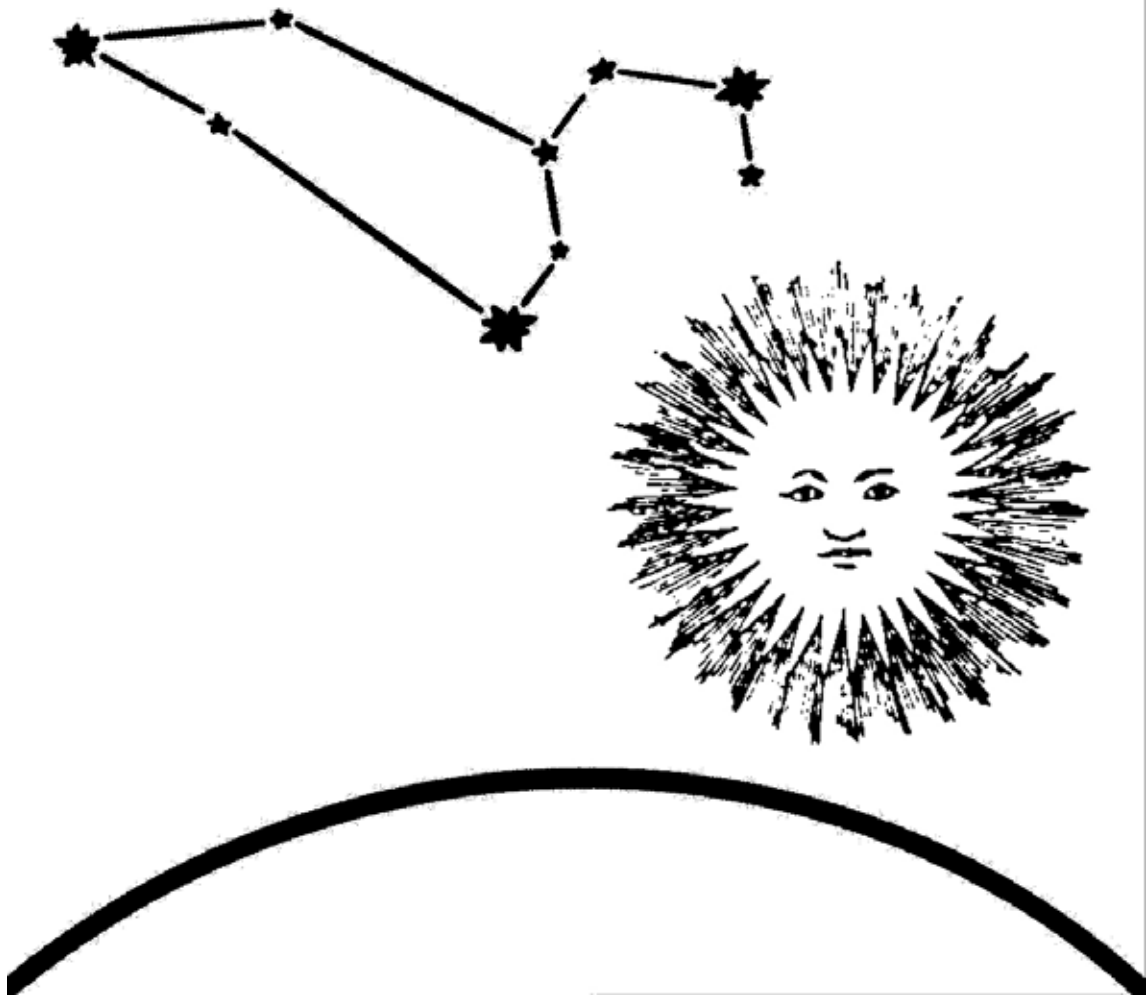


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# The Lyceum

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A publication of the Illinois  
Committee on Masonic Education

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# FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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Brothers all,

This month's issue has a lot of fun and educational material for you. Our Chairman has an excellent message and asks us to contemplate how to recapture some magic in the Lodge. We've got a terrific and in-depth examination of the Masonic Symbolism contained within the Matrix movie franchise. With the new movie right around the corner, this is the article to read if you haven't seen the films in a while. Not to mention, WB:. Darin makes some shocking correlations. It's a fun read.

If this wasn't enough, RW:. Chad Lacey gives us a stark reminder of who we are supposed to be and how we should act as Freemasons. Will you raise the "Masonic" bar? For those of you who were stumped by last month's cipher, I included all the clues and answers for you to discover. Congrats to the winner!

One thing we aspire to do in this publication is to make our readers aware of Masonic Education conferences that are happening around the United States. In this issue, we put a spotlight on three of them. We've got links and schedules for Masonic Week 2022, the Mid-West Conference of Masonic Education, and Double Eagle Con 2021. There's so much Masonic Education; you can't help but get your learning hat on!

We've printed a few other gems for this month, including a lovely book review--warning, you'll probably buy the book reviewed. With all this, I want to echo the sentiments our Chairman, Michael Overturf, has offered-- I wish you all a wonderful holiday season and also, with this, health of mind, body, and spirit.

The mountain is the way,

*R.H. Johnson*



# From the Chairman

WB Michael Overturf, Chairman of the Masonic Education Committee



Brethren,

It's hard to imagine that in less than two weeks, it will be Christmas and then New Year's Eve; it was almost 70°s for two days running and then falling back into the 30s overnight. I had to mow and mulch leaves-- nothing like picking up the Christmas decorations to mow. I hope this message finds all of you, my Brothers, in good health and happiness. From the Committee on Masonic Education, we wish you a very Happy Holidays.

Masonic Education has been and is my passion. It's has given me a more comprehensive view of how different Brothers of various religious and cultural backgrounds celebrate the holiday season. I see the beauty in their respective religions and traditions. This ability to find perspective is was one of my initial drivers to join masonry. It gave me an opportunity to search, discover, and grow. It is best described as "...we have our sandwich masons, our biker masons, our education masons, our ritualist masons, and our scotch and cigar masons." Each Brother discovers their light in either Lodge, an appendant body, or social group, and that is what's excellent about Freemasonry. We come together once or twice a month (sometimes more) to hang our worries up and open our lodges to conduct good work, whether it's being a service to our communities, our Brothers, or our Lodge.

This Diversity within Illinois Freemasonry creates an extreme challenge to those of us in the Masonic Education community. And with these challenges comes great opportunity. There are no five-step programs or quick reference sheets that appeal to everyone or fit every Lodge. Lodges travel in cycles--we have good runs and not-so-good runs.

In our romantic thoughts of our beloved Craft, we sometimes forget that we have our own problems. We forget that it's still a Fraternity of men with egos and tempers. Wise consult is sometimes received after the fact, and our best efforts are to apologize and grow. Let's light a fire for the new year and try our level best

to improve our experience, our perspectives, and our ability to temper ourselves.

My best times as a DEO were when we held DEO workshops using the intender program. Entered Apprentices got to me other Entered Apprentices, and the same goes for the Fellow Crafts and Master Masons. Some new, others well-traveled. It builds a stronger fraternal bond beyond the Lodge--sometimes they push into other districts or even other jurisdictions. Take time and look beyond the walls of the Lodge. Host a potluck before Lodge, let the wives and kids hang out. Host a Lodge cookout or have everyone meet at a local restaurant prior to Lodge, step out and try something new.



## Discussion Questions

What is something that we used to do as a Lodge that we have stopped doing?

What do some of our other lodges in the district do that is working for them?



