

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

bulletin

Volume XCIX • Number 2
February 2022

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)

February Stated Communication

Geometry III

Tuesday, February 8th, 2022

Our Masonic traditions are full of several hundred years of tradition. Much handed down mouth to ear, and other pieces of it, in wonderful writings, paintings, and other works of art. We have hundreds of expressions as well, all of which can be rather intense, esoteric, and if it is not your thing, overwhelmingly boring.

And it can be even worse if you are a Left-Brain thinker. The Worshipful Master will share his light-hearted thoughts with some actual visuals, on the science of Geometry, it's Masonic relationship to the number three, all through the lenses of a Left-Brain thinker. Plus, some totally irrelevant Masonic Trivia.

Many teachings of Freemasonry are based on understanding life through numbers, geometry, and symbols, as represented by the insignia of the compass and the carpenter's square. In architectural history, stonemasons were the master builders of temples, cathedrals, megaliths, and other sacred structures. Many ancient sacred sites worldwide have been built according to the principles of sacred geometry. Sacred Geometry can be observed in the geomancy of the entire planet, where we find energy vortexes at certain points where a grid of lay lines intersects. Similar to the chakras of the physical body, it is believed that many of these points around the globe are power centers for natural forces of either positive or negative energy.



The Trinity Knot



The Pyramids of Giza

Please join us at our February Stated Communication on, Tuesday, February 8th. Master Masons only, but you will have to attend to figure out why.

Brethren, in addition to the WM's Interesting Talk, we will be voting on a new candidate having received the Investigation Report and Waiver of Jurisdiction from the Grand Lodge of Maryland.

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

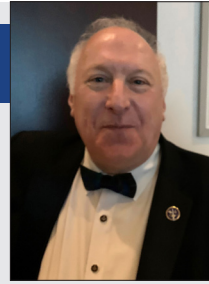
To learn more about Masonry:
**We meet the second Tuesday night
at Takoma Masonic Center**

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

2B1  ASK1

Light From the East

Jerry Keilsohn, W.M. 2022



As I am writing this, it looks like Mother Nature cannot seem to decide if it is winter or not. And then when she does think it is winter, she changes her mind the next day. This is the time of year that I get to see Mother Nature's light show. And some days I get to see both the early show on my way to work, Sunrise, and the late show on my way home, Sunset. I drive east in the morning and west in the evening. Mr. Sun is in my face every day.

February is my least favorite month of the year. Everything is still dead, and some of it is even beginning to look like it will never recover. Thankfully Spring will arrive in a few weeks, and the variety of scenes that each season displays to the discerning eye will get a whole lot more colorful.

By the time you will read this we will have made some new Master Masons. The last time we did this in our Lodge was in November of 2019. Both of these brethren who are about to be raised have waited a very long time to become Master Masons.

I have a unique relationship with the two brethren that were raised. I got to be their catechism instructor. It is difficult to be a Worshipful Master and find time to be a catechism instructor. As WB Burt Levy, PM, was a Worshipful Master last year, I took on what would have normally been his two students. Once the Masonic year rolled over and I was back in the East, I probably should have followed the conventional advice and passed my students back to Brother Burt, but choose to keep them for a few more weeks. The task is even harder when one is preparing for a part in the upcoming degree and when one has a full-time job that occupies a significant part of one's waking hours.

When I first started to write a column for the Bulletin, it was to track my journey as a Mason. Including my progression through the chairs. Over the last several years I have written a whole lot about the things I learned and all of the Masonic firsts I was encountering. As the years have gone by the number of firsts has decreased. I do have one for the last month though. I got to be the Worshipful Master of a Lodge that raised several brethren. In the past, I got to be the Worshipful

Master for the time being and did the raising. A humbling experience.

When I first accepted the Junior Steward's job, I was told that taking a line job would help me better understand the history and rituals of Masonry. While that is true, being part of the ritual really helps one to understand and appreciate it. It is humbling to realize that the ritual you are performing and participating in, has been performed in the same manner for hundreds of years.

