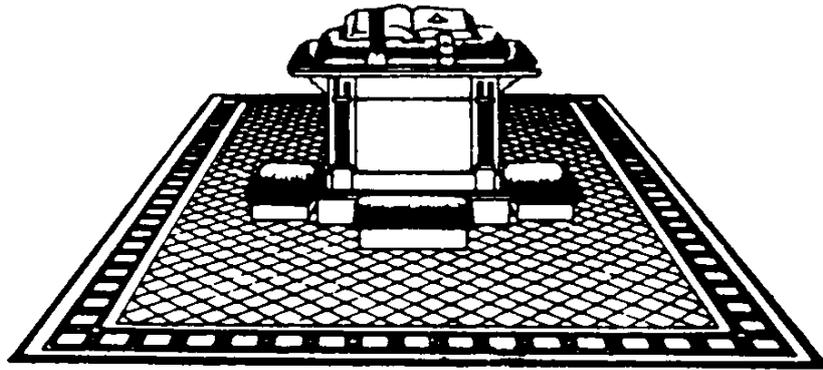


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# The Lyceum

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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,

A new year is upon us. This new year helps our minds visualize a new beginning, washing away the old and ushering in a clean slate with which to begin new healthier habits, new attitudes and refining that which we've already had some measurable successes.

This month's issue is focused on newness. The new candidate--is he truly ready? In an article from the late great Ira Gilbert, he explores what it means to be ready for Freemasonry. RW:. Brother Chad Lacek brings his contemplative chops to the January issue and asks us just how Initiation has changed us. No nonsense... what's really different about you?

We've also got a spread on some of the Masonic Conventions happening this year from around the country. Perhaps you can use it to plan a road trip with your lodge Brothers. What could be more Masonic? Traveling to "foreign countries"--earning master's wages (education)!

Of course, we would be remiss if we did not address the passing of RW:. Thomas W. Jackson. WB:. Greg Knott has a respectful piece that helps us remember Brother Thomas's legacy.

For the first time since our initial issue, Brother Justus Fischer is back with an excellent op-ed on his unique perspective in Freemasonry. I think this article dives into areas some of us might feel are uncomfortable. However, as we all may be aware--discomfort equates to growth. I think you'll like where Brother Justus ends up.

We round out the issue with another excellent book review by WB Kevin Wheeler.

January is a time for "rebirth." It's a new year, and here in the Northern Hemisphere - we have unique symbology that goes along with it. You will notice a tribute to Capricorn on the back page. I wish you all a wonderful month and that you are safe, warm, fed, and loved.

May this year bring you renewed vigor to be that better man. May you wake up and not be discouraged by the distance to travel. Instead, be invigorated by the call to adventure.

Yours in Brotherhood,  
R. H. Johnson

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R. H. Johnson".



# From the Chairman

WB Michael Overturf, Chairman of the Masonic Education Committee

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Brethren,

I would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year. Hopefully, 2022 will be a better year for all of us. 2021 was tough losing Betty White, an American icon. But Freemasonry lost an equally big icon with the passing of RWB Thomas W. Jackson, Past Grand Secretary of Pennsylvania.

After reading all of the tributes Greg Knott wrote about recently (which we've reprinted in this issue), he mentioned RWB Jackson's book, *Masonic Perspectives the Thoughts of a Grand Secretary*, and I decided to give it a read.

At 112 pages, it isn't long and is an anthology of his writings from the *Pennsylvania Freemasonry Magazine*. These writings are some of the most powerful things that I have read in a while. These pieces caused me to reflect on what needs to be done, and with that, I would like to introduce a new plan from the committee on Masonic Education.

Starting hopefully, this month, we are going to have Sunday evening Masonic Education Meetings. With Covid 19 starting back up and surging, I feel that instead of placing the burden on our hard-working Lodge Education Officers, we can assist and carry some of this weight in these unprecedented times.

We will offer to those who desire it, an opportunity to learn about our history, the regalia, and a deeper dive into our work. Imagine an online community where we can learn and offer input--together. Stay tuned for more information in the coming weeks.

Fraternally,  
Michael Overturf

*Michael Overturf*

Chairman of the Committee on Masonic Education



Visit [www.ilmason.com/il-mfid](http://www.ilmason.com/il-mfid) for all the details!

# Illinois Masonic Family Identification Program



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Time is critical! Every year in the U.S. thousands of children become lost. A few are victims of abduction.

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## Here's How the Illinois Masonic Family Identification Program Works.

The Masons of Illinois hold and fund the entire cost of the identification workshops for families all around the State. They are called Illinois Masonic Family Identification Program events. They're sponsored by local Masons and held at neighborhood functions or at community schools. They put together everything parents need to help the authorities find their lost child. It's the most comprehensive program of its kind and is **FREE OF CHARGE TO THE PARENTS!**



## What you get at an event

- **COLOR PHOTO** that records an image and height and is digitized on a convenient USB drive.
- **RECORDED INTERVIEW** captures the appearance, speech patterns, personal characteristics, and mannerisms for easy media distribution.
- **A DNA SAMPLE** taken through a saliva cheek swab is the latest tool in the scientific arsenal to make positive ID's of lost children.
- **FINGERPRINTS** are the oldest form of positive identification since they are unique to every person.



# Are You Duly and Truly Prepared?

by RWB.: Ira Gilbert, PDDGM

*\*Editors Note: In our quest to bring you something relevant to this month's theme of certain Entered Apprentice elements, we are printing this extraordinary piece by RWB.: Ira Gilbert (Deceased). A bit about Ira will be printed at the end. Suffice to say, Ira Gilbert carried the Illinois Lodge of Research for many years alongside a few others. And now without any further delay - "Are You Duly and Truly Prepared?"*

R. H. Johnson

My Brothers, you became my brothers as soon as you took upon yourself the obligation of the Entered Apprentice degree. When you entered the door of your Lodge for the first time two questions were asked of you. The first was whether your entry into the Lodge was of your own free will and accord. The second was asked of the Junior Deacon, who was conducting you on your admission into the Lodge, was whether you were duly and truly prepared. These two questions are inter-related.

Was your entry into our fraternity of your own free will and accord? Did any one entice you into becoming a Freemason? When the Investigating Committee spoke to you and your significant other were you asked the reasons for your desire to become a Freemason? Were you offered a copy of "On The Threshold" a pamphlet that explains the journey that you are now undertaking or some other material given by your Grand Lodge?

