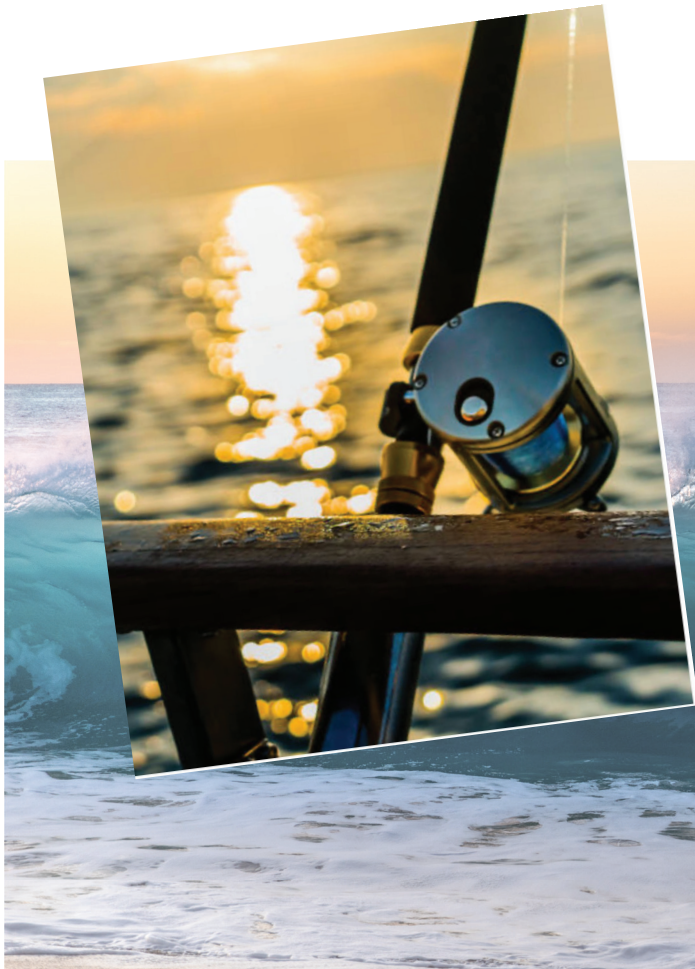
It was clear that our contributions of time, and energy along with our donation helped JSSA ensure the baskets were quickly moved into the delivery cars. Great job to those that participated. Once the service event was finished, we moved on to our officers' meeting.

In the fall, we will be helping JSSA distribute Rosh Hashanah baskets, and then, of course, our signature event, The William Boker Memorial Thanksgiving Basket event will round out the year. Hope we can have more brethren help for these upcoming events.



What's cooler than helping save lives through platelet donations, Visit [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org) or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767)

SPRING LODGE CHARTER FISHING TRIP SIGN UP



Last year we left extra early, beat the charter fleet to the fishing grounds, caught our limit and then went for breakfast!! The rest of the charter boats spent the entire day trying to catch up.

Yes, it's time for the 2023 Spring Charter Fishing on the Bay Event!

On Sunday, May 21st, the Lodge has chartered with Capt. Joe, the same Captain and boat we have been working with. Our Captain will sail out of Deale, Maryland.

This is a half day, early morning charter. We will Leave at 6 am and return about noon, spending the morning on the bay.

This event is open to family, friends and prospective Masons and includes everything you need for fishing.

The costs have increased, this trip is \$140 per person which will include the cost of cleaning the fish and a tip for the mate on the boat.

To secure your reservation, your payment must be made in advance. The last day to reserve is May 19th. This will again be a great time and full of fellowship.

Please RSVP to the Secretary and indicate on your payments, electronic or check that it is for the fishing trip. A bad day of fishing beats a good day of working.

