



Volume IIX, Issue 2

August 2016

92nd Virginia Scottish Rite Conference

Virginia Scottish Conference



DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Richmond - Midlothian

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September 23-24, 2016

**Conference Agenda
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- Help Needed Again
- What are you expecting to get out of Freemasonry and the Scottish Rite
- Cardinal Virtues
- Let's Talk about Education
- 9th Degree



Sovereign Grand Inspector General Illustrious James D. Cole, 33°

Help Needed Again

Illustrious James D. Cole, 33°
Lt. Grand Commander and S.G.I.G. in Virginia

Brethren,

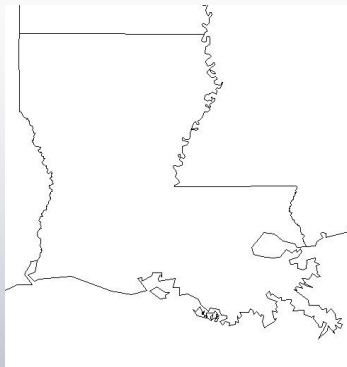
A few days before you will have read this, I directed every Valley in Virginia, at its next Stated Communication to publicize in advance then collect at the meeting a Fraternal Gift for our Brethren in Louisiana. This is what we do as Brother Masons.

Instructions on where to send checks, how to make them payable and a very personal message from the SGIG of Louisiana follows below. Illustrious Bill Mollere, 33° has spoken at our Orient Workshop and is a friend to many of us. I have been in touch with other Brethren from Louisiana and this is a very bad situation. I am receiving updates every few days concerning the relief efforts in that Orient. If any Brother reading this article can help, I urge him to do so, following the instructions outlined in Illustrious Brother Mollere's message below.

Perhaps more importantly, let us use this occasion, including our willingness to respond, as a reminder of the true value of our Fraternity. We are connected by an indissoluble chain of sincere affection to all Brethren in our Fraternity, wherever they may reside. We are reminded in the closing charge in our local Lodges that "these generous principles are to extend further." An important part of our duty is to be constantly aware of those around us who may need our assistance. Sometimes, the "flood damage" can be more individualized, like the loss of a loved one or the loss of a job or the lack of a meal or the need for a ride to the hospital. Often, there are no eloquent explanations of the trouble, but it may simply be an outstretched hand, or a pleading look in one's eye.

People need Masons to be, above all, Masons. Let us then emulate the example of those celebrated artists of Freemasonry who have gone on before and let the world see what we as Masons can do.

Sincerely and fraternally,
Jim



Flood Relief.
Louisiana Scottish Rite Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 64,
Shreveport, LA 71161

The Virginia Light©

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of Virginia

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January 1, 2017

Flood Relief

From SGIG Bill Mollere, Louisiana:

Brothers All

Certainly you have been watching the news about the flooding in the area in and around Baton Rouge. The area extends to the west and south to Iberia, St. Mary, Acadia, Lafayette, Vermilion, Assumption, Terrebonne, Iberville, and Ascension Parishes. To the east, Livingston Parish is basically a lake. Areas north and east in East Feliciana, St. Helena, and Tangipahoa Parishes have a great deal of flooding. Portions of other southern Parishes are affected. Much of East Baton Rouge Parish is flooded.

The Baton Rouge Scottish Rite had four feet of water yesterday. Most of the Masonic Lodges in the area have suffered flooding. These are buildings that have things in them, some things that we cherish, but things. As Masons, we are in the people - Brotherhood business, not in the 'thing' business. Baton Rouge's General Secretary, Illustrious Jimmie Dean Dunkin, had seven feet of water in his home.

We have Brothers who are without homes, cars, clothes, food, work places, churches, and do not know what today or tomorrow will bring, many have lost almost everything.

As the water begins to go down slowly, we need to remember who we are as Masons. Caring for each other, offering assistance and stretching forth that hand of charity. Many pull back when the word 'charity' is used, but we need to realize what we can offer as help, aid and assistance.

I have asked that all donations be channeled through our:

Louisiana Scottish Rite Foundation, Inc.
Flood Relief
P.O. Box 64,
Shreveport, LA 71161

Let us do our duty as good Scottish Rite Masons should, as Masonic Brothers, as Children of our God.

Fraternally,
Bill



Agenda for Ninety-Second Session of the Scottish Rite Conference of Virginia September 23-24, 2016

Thursday, Sept 22

12:00 Noon Hospitality Room set-up. Open in the evening for the golfers and early arrivals.