As an extension of the query of your free will for entry into Freemasonry, you should have been informed that being a Freemason grants you entry into an elite fraternity of brothers. A Masonic Lodge is far more than being merely a social or charitable

organization. The social and charitable activities of your lodge are important. You may be attracted to the social and charitable endeavors of the lodge. These are certainly laudable activities for every lodge to undertake. However, a Masonic lodge is also a place for moral and philosophical enlightenment.



As experienced Masons, we envy the path that lies ahead for you in our brotherhood of Freemasonry. After taking your obligation in the Entered Apprentice Degree, you heard an explanatory lecture on the symbolism and meaning of the ritual that you had just completed. In the ritual for each of the three degrees in Blue Lodge Masonry there are some ninety items that require symbolic explanation. The explanations presented to you in the degrees are only a start in understanding what Freemasonry really means.

Bro. Rollin C. Blackmer edited and produced a series of lectures about our fraternity. His book was entitled, "The Lodge and the Craft". It was first published in the year 1923. In the first lecture Bro. Blacker remarked that in the year 1923 there were approximately 100,000 brethren in the State of Missouri. Of these 100,000 brethren only about 75 men had made a significant study of the symbolism, philosophy, and history of this Brotherhood to which they belonged. He went on to state that it was a lamentable state of affairs that the majority of its members were ignorant of most everything connected with Freemasonry. There are many reasons for this regrettable state of

affairs.

The first of these reasons lies in the fact that our fraternity is now approaching the 300th year of its existence. Much has transpired in the past 300 years. The fraternity cries out for its new brethren to take upon themselves a study of what the principles of our brotherhood really are and mean.

You have joined a group of men who are the elite of society. You should consider yourself a Masonic brother to George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Paul Revere, John Hancock, thirteen signers of our United States Constitution, and nine signers of the Declaration of Independence. You are a brother to a myriad of other Freemasons, such as Gene Autry, Ernest Borgnine, W. C. Fields, Clark Gable, Roy Rogers, Davy Crocket, George M. Cohan, Irving Berlin, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, General Douglas MacArthur and General Leonard Wood. I can go on and on listing the brethren who you can now call your brothers. You are fortunate, indeed, for having been welcomed into this great fraternity.

Were you duly and truly prepared to enter the Lodge hall to take upon yourself the obligations of Freemasonry. This query can be considered on two levels.

First of all, you were asked to divest yourself of all metals and wear a suit suitable to your degree. You were hoodwinked (blindfolded) and a rope (cable-tow) was placed about you. The meaning of these preparation and symbols were explained to you. In this context you were undoubtedly duly and truly prepared to enter to lodge hall.

However, were you also duly and truly prepared in your mind and ready to start your journey in Freemasonry? In Freemasonry, it is true that your family and means of earning a living are predominant. And, I do not mean to imply that you are expected to become a Masonic scholar, while this would certainly be a laudable accomplishment. But, it is important that you understand what it really means to become a Mason. Are you duly and truly prepared to attend the meetings of your lodge, to the best of your ability? A Masonic Lodge is only as good as the brethren that are active in its affairs.

Are you duly and truly prepared to learn what it means to be a Mason and live according to Masonic precepts? Freemasonry is an organization dedicated to making good men better. You are already thought

to be a good man or you would not have passed the test of the ballot box and been admitted to your Lodge. A study of Freemasonry will give you the tools to become a better man. Properly implemented, your family and society, in general, will applaud your dedication to Masonic principles.

So, my Brother, I welcome you into our fraternity. There are many in your Lodge who will aid your quest into the philosophy, symbolism, and history of our Order. You should find something that piques your interest in our Brotherhood. There are five basic areas of interest in studying Freemasonry. These are history, philosophy, symbolism, law, and ritual (its memorization and meaning). Find an area that is of interest to you and pursue it. There are dedicated brothers who will help you as you take upon yourself the journey to learn what it really means to be a Mason.

My Brothers, I will close this presentation with a saying by the noted Masonic author, H. L. Haywood. His words may indicate to you the basic premise of Freemasonry, "Not More Men In Masonry, But More Masonry In Men".

About Ira Gilbert: Bro. Ira Gilbert was raised on January 8, 1968 in Isaac Cutter Lodge #1073 and was Master in 1972. Isaac Cutter Lodge merged with Chicago Lodge #437 and was a member of Chicago Lodge. Bro Gilbert was a member of A. O. Fay Lodge #676 as well. He was also a member of the Valley of Chicago Scottish rite.

Bro. Ira's dedication to Masonic Education had afforded him the ability to serve on the Grand Lodge Committee on Masonic Education and the Grand Lodge Committee on Jurisprudence. Bro. Ira came from a Masonic family, his father being Master of Universal Lodge #985, now a part of Decalogue Lodge through a series of mergers. His father was also a Grand Lecturer.

Ira's main interests in our fraternity had lain in the philosophy and history of our ritual and in Masonic Jurisprudence. Bro. Ira was a DDGM twice. He was also a fellow of the Illinois Lodge of Research and the ILOR awarded him the Andrew Torok Medal.

# How Does Your Masonic Initiation Affect You Today?

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



When I first entered a Masonic Lodge, I had no idea what to expect. I didn't know any Masons, and I didn't know what it meant to be one. I went through the motions of my initiation, going where I was led and saying what I was asked to say. I thought it was a neat experience, but I can't say it meant much to me.

Looking back on that event almost 15 years later, I am beginning to see what actually happened. A seed was planted. I'm still not sure if it was an idea, a concept, or even a promise to my future self. Maybe it was a combination of things, but it was planted nonetheless. I realize that my initiation means much more to me today and influences me more profoundly than I ever could have predicted. I expect that it will continue to grow with each passing year.

One small example of the effect I am referring to happened to me about a year ago. Out of the clear blue sky, the thought came to me that I would no longer speak profanity. There was no particular reason. There was no conscious thought of self-improvement or that this might be something nice to do. It just came to me. I now find myself using the word "Crumb" in the place where I would have otherwise used an expletive. I have no idea why. It's ridiculous, I know, but I suppose it's still an improvement.

Was that thought a fruit from the seed that was planted at my initiation? Maybe. I think it was. It feels like it was. It took an awfully long time for my seed to start growing, but some of us have rougher ashlar than others. I would love to think that there is some invisible common gavel working automatically within each of us, suggesting this or that part should be next to be removed.

I invite you to think back to your initiation. How did you feel? Can you remember the moment the hood-wink was removed? What thoughts were going through your head as you took your obligation? Now consider what it means to you now. Today. This moment.

Can you see evidence that a seed was planted the night of your initiation? How much different are you now from the man you were then?

