

THE MAGNOLIA TROWEL

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF SCOTTISH RITE BODIES OF THE
ORIENT OF MISSISSIPPI



Vol 2, Issue 1

Feb/Mar/Apr

COMMANDER'S QUOTE



"A kind word, an attentive ear, or just being present, can change a life."

The Orient of Mississippi newsletter is published for the members, family and friends of the Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Orient of Mississippi, and is available electronically to all current Scottish Rite Freemasons in Mississippi's Valleys. The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the Orient of Mississippi or its officers. The official registration and financial information of the organization may be obtained from the Mississippi Secretary of State's office by calling 1-888-236-6167. Registration by the Secretary of State does not imply endorsement.

2025 Lodge of Perfection Meetings

Clarksdale, 1st Tuesday of each month

Mar 4, Apr 1, May 6, Jun 3, Jul 1, Aug 5, Sep 2,
Oct 7, Nov 4

Corinth, 2nd Thursday of each month

Jan 9, Feb 13, Mar 13*, Apr 10, May 8, Jun 12,
Jul 10, Aug 14, Sep 11, Oct 9, Nov 13, Dec 11

Gulfport, 3rd Friday of each month

Jan 17, Feb 21, Mar 21, Apr 18, May 16, Jun 20,
Jul 18, Aug 15, Sep 19, Oct 17, Nov 21, Dec 18

Hattiesburg, 1st Friday of each month

Jan 3, Feb 7, Mar 7, Apr 4, May 2, Jun 6,
Jul 4*, Aug 1, Sep 5, Oct 3, Nov 7, Dec 5

Jackson, 1st Tuesday of each month

Jan 7, Feb 4, Mar 4, Apr 1, May 6, Jun 3,
Jul 1, Aug 5, Sep 2, Oct 7, Nov 4, Dec 2

Meridian, 1st Thursday of each month

Jan 2, Feb 6, Mar 6, Apr 3, May 1, Jun 5,
Jul 3, Aug 7, Sep 4, Oct 2, Nov 6, Dec 4

For more information,
contact the General Secretary in your Valley

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Larry Robinson, 32° KCCH (Hattiesburg).....(601) 603-0139
Bill Sellers, 33° IGH (Jackson).....(769) 230-5760
W.R. "Bill" Fortenberry, 32° (Meridian).....(601) 616-5964

THE MAGNOLIA TROWEL OF MISSISSISSIPPI

A MESSAGE FROM

Ill. Billy W. Sloan, 33° SGIG



BUILDING A ENDURING LEGACY

Brethren,

Great news! As I write this, our Endowed Scholarship fund will be fully funded at the minimum of \$50K by the end of Grand Lodge thanks to the generosity of one of our 33° members in Jackson. This is just the beginning, and you can still donate to strengthen our Scholarship for children and grandchildren of Mississippi Scottish Rite Masons. If we have no applicants in any given year that meet this criterion, then it will be opened to Mississippi DeMolay and Mississippi Rainbow. Thanks for your dedication and support of our youth who are our future in all regards.

This is also the year when we elect our men to receive Honors as an Inspector General Honorary and Knight Commander Court of Honor. These men are suppose to represent the best of who are serving and working hard in the quarries of the Scottish Rite, Blue Lodge, Community and Church. We never receive

Sovereign Grand Commander

Ill. James D. Cole, 33°

S.G.I.G., Mississippi

Ill. Billy W. Sloan, 33°

Personal Representatives

Valley of Clarksdale
Ill. Joseph Lee, 33° IGH

Valley of Hattiesburg
Ill. Lane Dossett, 33° IGH

Valley of Corinth
Ill. C. Dean Thompson, 33° IGH

Valley of Jackson
Ill. Kenny Dawson, 33° IGH

Valley of Gulfport
Ill. Bruce Baker, 33° IGH

Valley of Meridian
Ill. Terry F. Lewis, 33° IGH

Editors

Ill. Ben Jones, 33° IGH

Ill. Lane Dossett, 33° IGH

For submissions or articles, please contact Ben Jones at bejonesii@bellsouth.net or call (601) 927-8479. Whenever possible, please include a high-resolution (300 dpi/PPI) photo with your submission. All submissions should be received at least 45 days before the date of publication. Submissions for the Feb-Apr 2025 newsletter must be received no later than mid March for consideration. Articles are subject to editing and if published, become the property of the Orient of Mississippi. No compensation is given for articles, photographs or other materials submitted or published.