## ASSISTING ILLINOIS MASTER MASONS, THEIR SPOUSES, WIDOWS AND ORPHANS



## INFORMATION, ADVOCACY, AND REFERRAL ASSISTANCE

How it works? When an application is made, an IMOS caseworker conducts a site visit (or, in some situations, a phone assessment) to collect functional, environmental, psychosocial, financial, employment, housing, educational and health information as appropriate in order to complete a comprehensive financial and other needs assessment (all with absolute confidentiality). The purpose of a site visit is to better understand a person's individual situation to determine if financial assistance can be provided. A review of all supporting financial documentation of a person's assets, income, and expenses is completed.

Additionally, IMOS staff listens and identifies the specific needs of the individual and assists in the process of providing resource and referral assistance in connecting applicants to state, federal, and local benefit programs that they may qualify for. Per our compliance policy, applicants are expected to take advantage and apply for all areas of assistance in which they are eligible. IMOS staff can also advocate on the members' behalf; such as negotiating a lower bill with a hospital, dental clinic, or medical facility! IMOS staff expand and build their education and knowledge continuously by attending conferences/workshops/webinars, and visiting local departments that provide these types of resources (to remain current on changing trends and services offered). We care for you!!!

## Featured Article

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# Masonic Symbolism in the Matrix Films

by WB: Darin A. Lahners, AEO Eastern Area

*\*Editors Note: When this article was originally written, there were only inklings of a new instalment of The Matrix film series on the horizon. On a personal note, I'm excited to see what happens in that story, and of course--I can't wait to see the symbolism and philosophy it uses. It is in this vein of thought that we publish here for the first time anywhere, the "uncut" version of WB: Darin A. Lahners article on the Matrix films. SPOILERS AHEAD!*

R. H. Johnson

The 1999 movie, The Matrix, directed by the Wachowski siblings, is one of the most influential movies of the past 20 years. It popularized the 'Bullet Time effect,' which is now a mainstay in almost every Hollywood blockbuster. It is also one of the deepest when it comes to esoteric symbols, philosophical ideas, and religious constructs. There is also a Masonic Allegory at play. If you have never seen The Matrix, this is your warning that there are Spoilers Ahead.

The film centers on the character of Thomas Anderson, aka as Neo, which is the alias that he uses for his illicit hacker activities. Neo is a shortened version of the word: Neophyte. A neophyte is a new member of a fraternity, a new convert to a religion, or a novice in a religious order. The film begins with the characters of Trinity and Cypher discussing, watching him, and being paranoid about the telephone line being tapped. The screen morphs into the binary code of 1s and 0s. We next see Trinity in a room at a run-down hotel, named "Heart O' The City," in room "303". Masonically, this alludes to the 33 degrees of Scottish Rite Masonry.

The number 33 has a special meaning. As Manly  
6

P Hall states in **The Secret Teachings of All Ages**, "Alchemy is a threefold art, its mystery well symbolized by a triangle. Its symbol is 3 times 3--three elements or processes in three worlds or spheres. The 3 times 3 is part of the mystery of the 33rd degree of Freemasonry, for 33 is 3 times 3, which is 9, the number of esoteric man and the number of emanations from the root of the Divine Tree."

The symbol of the Scottish Rite is the double-headed eagle, with one head looking left and the other looking right. The Valley of Reading's website eloquently defines its meaning: "Generally, the symbolic meaning of this symbol in the Scottish Rite is that of duality contained



in or resolving itself in unity. Among other things, it reminds us that as a man, we are composed of both body and spirit, that he is both temporary and eternal, that both good and evil exist in the world, and that we must perpetually espouse good while opposing evil. It also reminds us that knowledge comes both from study and insight; and that our obligations are both to ourselves and to others; that both faith and reason are necessary." It has also been associated with the idea of the mythical phoenix. The phoenix is a bird in Greek mythology which cyclically regenerated or reborn. The idea of the phoenix will make sense at the end of the movie.

Trinity, whose name literally evokes the number 3, could be thought of being a senior member of the order to which Neo is on the threshold of joining, which masonically would represent as a Master Mason in the Blue Lodge. Trinity escapes from room 303 after being chased across rooftops by the sinister Agents, led by Agent Smith.

The next scene reveals to the viewer--Neo. Neo has a belief that something is wrong with the world and is led to believe that there is something called "The Matrix" from his online encounters. It is fitting that Neo's real name is Thomas, as the apostle Thomas doubted the news of Christ's resurrection until he was physically able to touch the wounds of Jesus, and so Neo doubts the nature of reality. He is told via a message that appears on his computer to follow the white rabbit and is alarmed by a knock on the door of his apartment, fittingly numbered 101. As each candidate's Masonic journey begins in the first degree with a knock on the door of the preparation room, Neo's journey begins with a knock on his apartment's door. Neo opens the door to see a client of his who is there to pick up some information that Neo apparently hacked for him. He gives the client the information, who is accompanied by his girlfriend and some others. The client's girlfriend mentions to her boyfriend about bringing Neo out with them that evening. Neo is about ready to decline the invitation until he notices the white rabbit, which appears in the form of a tattoo on his client's girlfriend.

He is led to a club by the girlfriend, who introduces him to Trinity. Trinity explains that a man named Morpheus can explain everything to him. Like the candidate is received in due form by the Senior Warden in the degrees of Freemasonry, Trinity is the one receiving Neo into the world that he is about to join. Morpheus contacts Neo at his office as the agents close in on him, but Neo is unable to make the Kierkegaardian leap of faith to escape the agents and reach Morpheus. He is subsequently detained by the agents, who implant a tracking device in him. Morpheus contacts Neo again and instructs him to meet him. Neo is picked up in an automobile by Trinity and two other members of Morpheus's crew, and the tracking device is removed by his associates.

He is brought to Morpheus, who is at the Lafayette Hotel, which is a building with the checkered black and white flooring of a Masonic Lodge. We can only assume that the Hotel is named after the Marquis de Lafayette. As for his Masonic membership, Lafayette said that he was raised in France before coming to America. It is a possibility that he was raised at a military lodge in Morristown, N.J., or in 1777 at Valley Forge, as some others have said. Lafayette also became a Royal Arch Mason, joining Jerusalem Chapter No. 8 in New York City on September 12, 1824. He then joined the Knights Templar in Morton Commandery No. 4 and in Columbian Command-

ery No. 1, both of New York City. In the Scottish Rite, he received the degrees in the Cerneau Supreme Council of N.Y. and was made a 33rd degree Mason and Honorary Grand Commander of that body.

Morpheus sits in a stiff armchair, and Neo is seated across from him. Morpheus tells Neo that explaining the Matrix is impossible and that Neo will need to see it for himself. He is given a choice of taking a red pill and learning about the Matrix or taking a blue pill which will lead him back to his normal life. Neo takes the red pill, and his journey to the unknown begins.



Neo in this scene is allegorically undergoing a Masonic degree. He is in darkness (ignorance) of the nature of the Matrix. He seeks

knowledge (light) of what it is. Morpheus, who is named after the Greek God of Dreams, offers Neo this knowledge but only of his own free will and accord by taking the red pill. If Neo refuses, he would be given the blue pill, which serves as the cable-tow by which Neo would be pulled from the Lodge Room (represented by the checkerboard floor of the building) over which Morpheus presides as Worshipful Master in his chair.

After taking the red pill, Neo is brought to another room and hooked up to electrodes. He begins to see the façade of the fake reality of the Matrix collapse. He awakes in a pod attached to wires and pulls a hose out of his throat. He looks around and sees thousands of other people in similar pods. A giant flying robotic crab-like apparatus comes and grabs Neo by the throat with one arm. Another arm unplugs Neo's interface with the Matrix from the back of his head, and he is flushed down a tube. He is picked up by a giant metal claw and brought into a ship.