If you'd like to accelerate the process, you can pour a little water on that seed with some mindfulness.

Remember the day you became a Freemason. How does that affect you today?



# *District Education*

## *Talking Points*

### **Overview of the Intender Program - First Contact with Petitioner**

“Upon receiving a petition for membership in the Lodge, the Worshipful Master appoints an examining committee. When the examining committee meets with the petitioner and his significant other, the petitioner is given the Guidebook, “On the Threshold.” This Guidebook will give the petitioner and his significant other information to help the petitioner in making up his mind to continue to become a Freemason.”

# Making Freemasonry More Meaningful

An Exploration of Opportunities by RWB.: R.H. Johnson

Freemasonry IS meaningful. We're often trying to increase the satisfaction of our members with what we might call in the business world value propositions. What does a person get from membership within our organization? Three degrees, some new friends--Brothers, whom they may share their lives and experiences. We offer fellowship, assuming the Lodge is active in this regard.

Freemasonry is, above all, an organization that promises to make us better. It's been asked ad nauseum, however, "How?" The answers span the gamut. Charity, Fellowship, Ritual Instruction are good answers. These all fall under the umbrella of Masonic Education.

Masonic Education is the exploration of our allegory--the stories our degrees are telling us. By exploring, we mean looking at the philosophy that these stories teach us. This is Masonic Education.

Masonic Education is not leadership training or membership recruitment. However, proper discussion of the stories we use for our ritual may lead to personal revelations that give us a better understanding of ourselves and others, making us better leaders. Further, proper and consistent Masonic Education opportunities offer that value proposition people look for, which inevitably leads to the retention of members. Masonic Education is the key.

You may have noticed within the pages of this e-magazine, we make room to tell you all about upcoming Masonic Education Opportunities that are happening not only within the Grand Jurisdiction of Illinois but around the United States. Freemasonry is not an island. We're encouraged to travel and work in foreign countries. It is in this thought that we offer you the information needed to expand your Masonic experiences by traveling to symposiums, lectures series, and conventions that seek to expand our Masonic Experience.

The expansion of Masonic opportunities such as these will increase the already meaningful experience we have. Why wouldn't you want to know more?

To be more confident? To be more experienced? Knowledgeable? You're a Freemason--a person who is looking to become better--and here are just a few of the opportunities coming to us in 2022, AL 6022.

The "World Famous" Original Masonic Con has moved from its home, Ezkial Bates Masonic Lodge in Attleboro, MA to Manchester, New Hampshire. Speakers this year are a number of various national and local Freemasons who are all amazing. Names Like Chuck Dunning, PGM Akram R. Elias of Washington D.C., and Oscar Alleyne will take the stage. From their site, "On **June 4th, 2022**, twelve Masonic Speakers from 9 different Jurisdictions will come to the Masonic Temple in Manchester, NH and will be capped off with Masonic Con's famous Festive Board." You can find out more by visiting [MasonicConNH.com](http://MasonicConNH.com)



Masonic Con Kansas will be held for the first time ever in 2022. It will feature seven wonderful speakers, including WB.: Joe Martinez (VA), RWB.: Bryan Simmons (MA) and many others. The conference will be held on August 27, 2022 in KC Metro area. You can find more information about tickets and more at [Masonic-ConKansas.com](http://Masonic-ConKansas.com)



Each year, Freemasons from across the United States and around the world gather for what has become known as Masonic Week. Historically, this event was held in Washington, D.C. around the time of George Washington's birthday, in conjunction with the annual meetings of the Conference of Grand Masters of North America and the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association. The Conference of Grand Masters has long since moved on, leaving Masonic



Week to what were quaintly referred to as the “Smaller Groups.”

The Grand Council of the Allied Masonic Degrees of the USA moved its Annual Communication from North Carolina to Washington, D.C. in 1938, and has met in the area ever since. As one of the larger of the “Smaller Groups,” the AMD always took the leadership role in organizing and administering Masonic Week. Find out more by visiting [www.amdusa.org](http://www.amdusa.org) or you can see the full schedule on page 17.

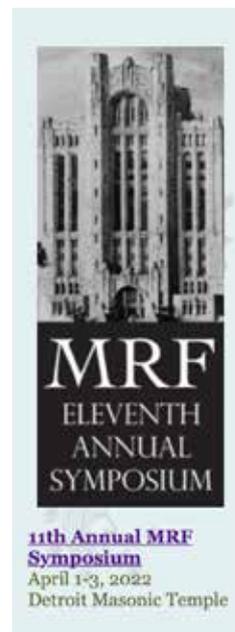
The Midwest Conference on Masonic Education 2022 promises to be an excellent event that offers excellent resources for Masonic Educators at all levels. The event will be held on April 29th-May 1st in Kansas City, MO. Whether you are the chair of Masonic Education in your jurisdiction, a local Lodge Education Officer, or just a Brother interested in contributing to Masonic Education in your local lodge, we welcome you to join us. We look forward to great presentations, useful workshops and interaction, plenty of good fellowship, and an unmatched opportunity to see what’s new and exciting in Masonic Education across jurisdictions. By the end of the weekend, you will have many new tools and ideas to take back to your jurisdiction for Masonic Education! Learn more by visiting [mcme1949.org](http://mcme1949.org) and page 16.



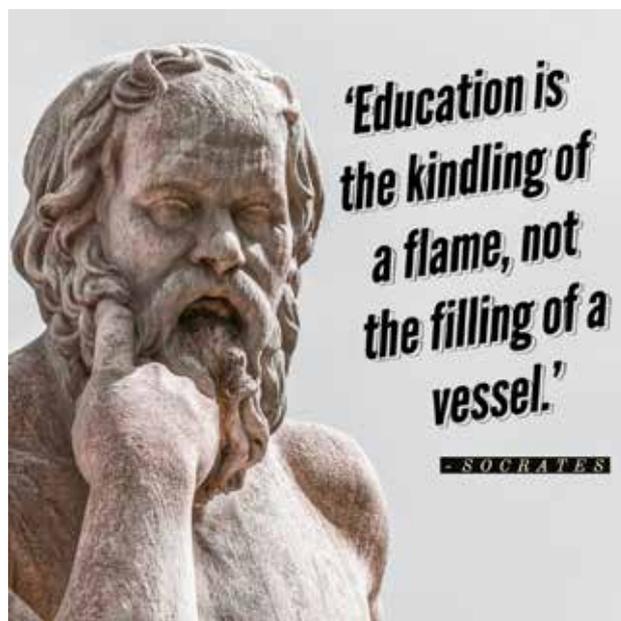
Esotericon-- This particular conference is not exclusively Masonic. While most of the attendees are associated with Freemasonry, there are a wide variety of topics and philosophical topics addressed. Founded in 2019 to bring together like minded individuals with an interest in the Esoteric, Esotericon is the preeminent conference serving esoteric minded individuals. Topics of our previous conferences have included ‘Hidden Symbolism’, ‘Enochian: Learning to Talk with Angels’ and ‘Sacred Spaces’ among others. We also include special activities such as tarot and natal chart readings. More information can be found by visiting [esotericon.net](http://esotericon.net)