SAMUEL GOMPERS-BENJAMIN FRANKLIN LODGE NO. 45, F.A.A.M. LIVING PAST MASTERS

1963	Allen J. Wright, MA, Gold Fidelity Medal
1974	Aaron S. Teitel
1974	Donald M. Stein
1979	Michael J. Rinis
1979	Burton Penn
1981	Jules S. Tepper, PGM
1981	Joel Shulman
1983	Julien P. Hofberg
1984	Edwin S. Nachlas
1989	Sheldon I. Rapoport, MA DSM, GL-E

1990	Robert H. Starr, PGM
1994	Joseph N. Snyder
1995	Burt Levy
1997	Adam Forman
2001	Sheldon I. Rapoport, MA DSM, GL-E
2002-2003	Jeffrey Sherman
2009	Jonathan M. Binstock
2010	David B. Torchinsky
2011	Joshua L. Rubin
2012-2013	Erik F. Milman

2014	Adam Forman
2015	Randy A. Schoch
2016	Leonard Rubin
2017	Michael K. Greenwald, SGS
2018	Raymond E. Horn
2019	Robert Greenwald
2020	Jerry P. Keilsohn
2021	Burt Levy
2022	Jerry P. Keilsohn



FROM THE ARCHIVES: A LOOK AT OUR LODGE'S PAST

By Joshua L. Rubin, PM, Lodge Historian
May 2023: Growth and Decline, Part 1

At our January Stated Communication this year, I had the opportunity to hear our Senior Past Master, WB Allen Wright talk about his time as Worshipful Master of our Lodge in 1963. While I was doing some research to put together some remarks about our lodge in the 1960s in general (see the February 2023 Bulletin for a transcript of my remarks that night), I started to wonder about our membership. WB Wright repeated the number “1500” as the total number of members

of Samuel Gompers #45 in his year as Master, and knowing that Freemasonry in general in the US began a decline in the late 1950s, I wanted to learn more about our lodge’s membership in particular, which you can see on the accompanying graph.

Nationally, the 20th century’s apex of Masonic membership in the United States was in 1958. Samuel Gompers Lodge #45, the largest lodge in the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia throughout the 1960s and 1970s, hit its peak during WB Wright’s year as Master, recording 1,468 members in the annual report of the Grand Lodge on September 30, 1963, just short of the mythical 1,500 number so often repeated amongst members from that era. Benjamin Franklin Lodge #50 hit its peak in the Masonic Year ending September 30, 1965, with 768 members, which made it the second-largest lodge in the Grand Jurisdiction, behind only #45.

By the time of the two lodges’ merger, however, in 1983, the membership of each lodge had fallen significantly: 947 for Gompers and 480 for Franklin at the end of the 1982 Masonic Year. This coincided with a massive decline in membership across all fraternal organizations. This has been widely noted in academic and non-academic, Masonic, and non-Masonic texts over the last 40 years. Personally, it first came to my attention via *Bowling Alone: the Collapse and Revival of American Community*. First published in 2000, I read this as part of my graduate program in Government & Politics in the early 2000s, prior to joining Freemasonry. Putnam’s work, I would later find out, was hardly unique, but it put a spin on the phenomenon that would make the book extremely popular. Though individual Masons in the 1980s may (or may not) have understood the causes, the organizations themselves were extremely aware of the phenomenon. Certainly, members of Gompers #45 were aware: in his March 1981 Light from the East column, then-Worshipful Master (now Past Grand Master) Jules Tepper wrote,

Samuel Gompers Lodge is extremely fortunate in being able to reverse a disturbing unfavorable trend being experienced by many fraternal organizations throughout the country. These organizations, be they Masons, Elks, Moose, Odd Fellows, or many others, are realizing serious declines in membership. Analysis of the reasons for these declines concludes that the principle [sic] reason is the lack of sufficient activity to interest prospective members to apply for membership.

What then-WM Tepper identifies as the main problem with the lodge’s declining membership is a “lack of sufficient activity to interest prospective members.” And while this may have been the case, a basic perusal of the lodge’s monthly Bulletin shows very little difference between the programs offered in the early 1960s and early 1980s. Nearly every year, big social events, such as the Lodge’s Birthday Party and Ladies’ Night, took place. Blood Drives were held. Men were initiated, passed, and raised. A