After his rescue and his recuperation, Neo is literally brought to light by Morpheus. Morpheus explains that Neo is on a hover ship called the Nebuchadnezzar and that the actual year is around 2199 instead of 1999. He introduces Neo to the crew of the ship, and he and Neo enter a computer program called a 'Construct,' in which Morpheus explains the nature of reality and the Matrix.

It is at this point that Neo is brought to light. He was in darkness (ignorance) of the nature of the Matrix, but Morpheus serving as the de facto Worshipful

Master brings him to light (knowledge) by giving him the nature of reality and the Matrix. Also, interestingly, the ship that Morpheus pilots is named after King Nebuchadnezzar, who destroyed King Solomon's Temple.

Neo is, unfortunately, unable to handle the nature of reality and gets violently ill. Morpheus explains that it was risky for him to rescue Neo because of his age. He explains that it is difficult for the brain to adjust once it has been in the Matrix for a long period of time. He explains that he believes that Neo is "the One" who is prophesized to save humanity. Neo then gets to have a discussion with Tank, who teaches Neo about Zion, which is the last human settlement buried deep underground. Zion refers to a hill in Jerusalem which was located south of Mount Moriah but later became a metonym for King Solomon's Temple. Esoterically, Zion is the point in the holy of holies located in King Solomon's Temple from which reality emerges.

Neo then sits down in a chair and plugs into the mainframe construct. At this point, Tank goes through the process of uploading certain knowledge directly into Neo's brain. The first thing he uploads into Neo is a ju-jitsu program, to which Neo remarks: "I know Kung-Fu." He then faces off against Morpheus in the construct. Morpheus defeats him because Neo does not understand that he can manipulate the simulation. He is not bound by any real physics. He can run faster, jump further, etc. Tank then loads up a program where Neo is forced to jump from the roof of one skyscraper to another. Once again, Neo's ability to not understand that he is not in a real place causes him to fail. He falls, and when he lands, he notices blood coming from his nose. He then learns that the mind cannot exist without the body, so if the mind dies in the Matrix, then you die in the real world. In Masonic terms, Neo is an entered apprentice. Like the candidate who is taught about what constitutes a lodge in his explanatory degree, Neo is taught about what constitutes the Matrix. However, he is still just taking his first steps in this new world of the real as well as understanding the new knowledge of the Matrix as being a facsimile of what was real.

Trinity then brings Neo some dinner, and he overhears them speaking about a person called the Oracle. Neo then re-enters the construct, and he is introduced to what Agents are. He learns the hard way that a sexy woman in a red dress could really be

an agent in disguise. Morpheus explains that everyone that has stood and fought an agent has perished, but because he is the one, Neo will be different. Neo is different because the agents are still part of the Matrix and bound by the rules of the system, but he is not bound by the same rules. Once again, whereas the entered apprentice is taught lessons about how a Mason should conduct his life, Neo is taught how to conduct his behavior while inside the Matrix.

The lesson is interrupted by a machine called a sentinel that hunts down humans in the service tunnels they use to hide in and plug into the Matrix from. The Sentinel is handled by having the ship emit an Electro-Magnetic Pulse, which fries the electronics of the Sentinel. Neo then has a philosophical discussion with Cypher about the nature of him being "the One" over some moonshine. This cuts to a scene with Cypher inside the Matrix where he is having dinner with Agent Smith. Cypher wants to be put back into the Matrix because he says: "Ignorance is Bliss." In return, he promises Agent Smith that he will deliver Morpheus to him.

Morpheus announces to the crew that Neo is ready to see the Oracle. In Greek mythology, the oracles were people (usually female) who provided wise and prophetic counsel, inspired by the Gods. Neo and the gang enter the Matrix. Cypher drops a cell phone into a trash can upon his arrival to give away his position to the agents. Neo is brought to the Oracle by Morpheus. Neo is brought into a living room with a bunch of other potential "Ones." All of them are children who are doing things like levitating building blocks or bending a spoon. The one bending the spoon reminds Neo that bending the spoon is impossible because there is not a spoon, but that the self must bend. Neo goes into the kitchen to meet the Oracle, who is an old woman baking cookies. She examines Neo and tells him that he is not the one. She explains that he has potential but that he is waiting for something.

There are two things that stand out in this scene from a Masonic point of view. The oracle references a sign above the doorway of the kitchen that has the Latin phrase: "Temet Nosce." She asks Neo if he knows what the sign means, and he turns to look at the sign. As he turns, the doorway comes into view, revealing it to be adorned with the double-headed eagle of the Scottish Rite. The sign: 'Temet Nosce' is the Latin translation of the Greek Delphic maxim: "Know Thyself." Knowing oneself is a theme that is alluded to in





Masonry but never strictly spoken about. The working tools of the Entered Apprentice are all designed to help the E.A. know himself. The lecture and the charges of the E.A. degree also serve this purpose as well, to help to direct the new brother to look inward instead of outward. Also, interestingly enough, the marble Tyler's chair outside the main entrance to the Temple Room at the Southern Jurisdiction's Scottish Rite House of the Temple in Washington, DC reads: "Know Thyself."

Once Neo and Morpheus make it back to the rest of the group, they go to make their escape from the Matrix. Neo has a case of Déjà Vu which means that something has been changed inside the Matrix. The trap that Cypher has set by leading the agents to his location is sprung. The crew finds themselves surrounded by Agents, and one of their group, "Mouse", is killed. The rest of the crew almost gets away by climbing through the walls, but Cypher intentionally sneezes to give away their location. Morpheus, still believing Neo to be the One, sacrifices himself to allow him to escape.

Cypher has somehow made it out of the Matrix and attacks Dozer and Tank with a giant lightning-like weapon. Dozer and Tank are incapacitated, and Cypher taunts the rest of the crew who are waiting to escape the Matrix. He methodically kills both Switch and Apoc. He asks Trinity about pulling the plug on Neo, stating that if Neo is truly the one, it should not matter if he unplugs him. Trinity obviously cares about Neo, and this has made Cypher jealous. Cypher is about to unplug Neo when Tank arises and surprises Cypher, killing him with the same weapon he used against him.

The next scene reveals the Agents, led by the sinister Agent Smith, torturing Morpheus. Agent Smith reveals that they attempted to make the first version of the Matrix as a perfect world for humans, but that we would not accept it. He goes on to call humanity a virus and a disease and that the machines are the cure. Neo realizes that he must go back into the Matrix in order to save Morpheus instead of killing him

to protect Zion. Trinity pulls rank on Neo and says she is going with him. Meanwhile, Smith is alone with Morpheus. He states his desire to get out of the Matrix because of how much he abhors humanity.

Trinity and Neo break into a secure building in order to steal a helicopter. After some out-of-this-world gymnastic tricks and gunplay in the building's lobby, they make it to the elevator, which they take to the roof. Trinity gets to the helicopter and downloads the program to teach her how to fly it while Neo dodges all the bullets of an agent that shows up. As an aside, this bullet dodging scene is now repeated in some form as an homage in many movies that follow it. Trinity and Neo board the helicopter and rescue Morpheus. They then make it to an exit in a subway, where Morpheus and Trinity can escape. Agent Smith shows up, and he and Neo battle. Neo defeats Smith, but Smith changes his form into another person nearby before getting killed. Smith then re-appears, and Neo runs for his life.

Neo makes it to room '303' at the 'Heart o' the City' Motel, where he is ambushed and killed by Agent Smith. In the meantime, the machines have located the Nebuchadnezzar and have sent their Sentinels to destroy it. The Sentinels are cutting into the hull of the ship, and Trinity confesses that Neo cannot be dead. She was told by the Oracle that she would fall in love with the One and that she loved Neo. With her confession, Neo resurrects from death. He now sees the Matrix in code, and he can manipulate it at will. He stops bullets in midair and dives into Agent Smith. Smith then starts to overload and explodes with a scream. The other agents flee, and Neo escapes the Matrix, allowing the crew of the Nebuchadnezzar to employ the EMP device. The movie ends with Neo issuing a warning to the machines from a phone booth. He flies up into the camera, which is placed overhead, and the movie ends.