Since 2001, the Masonic Restoration Foundation (MRF) has been examining the issues facing North American Masonry, identifying successful current and historical practices and offering realistic solutions aimed at improving the experience of Masonic labor. April 1-3, 2022 at the Detroit Masonic Temple. Find out more by visiting [MasonicRestorationFoundation.org](http://MasonicRestorationFoundation.org)



Keep your eyes and ears peeled for more events happening around the globe! Masonic education is alive and well. A visit to any of these conferences is well worth your time.



# The Passing of RWB Thomas W. Jackson

by Greg Knott, 33°

Reprinted with permission from  
the Midnight Freemasons Blog.

On December 30, 2021, Masonic social media announced the passing of RWB Thomas W. Jackson. What quickly followed was a large number of tributes and memories that brothers had reflecting upon the life and impact of RWB Jackson.

If you are not familiar with RWB Jackson, he was the past Grand Secretary of the Right Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Pennsylvania. He had also served as the first Executive Secretary of the World Conference of Regular Masonic Grand Lodges from 1998 to 2014. He held numerous Masonic honors from around the world including as one of the Founding Fellows of The Masonic Society.

I met RWB Jackson a couple of times at Masonic Week. When his book "Masonic Perspectives - The Thoughts of a Grand Secretary" was published, he was selling it at a table at Masonic Week. I bought the book and asked him to autograph it for me.

As I was flipping through the book, I noticed that he had written a couple articles on the topic of Scouting. We had a conversation about the similarities between Scouting and Freemasonry. RWB Jackson, like myself, is an Eagle Scout and has been involved in Scouting as both youth and adult leaders. It was a fascinating conversation.

In his book, he wrote about speaking at an Eagle Court of Honor offering some thoughts on the influence, and said:

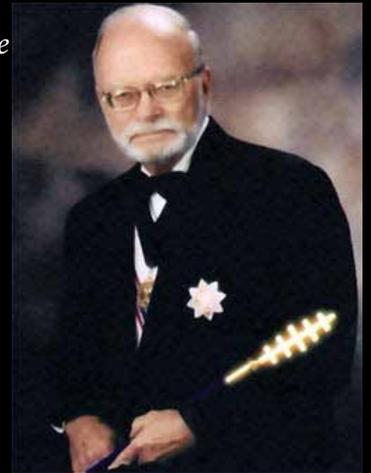
*"We cannot take a step in our lives without the influence of others. We will be nothing more at any time than a reflection of the influence of others along with our modifications. The poet Markham expressed it well when he wrote: 'There is a destiny that makes us brothers. None goes his way alone. All that we send into the lives of others comes back into our own.' So my brother Eagles, will you go beyond the ordinary? It is possible but it is up to you. Accept what scouting has to offer. Learn! Learn the meaning of the broth-*

*erhood of man, and give to others in equal measure what others have given to you. Maybe, then just maybe, you may rise above the ordinary."*

Though RWB Jackson was speaking to young Eagle Scouts, his words are equally applicable to Freemasonry. We are influenced by others and thereby we also influence others ourselves. As Freemasons, we have a tremendous opportunity to use this ability to influence others to help improve our individual communities having a positive impact upon the lives of others.

What will the legacy of RWB Jackson be? His challenge to raise the bar of Freemasonry will endure for the decades to come. I can't think of a better way to honor the memory of RWB Jackson than by going out into your community having a positive influence on others, exerting kindness to your brothers, and helping your lodge become the very best it can be to impact all of mankind.

Rest in peace Brother.



# Freemasons

Are We Men of Faith,  
or Men of Science?



## AN OP-ED BY BROTHER JUSTUS FISCHER

“*Cogito Ergo Sum*” - “*I think; therefore I am.*” [1]

Disclaimer:

The topic I am about to discuss is merely that of my own opinion. Not a single person could ever speak for Freemasonry in the macro sense.

In my observation, I see the topic of faith often being viewed as a polarized image against the backdrop of the never-ending scientific discoveries and innovations. The inevitable process is the “accelerating change,” which is the internet umbrella term for various forms of technocratic progression [2]

In a nutshell, this is the scientific terminology used to describe the rate of progression within the various fields of the liberal arts and sciences, measuring the timeline and weighing the proverbial scales of technological innovation within our society since the beginning of time.

According to “Moore’s Law” [3]

The rate of acceleration for the number of transistors within a circuit will increase while decreasing in size within the duration of a 2-year cycle. So hypothetically speaking, our “state of the art” tech will adapt and expand every few years, becoming more efficient, faster, and more portable. During this process, we are likely to expect a plethora of affordable technologies. These “tech” products are now available for the everyday consumer. For example: hypothetically, cell phones weren’t around in the year 1950; somehow, if it were so, would you imagine the hefty price tag associated with a device like this during the ‘50s? The common person most certainly could never afford

this luxury--a luxury that we amply enjoy today. Technology is “en vogue.” It’s cool, it’s affordable, and it’s here to stay. It has become vital for our sustenance and safety as a society.

As Freemasons, we are taught a lesson in Masonry-Masonry, that man is dependent on one another for our progress and safety as a society. This ideal, in essence, sounds lofty and beautiful to read on paper, as the Masonic ritual eloquently reminds us of the importance of this brotherhood for the benefit of all mankind. However, I believe that technology will be the deciding factor in our survival and progress on this planet. And in knowing as much, I also realize (for lack of a better term) a conundrum, a caveat of sorts. This is the crossroad where science and faith intersect. For example, “The God Spot” in the brain, which reacts whenever we observe or experience a spiritual sensation. [4]

Are faith-based experiences something that science could someday replicate with artificial intelligence? Is it somewhat of a plausible possibility that someday, members of the Masonic fraternity could interact with each other in a virtual reality environment? Is it a relative possibility, given the positivity rates for viral infections across the globe, that Freemasonry might have to adjust to a hybrid or augmented reality alternative? Is it also a strange possibility that maybe someday a vaccination passport and dues card may or may not be the appropriate forms of identification to bring to a Masonic event? These are all valid questions that have yet to be determined, and not without much controversy. In our Masonic jurisdiction here in Illinois, virtual or hybrid meetings are now available to us for the

safety of our members. [5]

It is during trying times like today, where “necessity is the mother of all invention.” In my humble opinion, we as Freemasons should come together right now, in solidarity, to ensure our safety and survival on this planet during times of pandemic and civil unrest. As the Masonic ritual reminds us, the sentiments about the “liberal arts and sciences” serve as echoes from the age of the enlightenment period. I can say in earnest that I believe that the study of science can bring us closer to our creator by understanding the knowledge of divine wisdom.