Doing a Special Communication for the Master Masons degree allowed me to pick my favorite ritual part, the Senior Deacon's role, in the second section of the Master Masons degree. Once in a while being the Master opens a unique opportunity.

Sitting in the East for a second time has been interesting. I have a better grasp of the Opening and Closing Ritual. And I am much less intimidated by the ritual and the administrative parts of the task of being a Worshipful Master. As there is always room for improvement, I hope I am doing a better job than I did the last time. The view from the East end of the Lodge hall is fascinating. The last time I sat in the East, most of sitting in the East was on Zoom and in my dining room. Seeing real people has been exciting.

Before I close with a quotation, I wanted to pass along some news. It is rather a lack of news. The world is still a strange place. Are we going to be able to continue to meet in person? I do not know the answer to that question. I hope so, but the world might have a different opinion. Nor do I know when we will it will be safe enough to stop wearing masks in the Lodge room. For the last several weeks, I have not been traveling to other Lodges, and am hoping one day real soon, I can resume doing that.

And now the closing quotation.

"I knew I shoulda taken that left turn at Albuquerque!" – Bugs Bunny

Jerry

Founder's Night: A Look at Jewish Freemasonry in 1925

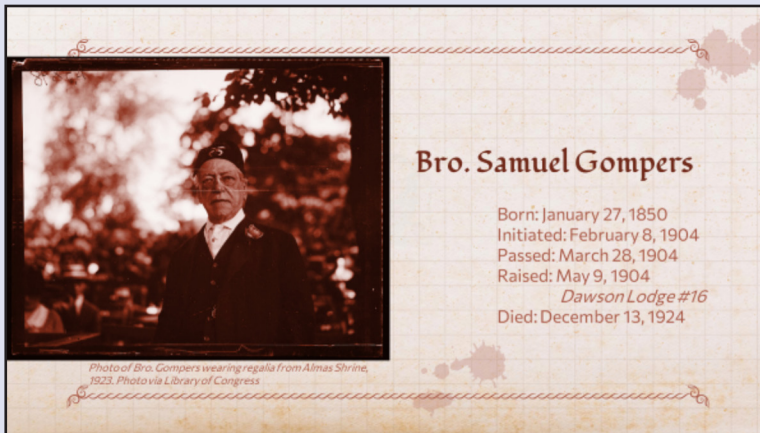
By Joshua L. Rubin, PM

At our January 11, 2022, Stated Communication, Worshipful Brother Joshua L. Rubin led the brethren down a path to review the state of Freemasonry at the birth of Samuel Gompers Lodge #45 in 1925. This was a significant year, not only because it represented the year spent under dispensation of a lodge named for a recently-deceased labor leader, but because it was a year when being Jewish or being an immigrant was not easy.

Two driving questions were explored. 1) In 1925, a group of Brethren approached the Grand Lodge of DC about founding a lodge named after the recently-deceased labor icon, Brother Samuel Gompers. But why was the lodge created? What was the state of Freemasonry in the District of Columbia (and the United States as a whole) in 1925, when the dispensation for Samuel Gompers Lodge was granted?

2) What was the status of Masonry in general in 1925? What was it like to be a Jewish Mason in the 1920s that led to the desire for a uniquely Jewish Lodge? Why might the founding Brethren have wanted to start a primarily Jewish lodge? And why doesn't there seem to be much evidence that it was a Jewish Lodge from the start?

Interestingly, despite the overwhelmingly Jewish character of Samuel Gompers Lodge #45, the brethren of the early lodge chose to downplay its Jewish nature. WB Rubin's focus for the evening was to ask and explain why we downplayed our essential feature: the fact that we were "the Jewish Lodge". To do this, WB Rubin led the brethren through a snapshot of American culture in the 1920s at the beginning of our lodge: specifically, he discussed how the rise of anti-Semitism, the end of the wave of Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe from 1880-1920, and the unique nature of our Masonic Obligations made it especially prudent for Jewish Masons in Washington, DC to form their own lodge.