Neo, in essence, becomes a Fellowcraft upon his second foray into the Matrix to rescue Morpheus. Fellowcraft Masons during their degree are shown a representation of the Middle Chamber of the Temple of Solomon. They are taught about the liberal arts and sciences. They are given more responsibility. This is mimicked by Neo, who, upon his second entry in the Matrix, can better manipulate his surroundings. He is still led by a true and trusty guide in the form of Trinity, but he can perform superhuman feats like dodging bullets.

The end of the movie shows Neo as taking the place of Hiram Abiff. Like Hiram, Neo is confronted by 3 agents (ruffians). Agent Smith, who plays the role of Jubelum as the head agent, kills him. Like the phoenix, however, Neo is reborn. Neo is raised from the grave by the utterance of a specific word or phrase, and he is now a Master of the Matrix. A brother who portrays Hiram Abiff in the 3rd Degree is raised as a Master Mason and given a specific word or phrase. Much like the newly raised, Neo can go on to have further adventures inside the Matrix, the new Master Mason is now able to go on to have further Masonic opportunities by joining the York Rite, Scottish Rite, Shrine, or any of the other appendant bodies. Not only does Neo seem to progress through the themes of all three Masonic degrees in The Matrix, but we can also view each movie in the Trilogy as its own Masonic degree.



The next Matrix movie, The Matrix Reloaded, is set six months after the events of the Matrix and represents the Fellowcraft

degree. Neo and Trinity are now a couple. Morpheus receives a message from the Captain of the Logos, which is another hovercraft piloted by an ex-girl-friend of Morpheus, Captain Niobe, for all ships to return to Zion. Upon reaching Zion, the crews learn that an army of Sentinels are tunneling towards Zion and will reach it within 72 hours. While the Commander of the forces of Zion, Lock, orders all ships to return to Zion, Morpheus asks that one ship, The Caduceus, be left to contact the Oracle. As this ship receives a message from the Oracle, one of its crew members, Bane, has an encounter with Agent Smith. Smith reveals that his previous encounter with Neo has severed his connection with the Matrix, and he is a rogue program. Smith then merges with Bane's avatar in the Matrix while he is using the phone line to leave the Matrix. This allows Smith to possess Bane's real body. While not directly Masonic, the names of the Hovercraft, Logos, and Caduceus relate to Masonic themes.

The ancient Greeks had two forms of Knowledge. Gnosis and Logos. Gnosis was knowledge of how to do something. For example, how to build a house, ride a horse, plant and harvest crops. In contrast, Logos was academic knowledge, such as knowledge of mathematics or logic. Logos was primarily taught

through words, whereas Gnosis was taught through practice and repetition. In spiritual terms, Gnosis is knowledge of one's connection with the divine. Socrates said: *"To know thyself is the beginning of wisdom."* Philo of Alexandria understood gnosis to be knowledge of God and his Sophia (Wisdom), but also of oneself, nature, and the great work (Magnus Opus). The Egyptian proverbs found inscribed at the Luxor Temple of Amun~Mut~Montu show they understood this as well. Some of these proverbs are as follows: *"The kingdom of heaven is within you, and whosoever shall know himself shall find it."*; *"The body is the house of God."* That is why it is said, *"Man know yourself"*; *"Your body is the temple of knowledge."* and *"True teaching is not an accumulation of knowledge; it is an awaking of consciousness which goes through successive stages."*

Logos meaning "Word," "Reason," or "Plan," was thought of in Greek Philosophy to be the divine reason which gives the cosmos form and meaning. This idea can be traced back to Heracleitus, who observed in the cosmos a reasoning power like that of man.

The Stoics defined Logos as an active spiritual and rational process that permeates all reality. Philo of Alexandria thought of Logos as the mediator between God and the Cosmos. Logos was that created the universe but that also that which allows man to comprehend God. Both Philo and Platonists believed that Logos was both intrinsic to the world and also the transcendent mind of God. John 1 1:5 identifies Logos, stating: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him, all things were made; without him, nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it."* And John 1 14:16, he equates Jesus Christ as this Logos, saying: *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."* 15 John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, *"This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'"* 16 *And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.* 17 *For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.* 18 *No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him."* Later, in John 8:12, he makes the final connection between Jesus and Logos when Christ says: *"I am the light of the world."*

*He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life.*” Gnosis then can be linked with Logos, as knowing oneself can be attributed to knowing God and thereby knowing Logos. As the brain is the seat of knowledge, it is where Gnosis resides, and therefore where your connection with God resides. Gnosis is also described as being represented as the Letter G found in between the Square and Compass, where the Divine Masculine is represented by the Compass, and the Divine Feminine is represented by the Compass.

The Caduceus is the Staff of Hermes (in Greek Mythology), Hermes Trismegistus (In Greco—Egyptian Mythology), or Mercury in Roman Philosophy. The Caduceus is represented by a short staff entwined by two serpents whose heads are facing one another. It is often depicted as being surmounted with Wings, but not always. Hermes Trismegistus (who the Egyptians gave the name Thoth) was the mythical figure that handed down the Hermetic Principles through the Egyptian Mysteries, of which Pythagoras was initiated into. The Hermetic Principles are thought to have been passed along through the various Mystery Schools into the Operative Stone Mason guilds from which Modern Freemasonry was born. The two snakes entwined on it evokes the image of the Winding Staircase, which we learn about during the Fellowcraft degree. It is represented (at least in my jurisdiction) by the Senior and Junior deacon’s staffs, as both have duties related to carrying messages within the lodge room. The Senior Warden carrying orders from the Worshipful Master in the East to the Senior Warden in the West and elsewhere around the Lodge as directed, and the Junior Deacon carrying messages from the Senior Warden in the West to the Junior Warden in the South and elsewhere around the Lodge as directed. Both Hermes and Mercury are messenger Gods, so it is appropriate for the Caduceus to be the Hovercraft that awaits the message from the Oracle.

Once the Caduceus delivers the message from the Oracle, Morpheus, Trinity, Neo, and the crew of the Nebuchadnezzar head back into the Matrix so that Neo can meet with the Oracle. He encounters the Oracle’s Bodyguard, Seraph, who fights Neo to make sure he is the One and not someone sent to kill the Oracle. Neo realizes that the Oracle is part of the Matrix and wonders how he can trust her, to which she replies that it is his decision to make. She teaches Neo how to reach the Source of the Matrix, with the help of the program known as the Keymaker, who is being imprisoned by a figure known as the Merovingian, which is a rogue program like Smith. She explains

that when programs face deletion, they often go rogue and hide in the Matrix rather than reconnect with the Source and face deletion. He also discusses the visions he has been having in his dreams about entering the door and Trinity falling. The Oracle tells Neo that he will have to make a choice and leaves. After the Oracle leaves, Neo encounters Smith and learns that Smith can replicate himself much like a computer virus can replicate itself. He learns that Smith is a rogue program. After a sequence where Neo fights an army of the Smith clones, he retreats in the face of overwhelming numbers.

Neo, Morpheus, and Trinity visit the Merovingian. The Merovingian lectures the three about Cause and Effect and refuses to let him go. His wife Persephone leads them to the Keymaker as revenge for her husband’s infidelity. Upon rescuing him, Neo learns that the Keymaker possesses the keys to various backdoors that lead to different locations within the Matrix. Morpheus, Trinity, and the Keymaker flee while Neo holds off the Merovingian’s henchmen. Neo fights the henchmen on a curved marble staircase that again evokes the Winding Staircase from the Middle Chamber lecture. Morpheus and Trinity, along with the Keymaker, are chased by the Merovingian’s enforcers, The Twins, that can dematerialize and materialize at will. After a long chase on a Highway, the twins are defeated with the help of Niobe, Trinity escapes, and Neo is able to save Morpheus and the Keymaker from one of the Agents, Agent Johnson.