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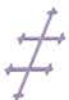
enough openings to award all that are deserving, but we try to award those who have been identified to be the most deserving. I have received several recommendations and will be selecting the nominees for the Supreme Council to consider. The recipients will be notified sometime in July. Our Honors ceremonies are scheduled for October the 11th in Tupelo again. Plan to attend and support these men while they are recognized and honored.

Our Reunions begin in April and we are in need of candidates, Ritualists, Cooks, Props teams, etc.. Have you been discussing with a brother in your Lodge about the benefits of being a Scottish Rite Mason? Have you considered taking a part in the Degrees? If you participate, have you invested the time to learn your parts and applied meaning to them while performing the work?

I am reminded of a sermon that I recently heard in church. God truly loves us and when he decided to offer a way for eternal life, he selected the best gift he could give us, his own son. Can you imagine offering your son for the benefit of others? In all things that are worthy of pursuing, shouldn't we try to give our best? Taking part in our Valley's functions, reunions, meetings, and assisting in meeting goals should not be only our desire, but we should apply our knowledge and skills to provide the best of ourselves to make it the best it can possibly be.

If you have a part, learn it. If you do other things, do them to the best of your ability with pride. Commit to be there and support your brethren. They are counting on you! YOU are part of the team (or you should be) and YOU matter. Give your best in whatever talents you have to offer and we will be better in all of our goals.

I look forward to seeing you at our reunions and I hope you enjoy them as I do. I do look forward to them both in the spring and fall.



Ill. Billy W. Sloan, 33°

Sovereign Grand Inspector General
in the Orient of Mississippi



\$50,000.00
\$49,742.99

**WE ARE
ALMOST
THERE!!!**

JOIN US IN REACHING OUR
GOAL OF \$50,000!

**DONATE
TODAY!**

THE MAGNOLIA TROWEL OF MISSISSISSIPPI



ORIENT OF MISSISSISSIPPI ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

HELP US RAISE

\$50,000

Benefits Our Own, Forever!

Goes to student with familial tie to
SR Mason in Mississippi



Can go to Rainbow/DeMolay Youth



CREATES \$1,000 ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP

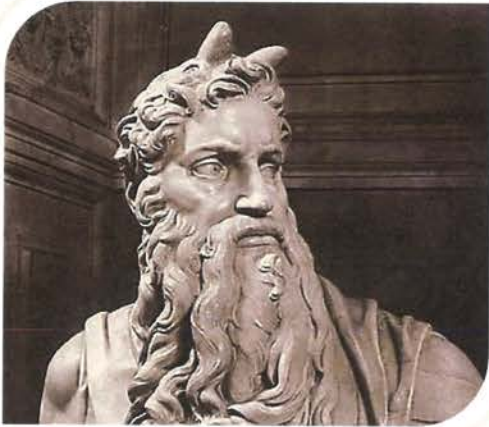
By creating this \$50,000 Endowed Scholarship, we will be ensuring that our children and grandchildren of Masonic families will receive these funds for higher education purposes in perpetuity.

**ALL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE
TAX-DEDUCTIBLE**

\$1,000 Scholarship in the 1st year

\$1,800 in each year after the 1st

THE MAGNOLIA TROWEL OF MISSISSISSIPPI



In 1505, Pope Julius II commissioned Michelangelo to sculpt Moses out of stone. This statue now sits prominently in the church of San Pietro in Rome. It may come as a surprise to some that Michelangelo depicted Moses as prominently having horns.

This was not, however, unique to Michelangelo. During the renaissance period, numerous others also painted Moses as being horned, like the image below.

These depictions became so popular and universal that the horned figure was utilized as an easy way to know that it was in fact Moses that was being depicted. If you were not unaware of this, you may wonder why this famous biblical figure was depicted in this "devilish" way.

