

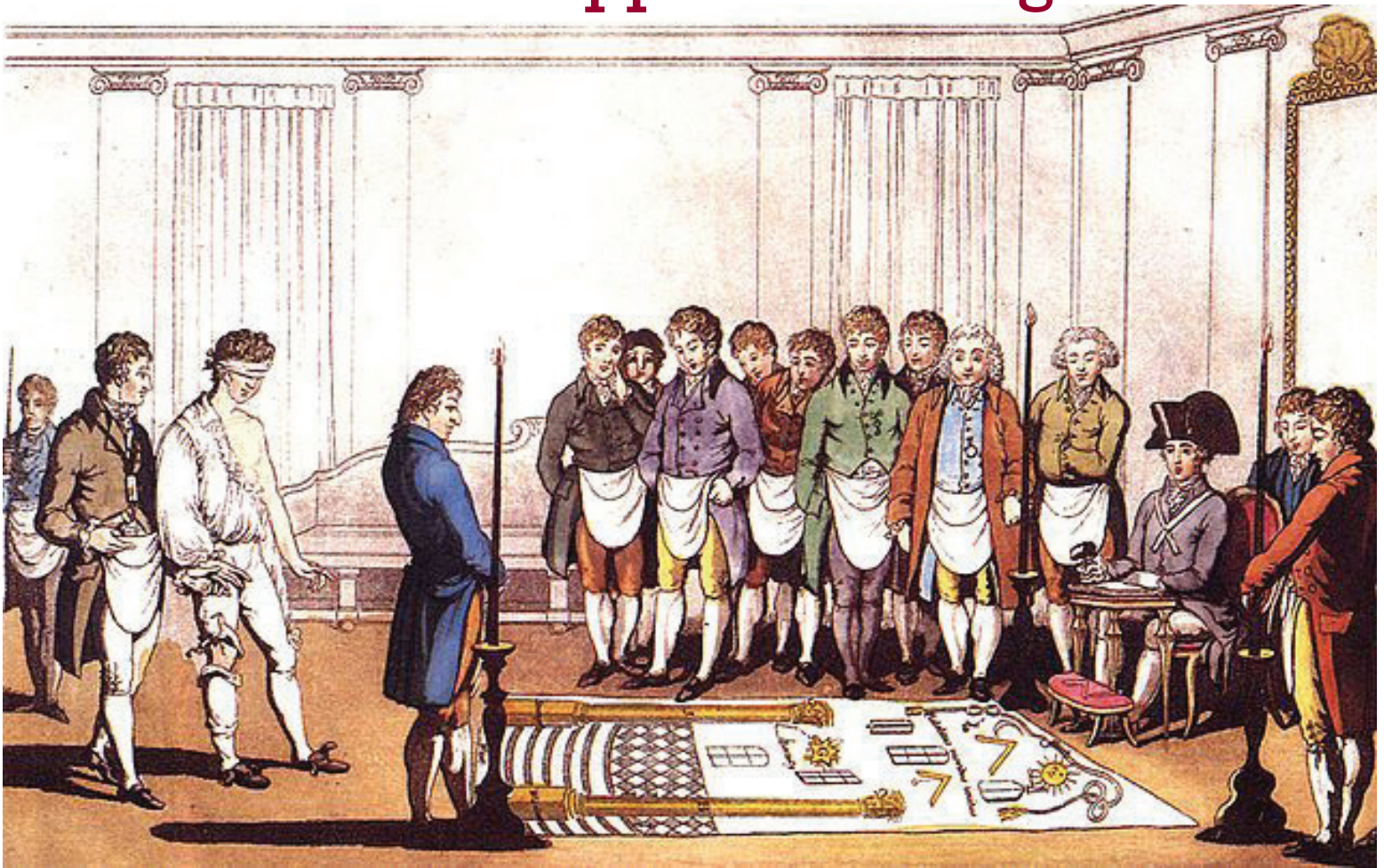
Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin  
Lodge No. 45 F.A.M

# bulletin

Volume XCVIII • Number 4  
April 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)