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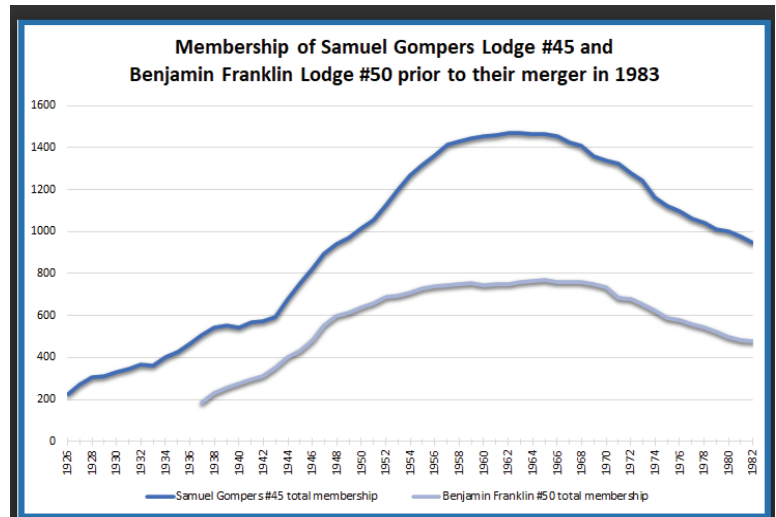
FROM THE ARCHIVES: A LOOK AT OUR LODGE'S PAST

myriad of other programs came and went, and all were touted as successes in the Bulletin. It is unlikely, therefore, that then-WM Tepper's conclusion was that it was a lack of programming that was the primary issue.

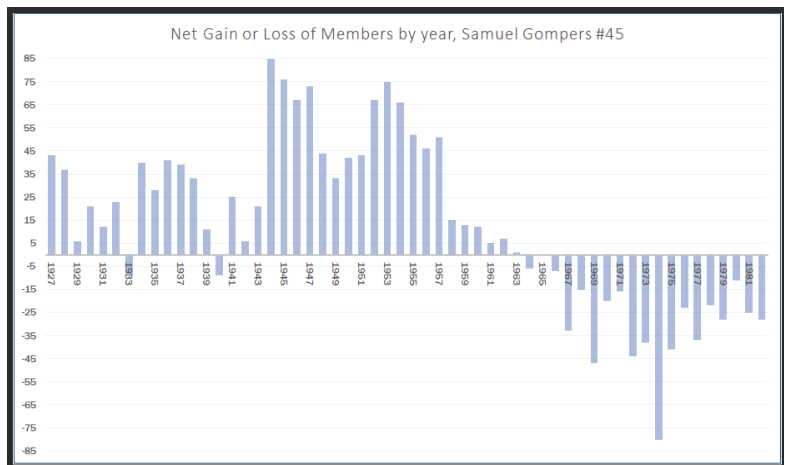
More likely, the realities of the demographic and cultural shifts taking place in the 1960s and 1970s across the United States were far more to blame than any specific problem with the lodge's programming. This second graph shows the net gain or loss of members each year from the year after its founding (Masonic Year 1927) until the year before the merger (Masonic Year 1982). The year with the largest membership, WB Wright's aforementioned 1963, was at the tail end of the growth period. What followed was a steep decline, peaking with a net loss of 80 members in 1974. And while the majority of the losses expressed in the 1970s were, in fact, due to the deaths of members (most of whom had joined during the membership boom of the 1940s and 1950s), a significant number of members simply withdrew their membership or were dropped for nonpayment of dues. (See the third graph)

As this column has already become a bit long, I will split it into parts. Next month, I will give a specific example of our demographic shift between 1963 and 1983 by comparing two iterations of the same event: The Lodge Birthday Party.

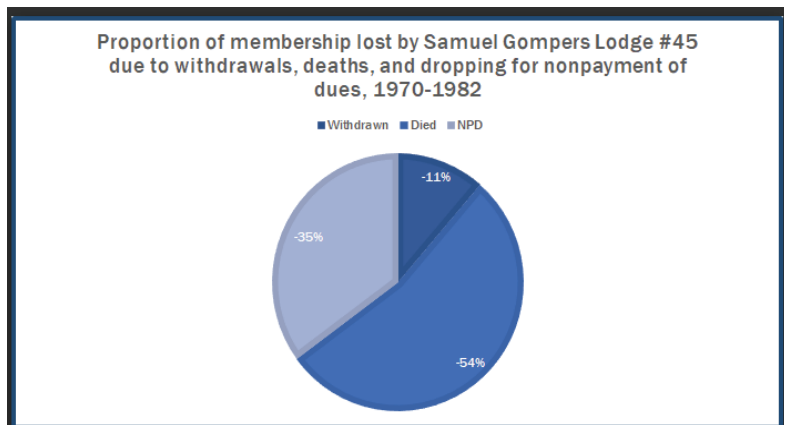
To be continued next month.