Our Lodge was Chartered the year after our lodge's namesake, Bro. Samuel Gompers died. He had three sons, Samuel Jr., Henry and Alexander J., two of which, Henry and Alexander were charter members of the Lodge of which WB Henry J. Gompers was the Charter Worshipful Master.

The 1920s, WB Rubin informed the gathered brethren, was the heyday for the second Ku Klux Klan, whose membership peaked in 1925. Many members of the KKK were also Brother Masons, and in some parts of the country, the two organizations were largely indistinguishable. Add to that the rise of fraternal publications sympathetic to the KKK (most notably DC's own "Fellowship Forum" newspaper), and it became untenable for Jews to remain members of certain lodges in the Grand Lodge of DC.

WB Rubin then took the brethren through a brief sociological exploration of the nature of immigrants. Most Jews in the United States in 1925 were either immigrants or the children of immigrants from Eastern Europe. Two thirds of the pillar officers in our founding year were immigrants from Eastern Europe, and the third, WM Henry Gompers, was the son of immigrants. This had a lasting effect on the lodge to attempt to remain as "American" as possible without many outward signs of its Jewish membership.

See *Founders Night/Continued on Page 5*

Finally, WB Rubin explained the nature of the obligations around discussions of religion in lodges. Freemasonry in general takes a more permissive approach to religion: celebrations of religiousness and religious activities are not forbidden, but merely the discussion that would lead to conflict. Our lodge has taken a much stricter approach historically, though that has changed over the last decade or so.

The brethren at our Stated Communication included a visitor who was the grandson of a brother of Samuel Gompers Lodge from the 1940s whose granduncle was one of the charter members thanked WB Rubin and the brethren retired for the evening. Any brother who was not able to attend WB Rubin's presentation but would like to be emailed a copy of the slideshow can request it by emailing him at jrubin@sgbf45.org.

	\$ (1925)	\$ (2022 adjusted)
Annual dues	6.00	95.14
Charter member fee	10.00	158.56
Petition fee	20.00	317.11
MM degree fee	20.00	317.11

A table comparing the costs for joining the Lodge at its founding and adjusted for inflation to 2022. As a comparison, our current annual dues are \$118.00, \$50.00 must be submitted with the petition, \$50.00 fee for the Fellowcraft Degree, and \$75.00 fee with the Master Masons Degree. Our Degrees are now a relative bargain.

Veterans Corner

by Robert Greenwald, PM



Hospital Charges

Update 08: CMS Issues 335 Noncompliance Notices but No Fines:

The CMS final price transparency rule aims to make hospital pricing information readily available to patients to compare costs and make more informed healthcare decisions. To aid with this, hospitals in the U.S. are required to post both a machine-readable file with the negotiated rates for all items and services and display the prices of 300 shoppable services in a consumer-friendly format. A recent analysis of 500 hospitals conducted by nonprofit Patient Rights Advocate found that 94.4 percent of hospitals haven't met at least one of the requirements since the rule took effect.

To boost compliance, CMS in November released a final rule modifying the hospital price transparency noncompliance penalty, which takes effect Jan. 1, 2022. Hospitals with 30 beds or fewer would continue to pay up to \$300 per day of noncompliance, but hospitals with more than 30 beds will pay \$10 per bed each day. The maximum penalty will be capped at \$5,500 per day. A full year of noncompliance with the

regulation would result in a maximum penalty of \$2 million per hospital. CMS has issued warnings to more than 300 hospitals for violations of rules requiring them to disclose prices, but the agency hasn't penalized hospitals for noncompliance, according to The Wall Street Journal.