## *April Special Communication* **Entered Apprentice Degree**



**APRIL STATED COMMUNICATION CALLED OFF!** To allow our Jewish Brethren to observe their 6th night of Passover, our W.M. has cancelled the April 11th meeting. **INSTEAD – On Sunday, April 16th**, we will ALL celebrate a SPECIAL COMMUNICATION as we confer the **ENTERED APPRENTICE DEGREE**. The Degree will begin at 1:30 pm at Takoma Masonic Center. Please revise your calendar, **reserve this date** and plan to join your Brethren as they guide our candidate(s) on the first step in Masonry. As you will read in our Worshipful Masters' "Light from the East" Column as our PM Jerry Keilson describes in his article about his experiences "Traveling". The Entered Apprentice degree is a candidate's first experience with the ceremonies of the fraternity and serves as an introduction to Masonry. Please plan on joining us. We will not be serving a meal prior to the degree, however Brethren will be invited to join us across the street at Bus Boys and Poets afterwards on their own accounts. Please RSVP to the eVite when it comes out or to the Secretary.

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](mailto:wm@sgbf45.org)  
Robert Greenwald, *Senior Warden*  
Jerry Keilsohn, *Junior Warden*

**2B1**  **ASK1**

## Light From the East

WM Allen Levy 2023



For those Brothers that were able to attend our March Stated Communication, I hope I was able to impart the intent of the discussion “Masonry Outside of the Lodge”. During the talk, you may have noticed me referring to documents that I was holding. In preparation for the meeting, I had done some research into the topic and found some very interesting articles. One of the articles was titled “How Does Freemasonry Make Good Men Better?” from the MasonicFind website. I really liked how the article was organized and how it listed topics like The Three Core Tenets and The Four Cardinal Virtues of Freemasonry. It had several points about how we can apply these and other teachings of Freemasonry in our everyday lives.

The other article was titled “Making Good Men, Better” from The Square Magazine, and what I found interesting about this article, as it applied to my topic, was its reference to a questionnaire in which brethren gave their opinion on what it means to be a Freemason and how these opinions can shape a

brother’s Masonic experience. I just wanted to credit these articles because there were many points that I was not able to introduce during the program and you might find it interesting to read them yourself.

Due to the Passover holiday falling on our usual second Tuesday meeting date in April, we have called off our Stated Communication for that month. But we will be having a Special Communication on April 16th at 1:30 pm so that we may confer the Entered Apprentice Degree on candidate Lee Silverman. Hopefully, you will be able to attend.

Until then, as Spring arrives, I am wishing you a Happy Passover and Easter!

<https://masonicfind.com/how-does-freemasonry-make-good-men-better>

<https://www.thesquaremagazine.com/mag/article/202005making-good-men-better/>

*Allen*

## What is a Masonic Funeral? Do You Want to be Honored by Your Brethren?

Brethren, one of the very few public duties we are asked to participate in as Mason is a Masonic funeral service. While this type of funeral service may be unfamiliar to your family and friends, it can be an incredibly meaningful and solemn way to honor your life and legacy.

You may have participated in many or you may have never attended one. Consider making this decision for your family.

When we are notified that one of our Brethren has passed to the Celestial Lodge, the first thing that happens is the Secretary reaches out to the family to try and determine if they would like a Masonic Service. Of course, some families know that the Brother would want one, but many are not familiar with the ritual.

During these services, Freemasons seek to provide comfort and solace to those mourning the death of their loved ones by honoring their memory in a dignified manner. Most typically, the Masonic Service is conducted after any Military Rites, but before the religious service. Recently, one of our Brethren who does not live in the Washington D.C. area added a note to his Grand View record. It read, “Please know that I would like to have a Masonic Funeral”. I called the Brother to ask how he was doing and if he needed any help. But he was only making sure that if his son did not contact us, we would know.

There is a lot to the ritual of the service, which is performed publicly and may be the only time that the extended family learns something meaningful about Masonry.

# Presentations by our Worshipful Master

During our March Stated Communication, WM Allen Levy presented Bro. Chuck Oshinsky with his Lodge nametag. Then Bro. Steven Dekelbaum received his Master Mason Certificate which the Grand Lodge has recently update.