For thousands of years on this planet, science and religion have often been iconoclastic viewpoints, mankind lacking the appropriate scientific evidence to substantiate the claims made by the various world religions in regards to creation myths and other unexplained mysteries of life. Then, as in the 17th century. The light of Masonic wisdom shook up the fabric of modern society. This period in world history is known as the “Age of Enlightenment” [6]

The Age of Enlightenment gave rise to some of the greatest “free thinkers” and idealists from this period. The notable figures most associated with the enlightenment era, the likes of some, who are: Alexander Hamilton (1755 or 1757-1804), Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790), Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778), David Hume (1711-1776), Emmanuel Swedenborg (1688 - 1772), Francis Bacon (1561-1626), George Washington (1732-1799), Isaac Newton (1642-1727), Rene Descartes (1596-1650), Robert Burns (1759-1796), Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826), Thomas Paine (1737-1809), Voltaire, (1694-1778), William Shakespeare (1564 - 1616), Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 -1791)

Background of notable Masonic members of The Age of Enlightenment:

Robert Burns (1759-1796):

“Well educated in a variety of subjects, from Scottish history and folklore to literature, Burns was forced to assist his father in working on the family farm, and took over at 25 when his father died in 1784 [7] By 28, Burns was beginning to be well known in his



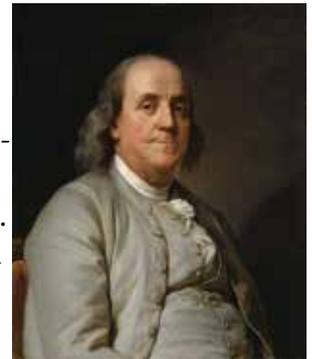
literary career; In 1786 he published “Poems: Chiefly in Scottish Dialect,” which was expanded in 1787 and again in 1793. Beginning in 1786, Burns would spend much time in Edinburgh among the elite and intellectuals of Scottish society. “[8]

Masonic:

Robert Burns was initiated as an Entered Apprentice in Lodge St. David, Tarbolton on 4 July (ironic date) 1781, at the age of 23. His initiation fee was 12s 6d, and paid on the same date. [9]

Benjamin Franklin: (1/17/1706 - 4/17/1790):

“Franklin was a signer of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. Printer, publisher, inventor, scientist, politician, diplomat, and statesman. Elected a member of the royal society because of his scientific discoveries. A friend of Voltaire and assisted in raising him, April 7, 1778.” [10]



Masonic:

“Early in the year 1731, we find that the young printer was Entered, Passed, and Raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason in St. John’s Lodge, held at the Tun Tavern in Water St., Philadelphia. The cost of his entrance fee was three pounds sterling. “Note: American Lodge of Research transactions, volume six, No. 1 pg. 65 says this date is June 24, 1731. [11] Franklin was made a member of “Loge des Neuf Soeurs,” sometimes called the Lodge of Nine Muses, in Paris, in 1777, and was elected Venerable (Worshipful Master) in May 1779, and re-elected the following year.” [12]

Francois - Marie Arouet. [Voltaire] (1694-1778):

French Philosopher and Freemason “Voltaire’ was a staunch supporter of religious tolerance during a time of exclusion and xenophobia.

“It does not require great art, or magnificently trained eloquence, to prove that Chris-



tians should tolerate each other. I, however, am going further: I say that we should regard all men as our brothers. What? The Turk, my brother? The Jew? The Siam? Yes, without doubt; are we not all children of the same father and creatures of the same God?" [13]



Masonic:

Voltaire was initiated at the Lodge of Nine Sisters in Paris.

“The Lodge of the Nine Sisters in making virtue its base has dedicated itself to fostering the arts and sciences. The aim of the lodge is to restore them to their place of dignity. Did not the arts and sciences serve as the foundation of great civilizations and nations? Work then with zeal to preserve and to advance civilization and our fraternity. Remember then that the base supports the edifice. Decorate both remembering that ornaments should not mask the dignity of Freemasonry...” [14]

“Although not a member of the Craft, Voltaire in flagrant violations of Masonic regulations was allowed on March 21, 1778. To attend as a visitor the meeting of Nine Sisters. After this meeting, the philosophy of Ferney, who evidently enjoyed this session of the lodge, informed Lalande that he would consent to be initiated during its next meeting. The induction ceremonies of Voltaire were held on Tuesday, April 7, 1778, and were not according to stated Masonic procedures. Because of Voltaire’s age and poor health, the Master Lalande was constrained to abbreviate the initiation ceremonies. Leaning on the arm of his guide, Benjamin Franklin, the blindfolded Voltaire was escorted into the lodge chamber and was asked several questions about his moral conduct. Without being required to receive the three mandatory degrees of blue lodge masonry, he was informed of the signs, secrets, and symbols of the Craft and then was proclaimed a member of the order and the Nine Sisters.” [15]

The Age of Enlightenment attracted notable prospects of the era to join the ancient mysteries. Freemasonry, as we know it today, has a deeply rooted lineage to The Age of Enlightenment’s ideas and philosophies that echo sentiments of alchemical transmutations, moral and ethical values, and a belief of deity coinciding with human characteristics. The notion of the rough ashlar versus a perfect ashlar, utilizing the science of geometry to enhance the human experience in a speculative manner.

(Biblical References to Science):

Note: I realize that Freemasonry is nonsectarian and, for the most part, non-dogmatic. There’s a number of holy texts I could reference and cite as my inspiration. However, I’ve spent parts of my early childhood learning about the stories contained within the “Holy Bible.” Since I am most familiar with and most comfortable citing this text. I will pull some interesting references with regards to how science and faith are two interwoven links in the same chain. In our Masonic ritual, the Holy Bible is mentioned as the “rule and guide” to our faith. So, for cultural significance, of the Bible in the Masonic ritual. I procured these quotes for context, as they pertain to Freemasonry; the following passages are from the King James Version of the Holy Bible.