Both Seraph and the Keymaker represent the Tyler. The Tyler is the officer of the Lodge who guards the inner door with a sword to prevent cowans and eavesdroppers from entering the Lodge Room and thereby learning the secrets of Freemasonry. The secrets of Freemasonry vary in each Jurisdiction but are normally the modes of recognition whereby one Freemason can know another. I also believe that the secrets are the knowledge given in the lessons of the Freemasonic degrees. Much like the Tyler guards this Knowledge, Seraph guards the knowledge that the Oracle possesses. The Keymaker, also like the Tyler is a guardian. As the Tyler controls who enters the Lodge Room, the Keymaker controls who can enter the backdoors of the various programs in the Matrix. The Merovingian refers to a dynastic line of French Kings who are tied to the Knights Templar through pseudo-historical books like “Holy Blood, Holy Grail” and fiction like “The DaVinci Code.” Persephone in Greek Mythology is the wife of Hades and

was worshipped along with her mother Demeter in the Eleusinian Mysteries. These mysteries promised its initiates passage to a blessed afterlife, much like Freemasonic philosophy teaches victory over death and the immortality of the soul.

The crews of the Nebuchadnezzar, Vigilant, and Logos help the Keymaker and Neo reach the Source. The Logos crew must destroy a power plant, and the Vigilant crew must disable a backup power station to prevent a security system from being triggered, allowing Neo to open the door to the Source. Haunted by his visions of Trinity falling, Neo asks her to stay on board the Nebuchadnezzar. The Logos completes its mission, but the Vigilant is destroyed, forcing Trinity to enter the Matrix in order to complete the Vigilant crew's mission. Agent Thompson confronts her, and they fight. As Neo and the Keymaker reach the Source, the replicated Smiths locate them and attack them. The Keymaker unlocks the door to the Source allowing Neo to enter, but he sacrifices himself in the process.



Inside the Source, Neo meets the Architect, who is in a room with thousands of monitors on the wall, all showing different activities going on within the Matrix. The Architect is the creator of the Matrix and explains that Neo is himself integrated with a program and an intentional part of the Matrix, which is now in its sixth iteration. Neo is meant to stop the Matrix's fatal system crash that naturally recurs due to the variable caused by the element of human choice inherently within it. As with the five previous Ones, Neo is again given a choice: either return to the Source to reboot the Matrix and pick survivors to repopulate the soon-to-be-destroyed Zion, as his predecessors all did. Or cause the Matrix to crash and kill everyone connected to it in the process, causing humanity's extinction when Zion is destroyed. Neo becomes aware of Trinity's situation and chooses to leave to save her instead of returning to the Source. The Architect is, of course, a representation of the Great Architect of the Universe, which represents God (according to one's belief) in Freemasonry and

the multitude of monitors on the walls represent the all-seeing eye, which Thomas Smith Webb adopted as a symbol of Freemasonry in his "Freemason's Monitor" published in 1797. Here's how Webb explains the symbol.

*"[A]nd although our thoughts, words, and actions, may be hidden from the eyes of man, yet that All-Seeing Eye, whom the Sun, Moon, and Stars obey, and under whose watchful care even comets perform their stupendous revolutions, pervades the inmost recesses of the human heart, will reward us according to our merits."*

Trinity is shot as she and Agent Thompson fall off a building. Before she hits the ground, Neo catches her, removes the bullet from her heart, and squeezes her heart back into rhythm, reviving her. They return to the real world, where Sentinels attack them. The Nebuchadnezzar is destroyed, but the crew escape. Neo displays a new ability that allows him to disable the machines right as they close in on them with his thoughts, but he falls into a coma after doing so. The crew is picked up by another ship, the Hammer. Its captain, Roland, reveals the other ships were wiped out by the machines. Someone prematurely activated an EMP device, and that only one survivor, the Smith-possessed Bane, was found.

The final movie, The Matrix Revolutions, picks up right where The Matrix Reloaded left off. The Matrix Revolutions represents the Master Mason degree, being the penultimate movie in the Trilogy. Both Bane and Neo are unconscious on the Hammer. Inside the Matrix, Neo is trapped in a subway station appropriately named Mobil (an anagram of Limbo) Avenue Station. The Station is located between the Matrix and the Machine City. There he meets a family made of programs, including a girl named Sati. Sati is marked for deletion, so her parents Rama-Kandra and Kamala, are trying to smuggle her into the Matrix. They explain to Neo that they love Sati or believe that they love her, and this is why they made a deal with the Merovingian. The father figure informs Neo that the subway train is controlled by a program known as the Trainman. The Trainman is loyal to the Merovingian and easily overpowers Neo and keeps him from boarding the subway train. Seraph contacts Morpheus and Trinity, by order of the Oracle, to inform them of Neo's capture. Seraph, Morpheus, and Trinity visit the Merovingian at Club Hel (Hades) and force him to release Neo from captivity. Neo, who is now having

visions of the Machine City, consults with the Oracle. The Oracle informs Neo that Smith's destiny is to destroy both the Matrix and Real World. She also tells him that everything that has a beginning has an end. After Neo leaves, the Oracle, Seraph, and Sati are overpowered by the army of Smiths, and in assimilating the Oracle, Smith gains her powers.

The crews of the Nebuchadnezzar and the Hammer find the Logos and restart it. Bane/Smith is interrogated and claims to have no memory of who set off the EMP. Neo requests a ship so that he can travel to the Machine City, and Niobe gives him the Logos because while she does not believe the prophecy of the One, she does believe in Neo. Neo and Trinity board the Logos and head towards the Machine City. Bane/Smith has stowed away on the Logos, and he confronts Neo. Bane/Smith uses a power cable to blind Neo, but Neo discovers yet another ability to see any source code in a golden light as this is how the Machine sees. He is now able to see Bane/Smith and kill him. Trinity pilots them to the Machine City. Meanwhile, Niobe and Morpheus pilot the Hammer towards Zion to help aid its defense against the Machines. As Zion's shipyard is being overrun by Sentinels, a heroic action allows the gate to be open for the Hammer. The Hammer arrives in-the-nick-of-time, deploying its EMP device. Unfortunately, this action also disables the rest of Zion's defenses. The humans brace for another attack and prepare to make their last stand.

The Logos nears the Machine City, where it is attacked by sentinels. Neo uses his powers to disable many of them, but there are too many to defeat them all. As they take evasive action, Trinity pilots the Logos up into the atmosphere. They break the cloud layer created by the Humans when they scorched the sky to defeat the machines, and Trinity sees the real sky and the Sun for the very first time. She exclaims that it is beautiful and the ship stalls, beginning a rapid descent towards the Machine City. They restart the engine, but it is too late, as the ship crash lands. Trinity is fatally wounded in the Crash. They say their goodbyes, and Neo heads into the Machine City. There he encounters "Deus Ex Machina," the leader of the Machines. This is appropriate given how the movie ends. Neo informs it that Smith plans to take over both the Matrix and the real world. He offers to stop Smith in exchange for peace with Zion. The Machine Leader agrees to the deal and orders the Sentinels to stop attacking Zion.