*Raymond Horn, PM, Bro. Chuck Oshinsky, WM Allen Levy*



*Raymond Horn, PM, Bro. Steven Dekelbaum, WM Allen Levy*

# Traveling.

**By Jerry Keilsohn, PM**

In our ritual, we travel to go to a different job. Something fundamentally important if you were an operative mason. Especially once the building you were working on is completed.

As a speculative Mason, I view traveling as going to visit other Lodges. What is in it for me, I am occasionally asked? I am not sure I have an answer for that, but I can share some of my experiences.

We meet one night a month. That means I see many of our brethren only once a month. Going to a Lodge meeting is very different for me than going to work. One, I go, because I want to, and one because I need to. One, I am happy to see the people I will be meeting with. The other may be some of them, but definitely not all of them. One, the people are friendly and I always get a handshake, and often a hug when I arrive. None of that happens at work. One, there is almost always an opportunity to sit and have a meal with people that come from a totally different place. This is a good thing. I meet brethren I would have never met before, and get to hear and share life's, successes, trials, and tribulations with them. All in an environment where everybody in the room has trust and respect for all of the other brethren in the room. Again, very different from work.

Now time for a short story. About a year ago, I received an email that was forwarded from one of our brethren that had been forwarded to another brother. East Gate Lodge #34 was trying to pull enough cast members together to do a first-degree. I volunteered to help.

One of the wonderful things we do at SG-BF #45, is once you enter the officer's line, and by the time you have sat in every chair, including the Master's, you should have learned every part in every degree, plus all of the officer parts when opening and closing on all of the three degrees.



*Photos of Naval Lodge NO. 4, Washington, D.C.*

I was asked to be the Senior Steward for the degree. That means I would become a brother's, first contact with our rituals. This is something the candidate is always going to remember, as first impressions are important. I think more so in the first degree than in either of the other two.

We pulled it all together and made a new Mason that night. A couple of months later, I had the privilege of being the same brother's conductor for the second degree. He had to wait a little bit, but I got to be his conductor when he was raised.

In the process, I got to know the brethren of East Gate Lodge #34. They are very different, in many ways from our #45 brethren. When I attend their Lodge meetings, it is a wonderful experience. They truly understand and practice true fraternal brotherhood. I always feel welcome. Many of the brothers speak French. I do not, but somebody will always translate the joke for me so that I do not feel left out. And the food, usually with an African flair, is delicious, and often with quite a bit of wonderful spice.

In the last year, I have traveled to many other lodges. Often to help out with a degree. Knowing all the parts often ends up with me sitting in a chair for the opening and closing. On several occasions, if I had not attended, they might not have been able to open the Lodge. In

the last year or so, I have managed to sit in every chair, except the Master's, Treasurer, and Chaplain.

Most of our DC lodges follow the same opening and closing ritual. Several lodges have additional customs that go with them. For example, one lodge lights a candle on the altar as a memorial to those brethren who have ascended to the celestial lodge. It is always interesting to see how many and which books of Sacred law are on the altar. At another Lodge, all of the officers, wear Morning coats instead of the traditional tux. And always interesting, is what hat the Master wears. One of my favorites, there is a lodge that uses a dollar bill as a bookmark in the bible.

Another item I find interesting is the actual Lodge halls. I have learned to appreciate all of the various architecture used for actual Lodge halls. We have many in DC alone. From the huge one at the House of the Temple to the really tiny one in the Grand Lodge building. At one, 50 people will look like nobody showed up, while at the other, a dozen is very cozy. Attending a meeting at either is a different experience. I would be remiss if I did not mention the ornate one. That is Naval Lodge with its wonderful history and unique Egyptian motif.

Maybe the answer to why I like to travel, is that it enriches my life.