Isaiah 40:12 - “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?”

Ecclesiastes 1:13 - “And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith.”

Job 38:4-6 “Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? Or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the cornerstone thereof?”

From my interpretations of these Bible verses:

The Grand Architect of The Universe warrants mankind to seek the knowledge of divinity. Ultimately, this experience will bring us closer to our creator, to better understand our relationship to each other as

a human race and to our surrounding environment.  
“As above, so below.”

We live in a society that nourishes these ideas about connectivity and creativity. A society that utilizes and encourages the latest technology for nearly every facet of our livelihood. It's a very interesting conundrum to see the members of our ancient fraternity having opposing viewpoints on these issues—matters such as inoculation, social distancing, virtual reality, social media & cyber lodges.

It's interesting to note that, while we have these excellent and very poignant diatribes among ourselves as fellow brethren of the Craft. The profane world outside of our fraternity may have a laundry list of concerns about us as a global organization—that which may be considered alarming and, at moments, even disturbing. More notably, the Grand Lodge of Ireland fell victim to a recent arson attack. The scene of the incident occurred at the Grand Lodge building located on Molesworth Street. The investigation is currently still pending. The enemies of the Craft have used technology to slander the reputation of our beloved institution. Suppose Freemasonry as a whole does not use the state-of-the-art technology available. The fraternity will lose the disinformation battle. From random manifestos showing up to lodges to the extreme acts of defiling our institutions and “canceling” our rich history as a fraternity. [16]

“True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,  
As those move easiest who have learned to dance.  
'Tis not enough no harshness gives offense,  
The sound must seem an echo of the sense.

All nature is but art, unknown to Thee;  
All chance, direction which thou canst not see;  
All discord, harmony not understood;  
All partial evil, universal good.  
And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,  
One truth is clear, Whatever is, is right.”

- Alexander Pope (1688 - 1744) [17]

In conclusion, as for the Freemasons. Are we men of faith or men of science? I believe that the answer is both. The Masonic “egregor” is a very strong and ancient energy current, a current that transcends the boundaries and limitations of time itself. The old adage comes to mind “history repeats itself,” this common theme of a repeated cycle of changing. It feels like we are approaching the Age of Enlightenment

within this present time. That in which spirituality and scientific revolutions will take mankind to the zenith of human triumph and ingenuity. As the pseudo-scientific billionaires of the world, race to colonize the Moon and the planet Mars. As Freemasons, it is imperative for our survival to embrace change with a sense of urgency; without making any innovations in Masonry, the fraternity as a whole is capable of adapting to its surroundings whilst keeping the core tenets of brotherly love, relief and truth, as true to its tradition, an lineage to the ancient times also referred to as the “vulgar era.” The era in which the Luddites pondered our ancient mysteries. The cowan then leaves the profane world behind, guided by ancient wisdom and illumination.

FIAT LUX!

“And I saw... that the light, tending to (one) end of the image, did super a refraction considerably greater than the light tending to the other. And so, the true cause of the length of that image was detected to the no other, then the light consists of rays differently refrangible which...were, according to their degrees of refrangibility, transmitted towards divers parts of the wall.”

- Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) [18]

Sources:

[1] Opening quote by Rene Descartes - Discourse on the method - (1637)

[2] [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Accelerating\\_change](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Accelerating_change)

[3] [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moore's\\_law](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moore's_law)

[4] The Age Of Spiritual Machines. Kurzweil. Pg. 152 - Penguin publishing, (1999 - 2000.)

<https://mysteriousuniverse.org/2021/08/scientists-may-have-finally-located-the-brains-god-spot/> / “scientists may have finally located the brain's God Spot” By. Paul Seaburn (8-27-21)

[5] <https://www.thesquaremagazine.com/mag/article/202112great-architect-of-the-metaverse/>

[6] [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age\\_of\\_Enlightenment](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age_of_Enlightenment),

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Christianity/Eschatological-expectations-and-secularization>

[7] McLeod, p. 162; Boot. - Robert Burns and Freemasonry by Todd J. Wilkinson.

<http://www.robertburns.org.uk/freemason-robertburns.html>

[8] Fox, p.7, McLeod, p.171). - Robert Burns and

Freemasonry by Todd J. Wilkinson.

<http://www.robertburns.org.uk/freemason-robert-burns.html>

[9] Robert Burns and Freemasonry by Todd J. Wilkinson.

<http://www.robertburns.org.uk/freemason-robert-burns.html>

[10] Masonic Membership of the Founding Fathers. Masonic Book Club. Pg. 18-19 (1974)

[11] Benjamin Franklin, the Freemason, by Brother William J. Paterson December (1955). - Masonic Membership of the Founding Fathers. Masonic Book Club. Pg. 18-19 (1974)

[12] Masonic Membership of the Founding Fathers. Masonic Book Club. Pg. 18-19 (1974)

[13] A Treatise on Toleration. Voltaire. (1763)

[14] Louis Amiable, Loge Maçonnique , Pg. 32. - SRRS - Heredom Vol. 10, (2002) Pg. 169. R. William Weisberger

[15] Louis Amiable, Loge Maçonnique , pg. 53-54, pg. 65-66 - SRRS - Heredom Vol. 10, (2002) Pg. 172. R. William Weisberger

[16] <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/anti-vaccination-graffiti-found-after-suspected-arson-at-masonic-hall-1.4767318>,

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cancel%20culture>

[17] Alexander Pope, An Essay on Criticism, ii. pg. 162-165: An Essay on Man, 1. x. 9-14: The Poetical Works, ed H.F. Cary (London, n.d.), 53, 224. - Europe a history (Norman Davies.) pg. 589. Harper Perennial. (1997)

[18] Quoted by Jacob Bronowski, The Ascent of Man. Pg. 226 - Little, Brown & Company; (1973), Europe a history (Norman Davies.) pg. 598. Harper Perennial. (1997)





**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.



Masonic Order of Pilgrim Preceptors

## THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH, 2022

8:00 a.m. -  
10:00 a.m.



Trinity Chapel No. 2  
Ye Commemorative Order of St. Thomas of Acon

10:00 a.m. -  
12:00 p.m.



Grand Master's Council  
Ye Commemorative Order of St. Thomas of Acon  
Annual Meeting

12:00 p.m. -  
1:00 p.m.



St. Thomas of Acon Festive Board  
Open to St. Thomas of Acon members and their ladies.

PURCHASE  
TICKETS

1:30 p.m. -  
3:00 p.m.



Sovereign Order of Knights Preceptor  
Annual Convocation

3:15 p.m. -  
4:15 p.m.