Federal rules requiring hospitals to make prices public took effect Jan. 1, 2021. More than a year later, some hospitals and health systems have posted incomplete data and others have posted nothing at all. As of December, CMS had issued noncompliance notices to approximately 335 hospitals and asked 98 hospitals to submit plans for how and when they would comply with the federal rules, according to the Journal. Some hospital leaders argue that the rules, which require hospitals to post prices negotiated with private insurers, put them at a competitive disadvantage. CMS is providing hospitals with technical help and information to boost compliance with the rules. CMS hasn't disclosed when it will begin penalizing hospitals.

[Source: Review Newsletter | Ayla Ellison | January 5, 2021 ++]

WB Burt Levy, PM Recognized his Officer Line

At our January Stated Communication, Immediate Past Master Burt Levy presented the members of his Officer Line with certificates of appreciation for their efforts at keeping the light of Freemasonry shining during the 2021 Masonic Year. And to help them “keep the light shining” he gave each of them a bright LED utility light (demonstrated in the picture) which he hoped they would keep in their car and think of him whenever that extra light came in handy.



From left to right: WB Burt Levy, PM, Tiler Hal Henig, JW Derek Gould, SW Allen Levy, JD Jeff Greenwald, SD Aaron Kamerer, WM Jerry Keilsohn, PM.

The Gossip Column By Allen Levy

Jonathan Binstock, PM was recently elected Grand Tall of **Annapolis Forest 126 Tall Cedars of Lebanon**, or as the late “Wally” Simon affectionately called it: The Short Pine Needles. Jonathan wants you to know that if you have any questions or want information on Cedarism, feel free to reach out to him at binstockj@comcast.net.

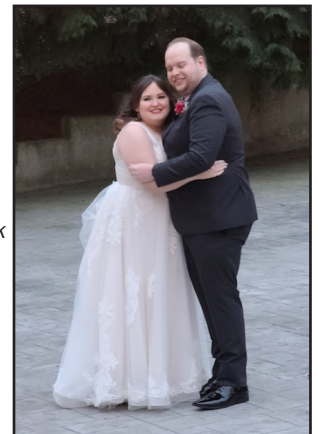


My father **Burt Levy, PM**, and I attended the wedding of Burt’s grandniece, Marley on January 15, 2022. The size of the event was drastically curtailed due to the Omicron variant, so only close family and friends were able to attend. Marly married a very nice young man named Dylan seen in the wedding photo.



From left to right: Jessica Levy (my wife), me, my sister Suzy Taylor, and her husband CJ Taylor. As Jessica put it: “All Allen’s father wanted was a nice picture of his family, and this is what he got”.

Dylan and Marley Cook



Happy Birthday

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

Roman Volsky 19	Jules S. Tepper..... 3	Francis P. Boylin..... 28
Maurice S. Berger 17	M. Bruce Lustig 8	Ryan S. Sompn 24
Stephen E. Costin 25	Nathan A. Lewis 11	
Sheldon I. Rapoport.. 17	Jerold Coffee 23	

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Masonic & Eastern Star Home Raymond Horn, rhorn@sgbf45.org, 443-253-0605
St. John's Mite AssociationOpen


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Refreshment. J.S., S.S.
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2022 PROXIES

For the Worshipful MasterRobert Greenwald
For the Senior WardenAaron Kamerer
For the Junior WardenRyan Simon

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 Secretary
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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
February	2	Hockey Night, Capitals vs Edmonton Oilers, 7:00 pm, Capital One Arena	Family and Friends
	8	Stated Communication, 7:30 pm	Masons
	21	Meet-up, 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Masons and Candidates

Date		Event	Open to
March	8	Stated Communication, 7:30 pm	Masons
	20	Meet-Up, 7:00 pm-8:00 pm	Masons and Candidates

Date		Event	Open to
April	12	Stated Communication, 7:30 pm	Masons
	18	Meet-Up, 7:00 pm-8:00 pm	Masons and Candidates