Graph1



Graph2



Graph3

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Junior Warden Aaron Kamerer, 202-510-5181
SecretaryRaymond Horn, secretary@srgb45.org, 443-253-0605
6109 Lone Oak Drive, Bethesda, MD 20817
TreasurerRobert H. Starr, PGM, 301-460-3088
ChaplainBurt S. Levy, PM, 202 409-4449
Master-of-CeremoniesRobert J. Greenwald, PM, 703-624-9085
Senior DeaconJeffrey R. Greenwald, 301-869-1915
Junior DeaconRyan A. Simon, 240-475-3935
Senior Steward Steven E. Dekelbaum, 301-367-3488
Trustees Julien P. Holberg, PM (2023), 301-774-2868
GL-E Sheldon I. Rappeport, PM, DSM, MA, (2024),301-598-8379
Jeffrey Greenwald, (2025), 301-869-1915

Fidelity Medal Recipient.....Peter H. Frank
HistorianJoshua L. Rubin, 240-277-5355
TilerHal Henig, 301-681-3873
Immediate PMJerry P. Keilsohn,301-570-0446

2023 REPRESENTATIVES

Masonic Foundation.....JGS Michael Greenwald, PM, 301-272-0168
Masonic & Eastern Star Home Raymond Horn, 443-253-0605
St. John's Mite AssociationBurt Levy, PM

2023 COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

AuditingKevin Stemp
Ambassador to Amicable-St. John's Lodge #25 Jonathan Binstock, PM
301-442-4812
Baskets Jeffrey Greenwald, 301-869-1915
David B. Torchinsky, PM, 301-933-1955
Bulletin Committee Raymond Horn, PM, 443-253-0605
Business Manager Open
By-Laws Robert H. Starr, PGM, 301-460-3088
Catechism InstructorsBurt S. Levy, PM, 202 409-4449
Allen J. Wright, PM, MA, 301-989-8945
Centennial Planning Aaron Kamerer, 202-510-5181
Education and Degree Committee GL-E Sheldon I. Rappeport, PM, DSM, MA
301-598-8379
Engleberg-Korman Charitable Foundation:Michael Greenwald, PM
Michael J. Rinis, PM, 301-384-8244
Jeffrey R. Greenwald
Funeral, Visitations, Widow Care Allen J. Wright, PM, MA, 301-989-8945
Burt S. Levy, PM, 202 409-4449
Investment Committee.....Trustees, Treas. Robert H. Starr, PGM
Refreshment. J.S., S.S.
Relief W.M., S.W., J.W.
Sunshine and Monthly Meet-Up Chairman Hal Henig, 301-681-3873
Technology and Communications Aaron Kamerer, 202-510-5181
Derek R. Gould, 240-938-6285
Volunteer Activities/Community Outreach Jeffrey Greenwald

2023 PROXIES

For the Worshipful MasterCharles Oshinsky
For the Senior WardenRyan Simon
For the Junior WardenSteven Dekelbaum



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 Secretary
 6109 Lone Oak Drive
 Bethesda, MD 20817



Calendar for Masonic Year 2022—Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge #45

For the most up-to-date information, please check the Trestleboard or www.sgbf45.org. If anyone is interested in any of these events and wishes to obtain more information, please contact WM Jerry Keilsohn about all events (see page 2)

Date		Event	Open to
May	9	Stated Communication, 7:30 pm Grand Visitation	All Masons
	22	Meet-up, 6:30 pm	Masons and prospective Masons

Date		Event	Open to
June	13	Stated Communication, 7:30 pm	All Masons
	26	Meet-up, 6:30 pm	Masons and prospective Masons