Potomac Court No. 107  
Masonic Order of Athelstan

4:30 p.m. -  
6:30 p.m.



Provincial Grand Court  
Masonic Order of Athelstan  
Annual Meeting

7:00 p.m. -  
8:45 p.m.



Athelstan Banquet  
Open to all attendees and their ladies.

PURCHASE  
TICKETS

8:30 p.m. -  
10:30 p.m.



Masonic Order of the Bath  
100th Annual Assembly and degree conferral.

CANDIDATE  
REGISTRATION  
FROM 7:45 PM  
TO 8:00 PM

## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH, 2022

7:00 a.m. -  
8:00 a.m.



Y.R.S.C.N.A. Breakfast  
Open to all attendees and their ladies.

PURCHASE  
TICKETS

8:00 a.m. -  
8:45 a.m.



Allied Masonic Degrees  
Installed Sovereign Master  
Degree conferral.

CANDIDATE  
INFORMATION

8:45 a.m. -  
9:30 a.m.



Royal Order of the Red Branch of Eri  
Knight Commander  
Degree conferral.

CANDIDATE  
INFORMATION

9:00 a.m. -  
10:00 a.m.



Ladies Breakfast  
Open to all ladies at no charge.

RESERVE  
TICKETS

9:30 a.m. -  
12:00 p.m.



Grand Council of  
Knight Masons of the U.S.A.  
56th Annual Meeting

PURCHASE  
TICKETS

12:00 p.m. -  
1:00 p.m.



Knight Masons Luncheon  
Open to all attendees.

PURCHASE  
TICKETS

1:15 p.m. -  
2:30 p.m.



Society of Blue Friars  
78th Annual Consistory  
Presentation by Adam G. Kendall  
Open to all attendees.

2:45 p.m. -  
3:45 p.m.



Council of the Nine Muses No. 13, A.M.D.  
Annual Meeting  
Presentation by Thomas W. Jackson  
Open to all A.M.D. members.

PURCHASE  
TICKETS

4:00 p.m. -  
5:00 p.m.



Ark & Dove  
Degree conferral  
Open to all A.M.D. members.

CANDIDATE  
INFORMATION

5:15 p.m. -  
5:45 p.m.



Royal Ark Mariner  
Worshipful Commander Noah  
Degree conferral.

CANDIDATE  
INFORMATION

5:45 p.m. -  
6:30 p.m.



Order of the Secret Monitor  
Installed Supreme Ruler  
Degree conferral.

CANDIDATE  
INFORMATION

7:00 p.m. -  
9:00 p.m.



The Masonic Society Dinner  
"Masonic Myth of Our Nation's Capital"  
presented by Chris B. Rulli  
Open to all attendees and their ladies.

PURCHASE  
TICKETS

7:00 p.m. -  
9:00 p.m.



C.B.C.S. Reception and Dinner  
Open to C.B.C.S. members only.

9:00 p.m. -  
10:00 p.m.



Ye Antiente Order of Corks  
96th Annual Cellar and degree conferral.

CANDIDATE  
REGISTRATION  
FROM 8:00 PM  
TO 9:00 PM

## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH, 2022

7:00 a.m. -  
8:00 a.m.



All Masonic Breakfast  
Open to all attendees and their ladies.

PURCHASE  
TICKETS

8:00 a.m. -  
9:00 a.m.



Royal Order of the  
Masonic Knights of the Scarlet Cord  
Fifth Grade conferral.

REGISTRATION  
FOR THIS  
CONFERRAL  
HAS CLOSED

9:15 a.m. -  
11:00 a.m.



Grand College of Rites of the U.S.A.  
91st Annual Convocation  
Open to all attendees.

10:00 a.m. -  
11:00 a.m.



Royal Order of the  
Masonic Knights of the Scarlet Cord  
Fourth Grade conferral.

CANDIDATE  
INFORMATION

11:15 a.m. -  
12:30 p.m.



Philaethes Society  
94th Annual Meeting

12:30 p.m. -  
1:45 p.m.



Philaethes Society Luncheon  
"The Lost Empire: Black Freemasonry in the Old West"  
presented by James R. Morgan, III  
Open to all attendees and their ladies.

PURCHASE  
TICKETS

2:00 p.m. -  
5:00 p.m.



Grand Council of the  
Allied Masonic Degrees of the U.S.A.  
130th Annual Convocation

2:00 p.m. -  
3:30 p.m.



Ladies Afternoon Tea  
Open to all ladies at no charge.

RESERVE  
TICKETS

6:00 p.m. -  
7:00 p.m.



All Masonic Social Hour  
Open to all attendees and their ladies.

7:00 p.m. -  
8:45 p.m.



All Masonic Banquet  
Open to all attendees and their ladies.

PURCHASE  
TICKETS

## SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13TH, 2022

8:30 a.m. -  
9:00 a.m.



Washington Monument Assemblage  
Worshipful Society of Free Masons, Rough Masons, Walkers,  
Staters, Pavlors, Plasterers and Bricklayers (The Operatives)

9:00 a.m. -  
10:30 a.m.



Lodge of Menatzchim V9  
Worshipful Society of Free Masons, Rough Masons, Walkers,  
Staters, Pavlors, Plasterers and Bricklayers (The Operatives)

10:30 a.m. -  
12:30 p.m.



Lodge of Harodim VI4  
Worshipful Society of Free Masons, Rough Masons, Walkers,  
Staters, Pavlors, Plasterers and Bricklayers (The Operatives)

12:30 p.m. -  
1:30 p.m.



The Operatives Brunch  
Open to all attendees and their ladies.

PURCHASE  
TICKETS

## SITES OF MASONIC INTEREST



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.



[MASONIC VISITOR INFORMATION](#)

# Reader's Corner

## The Craft and Its Symbols: Opening the Door to Masonic Symbolism

by Bro. Allen E. Roberts

A Book review by  
WB.: Kevin A. Wheeler



In my opinion, the book entitled *The Craft and Its Symbols: Opening the Door to Masonic Symbolism* by Bro. Allen E. Roberts is a great work that is well written and easily understood and should accompa-

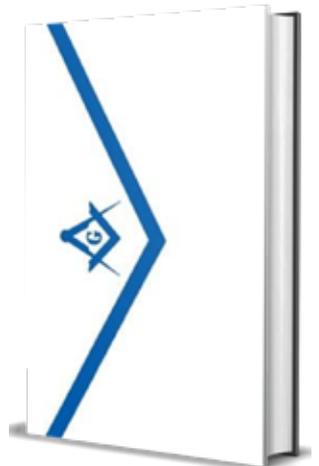
ny every Masonic Bible given to the newly raised Master Mason. I feel so strongly about providing this book to all Master Masons because it explains in detail most of the symbols that we are introduced to throughout our journey through the symbolic degrees. This book is excellent because it can serve as an introduction for new Master Masons, allowing them to gain a deeper understanding of some of Masonry's symbols and serve as a reminder for those seasoned Master Masons.

