

Fraternal Filler - A Matter of Opinion

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Among the lot of things which perplex me is the Masonic habit of locking things up and hiding the key. "It's the way things have always been done" is the usually accepted explanation for inexplicable (and usually unwritten) 'rules'.

"Always" is a long, long, time! I often wonder if the person is speaking of when he was a 'young' Mason, the way he wanted to do it when he was Master of his lodge, or the way he thinks it really has 'always been done', The worst possible explanation is that "the way its always been done" is merely a means to exert control over the constituents of a Lodge a petty and destructive possibility. Masonry is about freedom of the mind, not structure at our or someone else's personal expense.

I'll go out on a limb and say that the only sure things in Masonry are that nothing has always been done in any particular way in any given jurisdiction, and that it has never been done the same way in all Masonic jurisdictions. On its best face, Freemasonry is perpetually in a state of self invention, when it becomes locked in time, it becomes stagnant

and has little appeal to current or prospective members. Some think that our current problems are due to being trapped in a 1940's or 50's Masonic mentality, when "Big Tent" Masonry held full sway.

Recall in the last paragraph I said that procedures are transient - but don't think this means that Masonic values also are. Our value system beginning with the basic tenets of Truth, Relief and Brotherly Love are the hub of the wheel, one may think of the spokes as the symbols we use to test our philosophy. The rim is our contact with the earth and the earth is not always the same - so the rim

needs **to conform to the demands of a** changing. .Landscape. This **is a long way of** saying that **we need to shape our view of** Freemasonry to make **it** pertinent in our changing **work**

As Masons, we can't afford to lock up our Craft and keep **it chained to a** particular **period of** time, **even if it is** an earlier period **of** our own personal Masonic era. Try to **think of** Freemasonry as **an evolutionary force** – continually appealing **to** and **on shaping new generations. Understand that concept** and you will begin **to** understand **the 'free' in Freemasonry, a structure of values, which** frees **your** mind and **shapes your** daily world, **no matter what** that world looks **like.**