It begins with the Bible and a mistranslation. In the Book of Exodus, Moses receives the law after seeing God's glory. The God of Israel states that Moses could not see his face and live. Rather Moses is told to stand in the cleft of a rock. As God passes by, Moses sees his back, not his face. When Moses descends from Sinai with the two tablets of the law, he is visibly changed. The key phrase is that "Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God" (Exodus 34:29, ESV).

In the late fourth century, the Christian monk Jerome translated the Old Testament from Hebrew and the New Testament from Greek into Latin. His translation became known as the Vulgate. In the original Hebrew, the word employed to connote this change in Moses's appearance is *qeren* (קֶרֶן) In other books of the Hebrew Bible, such as Habakkuk 3:4, *qeren* indicates



Giovanni Lanfranco (Italian, 1582 - 1647)
Moses and the Messengers from Canaan,
1621-1624

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“rays,” such as “rays of light.” Jerome translates the phrase as *cornuta esset facies*, literally “(his) face was horned.”

The Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Hebrew text from the third century BCE, does not use a similar word, instead using *dedoxastai* to imply that Moses’s face was “glorified.”

Jerome’s translation became the most popular version of the Bible in the Christian West for many years. The word choice in Exodus moved from the metaphorical to the literal in the medieval period.

Freemasonry attempts to teach its members through symbolism. Have you ever wondered if you are on the right path, or if, perhaps, you have translated something incorrectly?

Thanks to the Scottish Rite, we have wealth of information and resources that are available, more now than ever. The Scottish Rite Master Craftsman Online College & Leadership Academy is unparalleled with the wealth of resources in understanding Masonic philosophies and lessons. Soon, even more classes will be available, including a course on the Porch and Middle Chamber book.

When we approach Masonry, we can approach it from two directions: eisegesis or exegesis. Exegesis is a method used to interpret something in which the meaning of the text is drawn out from within the text itself. This method of interpretation involves analyzing the historical, cultural, linguistic, and literary context of the source to understand what the original author intended to communicate. Exegesis aims to uncover the author’s intended message by considering the original audience, as well as the cultural nuances of that historical period. The purpose of exegesis is to avoid personal biases and preconceived notions, focusing instead on an objective interpretation

Eisegesis, on the other hand, is more subjective in nature. This method involves reading one’s own beliefs, ideas, or interpretations into a text, rather than allowing the text to speak for itself. When using eisegesis as our method, we approach the material with preconceived notions and agendas, projecting our own perspectives onto the text. The danger of this method of interpretation is that it leads us to distort the original meaning of the text to fit our personal beliefs or desires.

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We see these two views in Freemasonry, as many come to the craft and approach it for the purpose of confirming their preconceived ideas. They do not seek to improve themselves, learn or adapt to corrections. As a result, some men stand out and appear to have been painting odd looking pictures on the canvas that is life.

I am reminded by this that we should all remember to keep an open mind as we continue chiseling away at our ashlar, including standing back at times and considering whether what we are working on is indeed the right thing.

III. Lane Dossett, 33°

Personal Representative, Valley of Hattiesburg



The Supreme Council's Master Craftsman College has a new, free course for candidates and newly-made Prince of the Royal Secret. "The Ivory Key" is a short course that will help initiates get the most out of their Scottish Rite Reunion experience. Plus, it is a great refresher course for all. Enroll at mastercraftsmancollege.org

Calling All Brothers! Share Your Voice in Your Newsletter!

Brethren, the strength of our fraternity lies in the shared wisdom, insights, and experiences of each Mason. This newsletter is more than just an update; it's a reflection of our collective journey, a tapestry woven with the contributions of brothers from all walks of Masonic life. And now, we're inviting *you* to add your voice.

You don't have to hold a specific title or be part of the line to contribute. Whether you've been contemplating profound Masonic truths, delving into scholarly research, or have news to share with the brethren, this newsletter is your platform. Your unique perspective could inspire, educate, or inform your fellow Masons, enriching the shared knowledge of our craft.