## Happy Birthday

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

Harold I. Henig.....2	Gary M. Politzer ..... 12	Jerry P. Keilsohn .....23
Donald H. Roxenberg..... 2	Edwin S. Nachlas..... 14	Alan I. Karpas ..... 24
Gary A. Dorsay..... 7	David A. Ulanow ..... 18	Peter A. Riley ..... 30
	Martin C. Flaum ..... 21	

# York Rite Dinner

by Hal Henig

On Saturday Evening, March 18, the York Rite Dinner was held at Maggiano's Little Italy Restaurant near the Friendship Heights Metro. The Dinner followed major York Rite Events that ran throughout the whole day, since early morning. During the Dinner, many awards were given out to various York Rite Members. Our Lodge member, WB Jean Paul Paul Dongmo, PHP, has been elected Grand High Priest of all the Royal Arch Masons in Washington, DC.

Attached are two photos taken last Saturday Evening at the York Rite Dinner.



*Tiler Hal Henig with MWB Robert H Starr*



*Lisa and Hal Henig*

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

1963	Allen J. Wright, MA, Gold Fidelity Medal	1990	Robert H. Starr, PGM	2014	Adam Forman
1974	Aaron S. Teitel	1994	Joseph N. Snyder	2015	Randy A. Schoch
1974	Donald M. Stein	1995	Burt Levy	2016	Leonard Rubin
1979	Michael J. Rinis	1997	Adam Forman	2017	Michael K. Greenwald, SGS
1979	Burton Penn	2001	Sheldon I. Rapoport, MA DSM, GL-E	2018	Raymond E. Horn
1981	Jules S. Tepper, PGM	2002-2003	Jeffrey Sherman	2019	Robert Greenwald
1981	Joel Shulman	2009	Jonathan M. Binstock	2020	Jerry P. Keilsohn
1983	Julien P. Hofberg	2010	David B. Torchinsky	2021	Burt Levy
1984	Edwin S. Nachlas	2011	Joshua L. Rubin	2022	Jerry P. Keilsohn
1989	Sheldon I. Rapoport, MA DSM, GL-E	2012-2013	Erik F. Milman		

*Tiler and Meet-Up Chairman Hal Henig, WM Allen Levy, SD Jeff Greenwald, Julien Hofberg, PM, and David Torchinsky, PM. The Guests were Lisa Henig, Jessica Levy, Sharon Zitomer, Stuart Zitomer, Rinnie Zitomer, and Laura Torchinsky.*



# Evening Meet-Up

## Rancho Tex Mex Restaurant

**by Hal Henig**

On Monday Evening February 27, Samuel-Gompers Benjamin Franklin Lodge had its Monthly Meet-Up at Mi Rancho Tex Mex Restaurant in Downtown Silver Spring. The Meet-Up occurred on a rainy wet, and messy evening, but the Brethren and guests were able to eat inside the restaurant where it was warm and dry.

Eleven Brethren and guests participated in this social and enjoyed each other's company and some very good Mexican Food. The restaurant owner and the staff provided the Brethren and guests with friendly and warm hospitality. Mi Rancho Restaurant is a very friendly restaurant.

Attending Brethren were Tiler and Meet-Up Chairman

Hal Henig, WM Allen Levy, SD Jeff Greenwald, Julien Hofberg, PM, and David Torchinsky, PM. The Guests were Lisa Henig, Jessica Levy, Sharon Zitomer, Stuart Zitomer, Rinnie Zitomer, and Laura Torchinsky. More guests attended this Meet-Up Event than the Brethren from Gompers Franklin.

Attached, you will find a photo of the Five Brethren and guests enjoying the fellowship and a chance to get out of the house at Mi Rancho Restaurant, despite the poor weather outside. We did not have a Meet-Up Scheduled for March. I wish everyone a Happy Pesach and a Happy Easter. The April Meet-Up will be on our usual fourth Monday.



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

By Joshua L. Rubin, PM, Lodge Historian

April 2023: The Reckoning

This month's "From the Archives" is on a significantly heavier topic than past editions of this column. Although our lodge has members of color—and has had officers and masters of color in the past—for a very long time, this lodge was overwhelmingly white. That by itself isn't surprising, given the fact that African-Americans were banned from joining "mainstream" lodges for most of the 19th and 20th centuries in the United States. It wasn't until the Grand Lodge of

Connecticut officially recognized its Prince Hall Grand Lodge counterpart in 1989 that the process of racial reconciliation within the lodge hall even began.