Neo enters the Matrix and sees that Smith has completely taken it over. The version of Smith that assimilated the Oracle steps forward and informs Neo that he would be the one to defeat him, as he has foreseen it as Oracle/Smith. Neo and Oracle/Smith begin to fight. Oracle/Smith, while Neo is on the verge of defeat, remembers that he has seen Neo's end and that he is supposed to say: "Everything that has a beginning has an end, Neo." With this, Neo remembers this is what the Oracle told him and realizes what he must do. He submits to Smith, who assimilates Neo. Neo is then hit with a tremendous amount of energy from the machines, which is sent into the Matrix via Neo/Smith. The version of Smith that once was Neo starts to crack, and a bright light is emitted from the cracks. He explodes, and you see the other versions of Smith doing the same thing, even the Oracle/Smith that had confronted Neo. Neo is destroyed in order to destroy Smith. Neo's body is then carried off by the machines, in a scene that appears to Neo's apotheosis as he is deified as the savior of both man and the machines. The sentinels are ordered out of Zion, as the Machine Leader honors his end of the deal he struck with Neo.

With that, the Matrix is restored to a version of it prior to Smith assimilating everything. The last scene shows The Architect and the Oracle meeting in a park. The Architect realizes that Oracle used Neo to achieve this outcome, telling her that she played a very dangerous game. The Oracle replies that change always is. They agree that peace will last as long as it can and that anyone who wants to leave the Matrix will be allowed to. Sati is also there and reveals that she created a beautiful sunrise for Neo, asking the Oracle if they would see Neo again, to which the Oracle replies that she suspects that they will someday.



While Matrix Revolutions is much more of an action movie and not as filled with Masonic symbolism as the first movie, or even the second, there is still some. The first that is clear to me is the continued reference to the Sun being beautiful. This is first said by Trinity and then referenced again by Sati. This evokes the ritual of the Junior Warden in the first

degree, where he states that the sun, while at meridian height, is the beauty and glory of the day. The three primary officers of the Lodge represent the sun at its different places in the sky during the day. The Worshipful Master of the Lodge, sitting in the East in the lodge room, represents the rising sun as the Master rules over his Lodge like the Sun rules the day. The Senior Warden sitting in the West represents the setting sun. As the sun cannot rise unless it sets the night before, the Senior Warden assists the Worshipful Master with the opening of the Lodge. The Junior Warden, who sits in the South, represents the sun at meridian height (its highest point in the sky); and is typically responsible for supervising refreshment for a lodge and conveys orders from Master via the Senior Warden to the rest of the craft. Like the sun ruling over the day, the three principal officers are required to rule over the Lodge. The direction the candidate moves during his perambulation in the three degrees also represents the course of the sun throughout the day. The candidate starts in darkness (entering the Lodge in the northwest corner) and moves through the north (still in darkness), eventually making his way east, South and West, finally being placed facing east at the Altar to his obligation.

The second and most important involves Neo's sacrifice. Neo decides of his own free will and accord to save humanity, much like the candidate is asked in every degree if his decision to receive that degree is of his own free will and accord. One of the main themes of the Matrix Trilogy involves free will. Much of the dialogue revolves around choice and causality. Neo chooses to take the red pill, Neo chooses to save Trinity instead of Zion, Neo ultimately chooses to sacrifice himself. Neo's last choice reflects the ultimate expression of the tenet of Brotherly Love, whereby we are taught: *"By the exercise of Brotherly Love, we are taught to regard the whole human race as one family - the high, the low, the rich, the poor - who, as created by one Almighty Parent, and inhabiting the same planet, should aid, support, and protect one another. On this principle, Masonry unites men of every country, sect, and opinion and promotes true friendship among those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance."*

There are many themes in the Matrix Trilogy that are worth observing from an esoteric perspective. It is steeped in Gnostic themes. There is also a philosophical theme regarding the nature of reality which is alluded to by the inclusion of Baudrillard's *Treatise, Simulacra & Simulation*, in the movie. The work,

which is best known for its discussion of symbols, signs, and how they relate to simultaneous existences. There are also some odd coincidences, like Neo's passport expiring on 9/11/2001, even though the movie opened in theatres in 1999 and was filmed in 1998.

What other movies have you seen with intense Masonic Symbolism? Some other movies that have made popular lists are:

*The Man Who Would Be King*

*The Ninth Gate*

*Murder by Decree*

*National Treasure*

*Vanilla Sky*

*Eyes Wide Shut*



# December 18th, 2021

# Double Eagle Con

# 2021

Over the course of one day, we will have nine of the most prolific men in Freemasonry. Never before has a group of speakers been assembled who've molded our awareness of Freemasonry in such significant ways. These men have made their indelible mark on not only our fraternity as a whole but also the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry. This education day will be packed with presentations, fellowship, and more.



**Joseph Wages, 32°**

De Grass-Tilly and  
The Early Supreme  
Council



**Robert G. Davis, 33°**

How the Degrees of the  
Rite Inform the Journey  
to the Mature Masculine



**S. Brent Morris, 33°**

A Timeline of  
High-Degree  
Masonry



**Chuck Dunning, 32°, KCCH**

Shekinah, the Blazing  
Star, & the Intendants of  
the Building



**Darin A. Lahners,  
32°**

Mature Male  
Friendship & Scottish  
Rite Freemasonry



**Steven L. Harrison, 33°**

Clash of the Titans:  
Denslow V. Cowels



**Darin A. Lahners,  
32°, KCCH**  
The Scottish Rite  
Craft Lodges of New  
Orleans



**Roberto M. Sanchez,  
32°, KCCH**  
The Chamber of Reflec-  
tion and it's Ties to the  
Scottish Rite



**Jeff Croteau**

A Brief History of the  
Library & Archives

Includes; continental breakfast, lunch & dinner.  
Breakfast/check-in start at 7am.  
Speakers start at 8 am. Early Bird Pricing, \$90.  
After November 30th, \$120. Presented by the  
Valley of Chicago AASR NMJ.

<http://www.tinyurl.com/DoubleEagleCon2021>

# What Expectation Does the World Have of Us?

by RW: Bro. Chad Lacek, Member Committee on Masonic Education



nificant?

I was recently paging through a copy of *The Builder* from 1919 and read the following introduction to the volume:

*"In these crucial moments of social revolution there are those among us who patiently and unselfishly give themselves to the larger service for the good of man and to the glory of God. To have kinship with them is one of life's privileges. To be in some degree recipient of their ministrations is to involve for ourselves a debt of everlasting gratitude."*

You will remember that this was written just as World War 1 was ending. The 'those among us' mentioned are the Freemasons. It's you and me. I invite you to go back and re-read that portion of the text again. Would people today read that description and know that it was referring to us?

It seems that our own membership expectations have migrated from "giving ourselves to the larger service for the good of man and to the glory of God" to "a system of self-improvement" (a.k.a. Making good men, Better)

Perhaps this explains why so many people don't know we still exist. Why should they? Until we step up into those larger service roles, in significant numbers,

there is no reason for the public to associate Freemasonry with those lofty praises.

When I read that text from 1919, it was a wake-up call and a slap in the face. "Better" isn't good enough. The bar is set much higher. We simply haven't cranked our neck back far enough to see it in a while.

If we accept the responsibility we have and realize the full extent of the duty we owe, we could once again be worthy of these closing words from that same introduction:

*"To you, O! men of matchless love, of whatever land or clime or faith; You, who live in tune with providential goodness; You, who inspire by your examples our simple trust in the infinite wisdom, to you we dedicate this volume."*





# LAST MONTHS CIPHER - THE ANSWER



Last month I offered a cipher challenge for anyone to attempt. I have to say I was a bit surprised by the response.

No one deciphered it--except WB Tim Thomason! Congrats to Brother Tim for getting the prize - a set of redoak polished coasters engraved with the seal of the Grand Lodge of Illinois - Hand Made!

This image resonates with a Shakespearian play - A Midsummer Night's Dream.