Consider this your open invitation. If you have something to say from a masonic perspective—perhaps insights into your masonic ruminations, a thought-provoking reflection, a historical insight, or updates from your lodge or Masonic community — we want to hear from you. I encourage any and all brothers to send their ideas to: bejonesii@bellsouth.net or lanedossett@gmail.com



THE MAGNOLIA TROWEL OF MISSISSISSIPPI

EVENT CALENDAR

Fri Dec 20 - Valley of Gulfport Stated
Sat Dec 21 - St. Leonard RC
Wed Dec 25 - Christmas Day

Fri Dec 27 - Feast of St. John
Tue Dec 31 - New Year's Eve

Wed Jan 1 - New Year's Day
Thu Jan 2 - Valley of Meridian Stated
Fri Jan 3 - Valley of Hattiesburg Stated
Sat Jan 4 - Valley of Gulfport Breakfast
Tue Jan 7 - Valley of Jackson Stated

Thu Jan 9 - Valley of Corinth Stated
Fri Jan 17 - Valley of Gulfport Stated
Mon Jan 20 - MLK/REL Day
Wed Jan 22 - Feast of Kadosh

Sat Feb 1 - Valley of Gulfport Breakfast
Tue Feb 4 - Valley of Jackson Stated
Thu Feb 6 - Valley of Meridian Stated
Fri Feb 7 - Valley of Hattiesburg Stated

Thu Feb 13 - Valley of Corinth Stated
Mon Feb 17 - Presidents Day
Fri Feb 21 - Valley of Gulfport Stated

Sat Mar 1 - Valley of Gulfport Breakfast
Tue Mar 4 - Valley of Jackson Stated
Tue Mar 4 - Valley of Clarksdale Stated
Thu Mar 6 - Valley of Meridian Stated
Fri Mar 7 - Valley of Hattiesburg Stated

Sun Mar 9 - Daylight Savings Begins
Thu Mar 13* - Valley of Corinth Stated
Thu/Fri/Sat Mar 13-15 - Miss. Grand Lodge
Annual Communication
Fri Mar 21 - Valley of Gulfport Stated

Tue Apr 1 - Valley of Jackson Stated
Tue Apr 1 - Valley of Clarksdale Stated
Thu Apr 3 - Valley of Meridian Stated
Fri Apr 4 - Valley of Hattiesburg Stated
Sat Apr 5 - Gulfport Spring Reunion
Thu Apr 10 - Valley of Corinth Stated
Sat Apr 12 - Passover Begins

Sun Apr 13 - Palm Sunday
Thu Apr 17 - Maundy Thursday
Fri Apr 18 - Valley of Gulfport Stated
Sat Apr 19 - Meridian Spring Reunion
Fri/Sat Apr 25-26 - Corinth Spring Reunion
Mon Apr 28 - Confederate Memorial Day

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE
2025 BIENNIAL SESSION
AUGUST 17-19, 2025 • WASHINGTON, D.C.
ONLINE REGISTRATION OPENS MAY 1.

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VALLEY OF CLARKSDALE

VALLEY OF CORINTH



Hon. J.O. Roberts 32° KCCH received his 50 year cap and certificate recently for his years of service to the Corinth Scottish Rite.

At the February meeting of the Knights of Saint Andrew, VM Tyler Swinney updated the members on the charitable efforts of the group. The KSA contributed \$500 to the Salvation Army Angel Tree in Tupelo for Christmas 2024.

VM Swinney presented Mr. Jason Kirkland of Camp Rising Sun a \$750 donation from the Knights of Saint Andrew. The group also held a fundraiser by selling hamburger plates and hand-made wooden bowls, made by KSA Brother Doug Green. Camp Rising Sun provides summer camp for children with cancer. And relies wholly on donations to serve the children.

VALLEY OF GULFPORT

The Valley of Gulfport offers several monthly activities for members in addition to its stated meetings. First, a great homemade breakfast and coffee on the first Saturday of each month at 9:00 AM. III. John McKelvy leads a Master Craftsman study group twice per month on the first Tuesday and third Wednesday every month at 6:30pm. Open to all Masters of the Royal Secret, Brother McKelvy examines one degree per month in greater depth. These events offer great fellowship and conversation.

Finally, degree teams are preparing for the upcoming Valley reunion on the first Saturday in April. Brothers McKelvy and Kirkpatrick are working with teams as they practice the ritual. Look forward to seeing you at the Valley!