Today, we still fall short of the ideal of brotherly love and esteem, with only 31 Prince Hall Grand Lodges being recognized in the United States by the Grand Lodge of DC. Our Grand Lodge's policy of recognition of these 31 is predicated by the "mainstream" grand lodge in each jurisdiction first. This policy has never particularly sat well with me. If the other 20 Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodges in the United States have legitimate Masonic issues, I might be able to understand it, but to the best of my knowledge, the only reason the Grand Lodge of DC has refused to recognize these Grand Lodges is that the white Grand Lodges in their states haven't recognized them. Is this a sufficient reason?

How do we, as Masons in 2023, reconcile with our overtly racist past and heal the wounds our Grand Lodge structure continues to perpetuate? I think our Grand Lodge has done a fantastic job of incorporating non-white members into its ranks, but is this the case across the country? The fact that we still have 20 Grand Lodges that do not recognize their Prince Hall counterparts tells us that, no, this is not a common enough practice yet. Our Grand Lodge has the ability to buck tradition and recognize the remaining 20 Prince Hall Grand Lodges unilaterally, though such a move would undoubtedly create a kerfuffle amongst the rest of "mainstream" Freemasonry in the United States. But that's politics that go beyond what I can do with my little column taking a look at our lodge's history.

I would like to take a moment and return to our lodge to finish this column; specifically, I want to return to April 22, 1947. On this night, after the regular lodge meeting (back when we still met on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month), our lodge hosted an "Amateur Nite." Most of the acts from that evening are lost to history—at least the history that our lodge currently has access to. However, five acts are immortalized with photographs in the lodge's May 1947 Bulletin, including the one that prompted me to write this column: two brethren put on a sketch in blackface in the minstrel fashion in the style of "mammies." The caption reads the two brethren put on "a clever sketch" for this talent show. For those unaware, "mammy" characters were typically dim-witted, large-bosomed, and full of love for the white children they were hired (or enslaved) to care for. Perhaps the best-known mammy in the American zeitgeist is the character from 1938's *Gone with the Wind*, appropriately named Mammy, though the now-defunct Aunt Jemima pancake mascot also fits the stereotype. For two white men to dress up as mammies in 1947 would not have caused anyone to bat an eye. In 2023, such an act would be unimaginable—to the point where I am not even going to include the photograph in this bulletin to accompany the article. (Any brother wishing "proof" can have the bulletin page sent to them via email; request a copy at [jrubin@srgb45.org](mailto:jrubin@srgb45.org).)

I would hope that in 2023, this lodge would decry such a performance from our now-distant past. But reconciliation requires recognition: we can't make progress as an organization or a society without first acknowledging the structural racism in our own past. It is my hope that we will one day be able to meet on the level with all regular Freemasons around the United States, regardless of the color of their skin or the history of their Grand Lodge's charter.



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Junior Warden ..... Aaron Kamerer, 202-510-5181  
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Chaplain ..... Burt S. Levy, PM, 202 409-4449  
Master-of-Ceremonies ..... Robert J. Greenwald, PM, 703-624-9085  
Senior Deacon ..... Jeffrey R. Greenwald, 301-869-1915  
Junior Deacon ..... Ryan 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  
Historian ..... Joshua L. Rubin, 240-277-5355  
Tiler ..... Hal Henig, 301-681-3873  
Immediate PM ..... Jerry 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 Association ..... Burt Levy, PM

## 2023 COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

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Ambassador to Amicable-St. John's Lodge #25 ..... Jonathan Binstock, PM  
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David B. Torchinsky, PM, 301-933-1955  
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Business Manager ..... Open  
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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 Master ..... Charles Oshinsky  
For the Senior Warden ..... Ryan Simon  
For the Junior Warden ..... Steven Dekelbaum

Samuel Gompers-Benjamin Franklin Lodge No. 45 F.A.A.M.  
 Secretary  
 6109 Lone Oak Drive  
 Bethesda, MD 20817




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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](http://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
April	16	Special Communication, 1:30 pm, EA Degree	Masons
	23	Meet-up, The National Air & Space Museum 1 pm	Masons and prospective Masons

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