**SOLVED!**

7 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75 80 85 90 95 100

*The Word is Union*

~ 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75 80 85 90 95 100

*Emblamatic Freemasonry*



## What is the Truth?

The A1-S1 is code for Act one, scene one.

3 is third paragraph. 17 is the 17th letter. Which was "N."

A1-S1 Using this cipher as  
3-17 A=N the above cipher can be answered.



This is an image that symbolically represents Midsommar

# *District Education Talking Points*

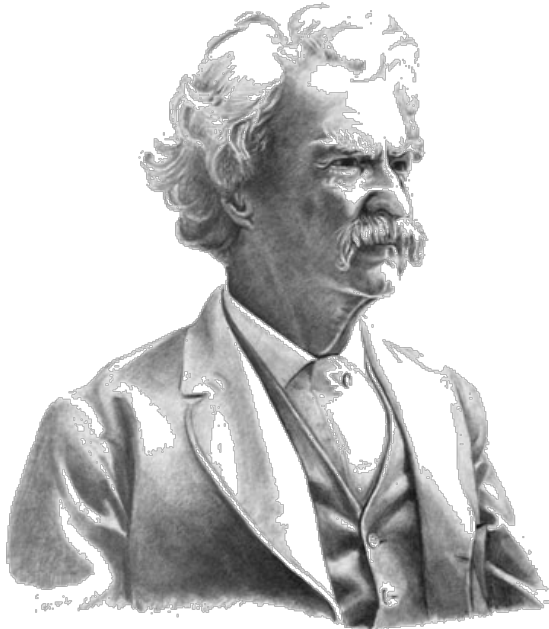
## **The Purpose of the Intender Program**

“The Intender Program has only one major objective. That objective is to reach the fundamentals of Freemasonry to every candidate. The purpose is not to make each candidate a Masonic Scholar. That is to be left to the desires of the individual candidate. The main rationale is for the Intender to guide the candidate so that after going through the three degrees he becomes a Mason in fact, not a Mason in name.”

# Mark Twain's Christmas Hope

by RW:. Brother Robert H. Johnson, Committee on Masonic Education

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Sam Clemmons, "Mark Twain" was a member of Polar Star Lodge No. 79, St. Louis, Mo. (EA May 22, 1861, FC June 12, 1861, MM July 10, 1861). He was later suspended and reinstated on April 24, 1867. He demitted October 8, 1868 and presumably never again affiliated with any lodge.

E.A. - May 22, 1861

F.C. - June 12, 1861

M.M. - July 10, 1861

Lived: Nov. 30, 1835 - April 21, 1910

Many things have been invented and praised because of the relief they provide society; the television, the computer, and the telephone are all examples. Despite the great things these inventions have given us, there are always those among us who carry a disdain for them. For instance, Groucho Marx hated the television. But this post isn't about Marx; it's about a Brother, specifically, Brother Sam Clemmons or Mark Twain as he was better known to the world. He had something to say about a piece of technology as well. He addressed it in a message in the form of his "... hope for Christmas...)

*"It is my heart-warmed and world-embracing Christmas hope and aspiration that all of us, the high, the low, the rich, the poor, the admired, the despised, the loved, the hated, the civilized, the savage (every man and brother of us all throughout the whole earth), may eventually be gathered together in a heaven of everlasting rest and peace and bliss, except the inventor of the telephone."*

Mark Twain always did have a sense of humor and a general matter-of-fact way of speaking. He said that the telephone was an incredible invention and that he also was not a fan of it. Something about the impersonal nature of it. If you really think about it, it's not even a person's voice you're hearing, but instead, a vibrating tone of a magnet mimicking the sound of the voice on the other end. Pretty wild, right? If Twain were alive today, he almost certainly would have some interesting things to say about our use of technology. Our cell phones, telemarketing, and everything else that comes with telecommunications in general. I am sure that Bro. Mark was a man who enjoyed the art of letter writing and face-to-face communications rather than the sometimes bothersome-- and then, at the time, cumbersome use of the telephone.

Remember to write out some cards this holiday season, and it means much more than a phone call to a great many people. Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Joyful Kwanzaa, & Happy Holidays.



**REGISTRATION FOR  
THE 2022 CONFERENCE  
IS NOW OPEN!**

Midwest Conference on Masonic Education 2022

**April 29-May 01, 2022**

Hampton Inn and Suites Kansas City - Country Club Plaza  
4600 Summit Street  
Kansas City, MO 64112

The 2022 Midwest Conference on Masonic Education looks to be yet another fantastic weekend of sharing best practices on Masonic Education and enjoying some great Masonic fellowship!

We have some exciting speakers lined up and plenty of workshops for you to learn new tools you can use in your jurisdiction! This conference is open to all Master Masons.

Use the link/webaddress below to view the agenda, buy your ticket and book your hotel room!

**<https://tinyurl.com/MCME2022>**

# MASONIC WEEK 2022

FEBRUARY 9TH – 13TH  
HYATT REGENCY CRYSTAL CITY  
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION

### MASONIC WEEK REGISTRATION FORM

All Masons attending any event during Masonic Week must complete and submit the Registration Form, along with the required \$35.00 registration fee. Additionally, meal tickets may also be reserved and purchased using the Registration Form.

## HOTEL INFORMATION

Hyatt Regency Crystal City – Arlington, Virginia

### HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Room block: Monday, February 7th - Monday, February 14th, 2022.  
The deadline for hotel reservations is Monday, January 17th, 2022.

## WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9TH, 2022

7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.		<b>Masonic Order of Pilgrim Preceptors</b>	
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## THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH, 2022

8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.		<b>Trinity Chapel No. 2</b> Ye Commemorative Order of St. Thomas of Acon	
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.		<b>Grand Master's Council</b> Ye Commemorative Order of St. Thomas of Acon Annual Meeting	
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.		<b>St. Thomas of Acon Festive Board</b> Open to St. Thomas of Acon members and their ladies.	<a href="#">PURCHASE TICKETS</a>
1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.		<b>Sovereign Order of Knights Preceptor</b> Annual Convention	
3:15 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.		<b>Potomac Court No. 107</b> Masonic Order of Athelstan	
4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.		<b>Provincial Grand Court</b> Masonic Order of Athelstan Annual Meeting	
7:00 p.m. - 8:45 p.m.		<b>Athelstan Banquet</b> Open to all attendees and their ladies.	<a href="#">PURCHASE TICKETS</a>
8:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.		<b>Masonic Order of the Bath</b> 100th Annual Assembly and degree conferral.	<a href="#">CANDIDATE REGISTRATION FROM 7:45 PM TO 8:30 PM</a>

## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH, 2022

7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.		<b>Y.R.S.C.N.A. Breakfast</b> Open to all attendees and their ladies.	<a href="#">PURCHASE TICKETS</a>
8:00 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.		<b>Allied Masonic Degrees</b> Installed Sovereign Master Degree conferral.	<a href="#">CANDIDATE INFORMATION</a>
8:45 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.		<b>Royal Order of the Red Branch of Eri</b> Knight Commander Degree conferral.	<a href="#">CANDIDATE INFORMATION</a>
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.		<b>Ladies Breakfast</b> Open to all ladies at no charge.	<a href="#">RESERVE TICKETS</a>
9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.		<b>Grand Council of Knight Masons of the U.S.A.</b> 56th Annual Meeting	
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.		<b>Knight Masons Luncheon</b> Open to all attendees.	<a href="#">PURCHASE TICKETS</a>
1:15 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.		<b>Society of Blue Friars</b> 78th Annual Consistory Presentation by Adam G. Kendall Open to all attendees.	
2:45 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.		<b>Council of the Nine Muses No. 13, A.M.D.</b> Annual Meeting Presentation by Thomas W. Jackson Open to all A.M.D. members.	
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.		<b>Ark &amp; Dove</b> Degree conferral Open to all A.M.D. members.	<a href="#">CANDIDATE INFORMATION</a>
5:15 p.m. - 5:45 p.m.		<b>Royal Ark Mariner</b> Worshipful Commander Noah Degree conferral.	<a href="#">CANDIDATE INFORMATION</a>
5:45 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.		<b>Order of the Secret Monitor</b> Installed Supreme Ruler Degree conferral.	<a href="#">CANDIDATE INFORMATION</a>
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.		<b>The Masonic Society Dinner</b> "Masonic Myth of Our Nation's Capital" presented by Chris B. Rull Open to all attendees and their ladies.	<a href="#">PURCHASE TICKETS</a>
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.		<b>C.B.C.S. Reception and Dinner</b> Open to C.B.C.S. members only.	
9:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.		<b>Ye Antiente Order of Corks</b> 96th Annual Cellar and degree conferral.	<a href="#">CANDIDATE REGISTRATION FROM 8:00 PM TO 9:00 PM</a>

## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH, 2022

7:00 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.		<b>All Masonic Breakfast</b> Open to all attendees and their ladies.	<a href="#">PURCHASE TICKETS</a>
8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.		<b>Royal Order of the Masonic Knights of the Scarlet Cord</b> Fifth Grade conferral.	<a href="#">REGISTRATION FOR THIS CONFERRAL HAS CLOSED</a>
9:15 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.		<b>Grand College of Rites of the U.S.A.</b> 91st Annual Convocation Open to all attendees.	
10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.		<b>Royal Order of the Masonic Knights of the Scarlet Cord</b> Fourth Grade conferral.	<a href="#">CANDIDATE INFORMATION</a>
11:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.		<b>Philaethes Society</b> 94th Annual Meeting	
12:30 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.		<b>Philaethes Society Luncheon</b> "The Lost Empire: Black Freemasonry in the Old West" presented by James R. Morgan, III Open to all attendees and their ladies.	<a href="#">PURCHASE TICKETS</a>
2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.		<b>Grand Council of the Allied Masonic Degrees of the U.S.A.</b> 130th Annual Convocation	
2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.		<b>Ladies Afternoon Tea</b> Open to all ladies at no charge.	<a href="#">RESERVE TICKETS</a>
6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.		<b>All Masonic Social Hour</b> Open to all attendees and their ladies.	
7:00 p.m. - 8:45 p.m.		<b>All Masonic Banquet</b> Open to all attendees and their ladies.	<a href="#">PURCHASE TICKETS</a>

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13TH, 2022

8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.		<b>Washington Monument Assemblage</b> Worshipful Society of Free Masons, Rough Masons, Walkers, Slaters, Pavlors, Plasterers and Bricklayers (The Operatives)	
9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.		<b>Lodge of Menatzchim V*</b> Worshipful Society of Free Masons, Rough Masons, Walkers, Slaters, Pavlors, Plasterers and Bricklayers (The Operatives)	
10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.		<b>Lodge of Harodim VI*</b> Worshipful Society of Free Masons, Rough Masons, Walkers, Slaters, Pavlors, Plasterers and Bricklayers (The Operatives)	
12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.		<b>The Operatives Brunch</b> Open to all attendees and their ladies.	<a href="#">PURCHASE TICKETS</a>
		<b>SITES OF MASONIC INTEREST</b> While attending Masonic Week 2022, consider visiting one (or more) of the many sites of Masonic interest in the Washington, D.C. area. For more information, follow the link below. <a href="#">MASONIC VISITOR INFORMATION</a>	

# Reader's Corner

## Loge Liberté chérié: A Light In The Darkness

by Bro. Alexander P. Herbert

A Book review by  
WB.: Adam Thayer



One of the great joys in my Masonic journey is getting to read new research materials for review. I'm often contacted by authors who are releasing new books with the opportunity to read their work in exchange for an honest review. As

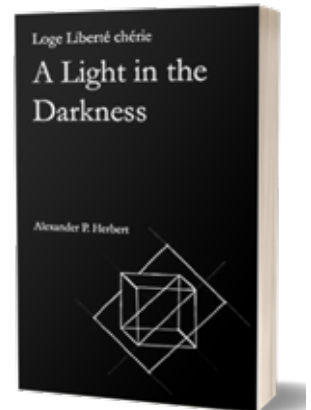
someone who reads an obscene amount, I always jump at the chance.

I received a copy of B. Herbert's history of a Masonic Lodge formed inside a concentration camp with a lot of excitement, as this era of Freemasonry has always been an interest of mine. Unfortunately, I stupidly took my copy to my office, intending to read it on my lunch breaks, and shortly after, our office shut down due to the current pandemic. All of this is a very long-winded explanation to apologize to B. Herbert for taking so long to review this great book!

A Light In The Darkness covers the events surrounding the formation of Loge Liberté chérie, a Masonic Lodge that formed and met inside of a concentration camp. Due to the highly illegal nature of the Lodge, records are quite scarce, making this book the most complete history we will likely have available.

The book begins with a brief explanation of the cultural views of Freemasonry during World War II, a topic that is generally glossed over in most history books. Specifically, the book gets into a pretty thorough discussion of the laws and edicts that were passed forbidding different aspects of the Craft, which culminated in Freemasons being arrested and put in concentration camps as political prisoners.

It continues by examining the three Catholic priests who served as unofficial Tilers for the Lodge, by keeping an eye out for Nazi guards patrolling the camp during Lodge meetings. This section definitely provides an interesting counterpoint to the typical "Catholics hate the Freemasons" narrative that we usually see in history, and shows that good people continue to do good deeds, even in the darkest times.



The book then hits the "meat" of the topic: the formation of Loge Liberté chérie the business the Lodge was able to perform within the camp, and the artisans they worked with to procure supplies, such as a tracing board. Unfortunately, as previously stated, while this is the most exciting part of the book, it is also the most sparse; even in the best of times, Lodge records can be difficult to locate, and since this specific Lodge was formed in extreme secrecy, the records are nearly non-existent. Most of the history we have available is from the three brothers who survived to the end of World War II, and from others who were in the camp with them.

We finish with a brief examination of the troubles faced by the Brothers of the Lodge post World War II to gain official recognition, as the Lodge was formed clandestinely under extreme circumstances. It is interesting to note that while the Lodge first formed in 1943, and the war ended in 1945, the Lodge was not granted official recognition and a charter until 1987.

This book itself is pretty short and can be finished in an afternoon, however, considering the events it is examining took place over a short time that is not a detriment. It would have been easy for the author to

be tempted to pad out the book by adding superfluous materials, and a credit to him that he did not.

The book is also filled with photos that provide greater knowledge of the individuals involved, the layout of the camp and the Lodge within it, and the supplies they had available. These are a welcome addition, as it enriches the experience by helping provide a connection to the text. Many history books leave this material out, and they end up being dry text, so it was good to see how many photos the author was able to include.

I would also like to thank the author for the tremendous amount of research that went into this book; as almost none of the source materials were in English, he had to not only compile the information presented but also translate it, and then fit it into the overall narrative. I can only imagine the hundreds of hours of research that went into putting this together, and it is evident that the author knew the material very well by the time he was finished.

I would highly recommend this book to anyone with interest in Masonic history, as it provides a precious window into a Lodge that would easily have been forgotten otherwise. You can pick up a physical copy from Amazon or Barnes and Noble for \$10 US; unfortunately, due to rights issues for the images, a digital copy is not currently available.





“When he who was weary,  
plucked at a sprig of acacia,  
he had evidence of things  
not seen.”

- STB Vol. X No. 11, p. 8