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VALLEY OF JACKSON



At the January stated meeting, Ill. Kenny Dawson 33° Personal Representative, presented Bro. Payton Acy 32° his Supreme Council certificate and key pin for completing the new Master Craftsman Online College course "The Ivory Key." Acy completed the course within sixty days of becoming a Master of the Royal Secret at the Valley's November Fall Reunion.



Bro. Dawson presided over the ceremonial installation of new officers in February. Newly-elected presiding officers of the four coordinate bodies are [L-R] Consistory, Ben Kruger KCCH; Council of Kadosh, Eddie Rhodes KCCH PGM; Chapter of Rose Croix, Phil Hobson KCCH, and Venerable Master Lamar Hamil KCCH. Pictured also are the new officers of the Lodge of Perfection: Scott Womack KCCH SW; Jerry Barlow JW 32°; Kirk Carver 32°, Tiler; Ethan Ingram 32°, Captain of the Host; and Reid Quarles KCCH, Prelate)



In March, the Valley enjoyed the obligatory Feast of Kadosh Tableau as Pope Clement V's French Inquisitor Guillaume de Paris (notably also the King's Confessor) under the "supervision" of King Philip IV's Lord Councillor Gilles I Aycelin de Montaigu, in his Papal role as Promoter of the Faith (also Archbishop of Rouen) (Darin Pannell KCCH), attempts to negotiate a confession of apostasy from Jaques Demolay (Bryan Wiley KCCH).



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VALLEY OF MERIDIAN



Ill. Bill Sloan 33° SGIG and Ill. Terry Lewis, 33° presented one of Valley of Meridian's newest Master of the Royal Secret, Bro. Chris Dean 32°, with the Ivory Key certificate and lapel pin for completion of the Master Craftsman Ivory Key course. The Valley was especially proud of his accomplishment and commitment. The Valley of Meridian also presented Brother Sloan with a gift for the Orient of Mississippi Scholarship Fund.

VALLEY OF HATTIESBURG



Congratulations Bro. Cameron Mayers on completing your rite of passage to the Master of Royal Secret.

BIENNIAL HONORS WEEKEND
ORIENT OF MISSISSIPPI
October 11, 2025
Tupelo, Mississippi



THE MAGNOLIA TROWEL OF MISSISSIPPI



Ordo Ab Chao

1 Sections 1 Videos 0 Assignments 5 Handouts 1 Tests

COST: \$1.00



The Master's Steps

1 Sections 1 Videos 0 Assignments 17 Handouts 3 Tests

COST: FREE



Why 33?

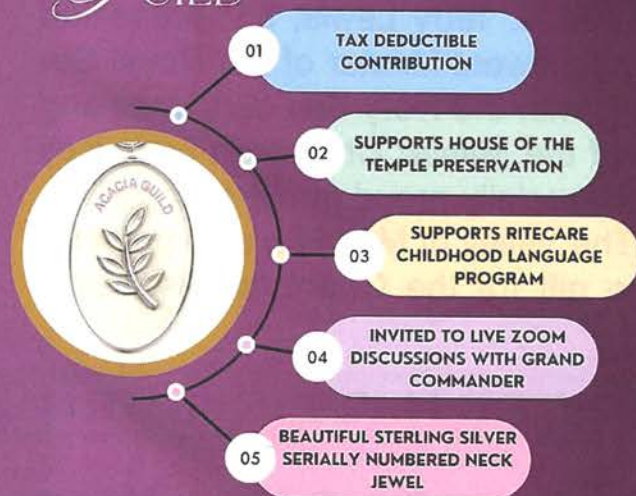
1 Sections 1 Videos 0 Assignments 4 Handouts 1 Tests

COST: \$5.00

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Billy W. Sloan
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James A. Case

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Meridian
Hattiesburg
Gulfport
Jackson
Hattiesburg
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Xerxes Z. Herrington II
Kyle L. Jordan
Dillian C. Knight
Joe W. Vawters
Frank V. Walker III
Wilson A. Windham
Stephen E. Yon
Freddie C. Zehner

Gulfport
Hattiesburg
Jackson
Corinth
Hattiesburg
Jackson
Gulfport
Gulfport
Hattiesburg

* = 1 renewal; § = 3 renewals