Bro. Roberts begins his book by discussing and describing the Entered Apprentice Degree and its symbolism. He describes how your journey through the first degree is symbolically and spiritually a re-birth. He also explains what Masonry is, its origins, and how there were originally only two degrees. The creation of the third degree dated between 1725 and 1738, the oldest known Masonic document, the Regius Poem, places Masonry in England at or around 526 A.D., and more. Bro. Roberts explained things that I do not recall from the ritual, such as the meaning behind the removal of the shoe, or the cable-tow, etc. In addition to explaining some of the meanings of the symbols that were not explained, he also offered alternative definitions to the symbols we do know, offering a more profound understanding for new and seasoned Master Masons alike.

Bro. Roberts describes the three degrees as symbol-

izing stages in life, Infancy, Manhood, and old age. When discussing the Fellowcraft Degree, he provides additional definitions for the working tools. In our journey into manhood or the Fellowcraft Degree, Bro. Roberts offered an alternative explanation of the flight of winding stairs that was unfamiliar to me. When discussing the symbols of the Master Mason's Degree, Bro. Roberts yet again offers an additional meaning to that of the cable-tow. One thing that caught my attention was when Bro. Roberts explained the journey from Entered Apprentice through Fellowcraft to the doorsteps of the Master Mason's Degree, symbolically, he did this when he stated, "Symbolically, you spent seven years in learning that worldly attraction, money, and other material things are not important. They are only important if they can be used to benefit your fellow man. You went through five more years, symbolically, in self-analysis. You learned to control your mind, your body, and your heart. You used the tools of architecture to square, level, and plumb your spiritual Temple. You proved to your lodge that you were ready to search for Truth. You had squared your life and actions perfectly". (p. 63-64) To me, the above statement can also be one's journey through life; in the beginning, you learned the basics, as a teen, you figured yourself out, and as a man or a Master Mason, your journey continues as you learn the world.

In continuing with this wonderfully written book by Bro. Roberts, he tells us about Bro. Thomas Smith Webb, who has been called the "father" of ritual in America, as he developed his own version of the English Ritual by Bro. William Preston. One meaningful



revelation that Bro. Roberts introduced me to in this book was that the altar and its Volume of Sacred Law, Square, and Compasses symbolize the Ark of the Covenant.

Overall, I immensely enjoyed Bro. Robert's book entitled *The Craft and Its Symbols: Opening the Door to Masonic Symbolism*, I thought it was a great book that every Master Mason should acquire and read. Bro. Roberts is a great writer, and I look forward to reading more of his works, as I learned a great deal.

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Other books by Allen E. Roberts Include:

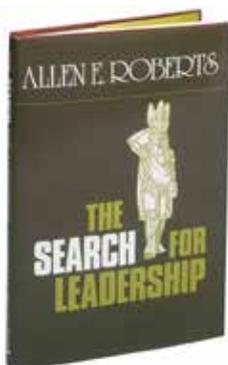
### G. Washington: Master Mason

This is one of the few books which approaches the man from a human interest standpoint. Here we learn what the man was really like--how his friends, neighbors, soldiers, and statesmen regarded him. The author has let Washington tell his own story. His own words, as he wrote them, are used throughout this story of his life. From his birth to his death, we learn what influenced Washington. We find that he was far ahead of his time. Learn things about Washington you never knew before. Five original sketches by Ronald M. LeHew.



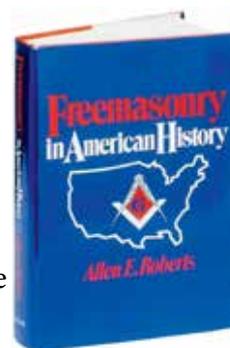
### The Search for Leadership

LEADERSHIP or the lack of it, is the subject of this book. It is one man's attempt to define the deterioration of leadership during the past four decades. It attempts to offer solutions for the decline in the ambition needed for excellence. It offers solutions, not merely for the Freemason, but for every organization. Hard cover dust jacket 240 pages. Freemasonry is a perfect place for good men to get better in the leadership abilities. Author Roberts helps masons everywhere tap into their natural leadership talent.



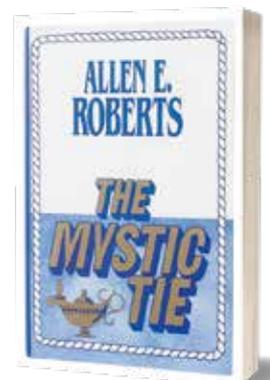
### Freemasonry in American History

Traces the history of Masonry in America. But it is not simply a history of Freemasonry in isolation. It attempts to set it against the general history of time. The earlier part is a chronicle of the introduction of Masonry into the various thirteen original colonies. Throughout the latter part, the names of Freemasons are fully capitalized.



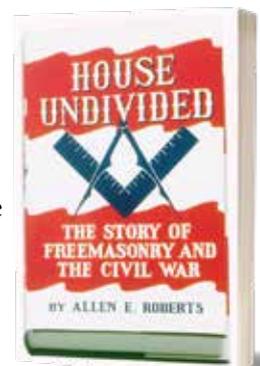
### The Mystic Tie

From the first page to the last, the reader is in for an adventure--one that will take him through the centuries of recorded history. Read about Plato, the Civil War, the "Lodge of confusion," Prince hall Freemasonry and more.



### House Undivided

Here is a story which depicts the "human" side of the conflict. Many eye-witness accounts never before published and the quotations tell what the men of 100 years ago actually said--not what someone thinks they might have said. The author has blended two histories--Freemasonry just before, during, and after the Civil War, with the history of the nation itself. Index and Bibliography. Author Roberts tells this story in chronological order so the reader may better understand the reasons for the statements and activities which took place in Masonic circles.



*All books here may be purchased through Macoy Publishing. They may be also purchased by using Amazon Smile - Use Grand Lodge Illinois Charities as your choice!*

*Upcoming Book reviews include, Freemason's Guide And Compendium, The Mystic Tie, The Pocket History of Freemasonry, The Better Angels of our Nature, and Measured Expectations. If you have a Masonic Book Review, send it to the editor! admin@wcypodcast.com*