Friday, Sep 23

8:00 AM	Registration Opens	James River Ballroom Foyer
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM	Knights of St. Andrew	Anna Room
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM	Lunch	Richmond Valley Hospitality Suite
1:30 PM and 2:30 PM	Education Programs	James River Ballroom — E & F
	"Demographics of Our Membership"	III. S. Brent Morris, 33°, G.: C.:
	"The Royal Secret"	III. Arturo de Hoyos, 33°, G.: C.:
3:30 PM	Scottish Rite Foundation Directors	Anna Room
3:30 PM	President/Vice Presidents Meeting	New River room
4:00 PM	SGIG with Valley Personal Representatives, Treasurers, Secretaries, and Alternates	Chesterfield Room
5:00 PM	Banquet with cash bar	James River Ballroom
6:00 PM	Presentation of the Colors	National Sojourners Ft. Lee Richmond Chapter No. 72
	Richmond Childhood Language Center	Robin K. Olivier, Executive Director

Hospitality Suites open following dinner

Education Programs

1:30 PM and 2:30 PM

Demographics of Our Membership

III. S. Brent Morris, 33°

The Royal Secret

III. Arturo de Hoyos, 33°

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Agenda for Ninety-Second Session of the Scottish Rite Conference of Virginia September 23-24, 2016

Continued from page 4

Ladies Saturday Program

11:30 AM

Ladies Lunch and
Program

James River
Ballroom
E and F

Saturday, Sept 24

8:00 AM	Registration Opens	James River Ballroom Foyer
8:30 AM	NINETY-SECOND SESSION	Virginia Scottish Rite Conference
Welcome	James River Ballroom – H	Bro. B. Kevin McLaughlin, KCCH
Invocation	III. Charles W. Seward, 33°	
Pledge of Allegiance	Bro. B. Kevin McLaughlin, 32°KCCH	
Minutes of Last Session	III. Alan W. Adkins, 33°, G.: C.:	
Necrology Service	III. Charles W. Seward, 33°	
Introductions	Bro. B. Kevin McLaughlin, 32°KCCH	
Introductions of Distinguished Guests	III. James D. Cole, 33°	SGIG, Lt. Grand Commander
Remarks of the Grand Master of Masons in Virginia	III. and W.: M.: James E. Litten, 33°	
BREAK		
Reports of Valley Vice — Presidents	Bro. B. Kevin McLaughlin, 32°KCCH	
Remarks of the SGIG in VA	III. James D. Cole, 33°	SGIG, Lt. Grand Commander
Election of Officers	Bro. B. Kevin McLaughlin, 32°KCCH	
Installation of Conference Officers for 2016	III. James D. Cole, 33°, SGIG	
Adjourn & Benediction	III. Charles W. Seward, 33°	
SCOTTISH RITE FOUNDATION		
Annual Meeting	III. Robert L. Warren, 33°	
Noon — Lunch on your own		
2:00 PM	Presentation of the 13°	Richmond Valley James River Ballroom - G
6:00 PM	Banquet with cash bar at 5 PM	James River Ballroom
	Presentation of the Colors	Richmond Commandery No. 2

Hospitality Suites open following dinner

Ladies Saturday Program

11:30 AM Ladies Lunch and Program James River Ballroom — E & F



**Illustrious Edmund Cohen, 33°
Personal Representative of the SGIG in Alexandria**

What are you expecting to get out of Freemasonry and the Scottish Rite?

We all joined Freemasonry thinking that this was the organization for us. It promised to make us better men, it offered life-long learning through an exposure to Masonic philosophy, history, and jurisprudence, which in combination constitutes a course in moral philosophy that would have a real impact on our lives. We eagerly went through the degrees and, having achieved the third degree and having gotten a membership card from the Grand Lodge, we supposed that at last we were Master Masons. But then, some of us failed to make meaningful connections with the members of our Lodge and felt neglected. Happily, others of us began to enjoy the fellowship and camaraderie of our Lodge Brethren. We dipped our toes further into the ritual, learning a part or two, and perhaps even taking on some of the administrative burden of the Lodge. Even so, when we looked around and did some reflection, many of us felt that there must be more to the title "Master Mason" than we had thus far experienced. We sought further light by exposure to those so called higher degrees, and we ended up with additional membership cards from any number of appendant bodies, but many of us still did not feel content that we had gotten all that we had hoped would be available to us in Freemasonry. And we were right. To be sure, we had gained certain experiences, and had been exposed to certain lessons presented through allegory and symbol, but this simply gave us tools that might assist us in our Masonic education. We discovered that some additional serious effort was required on our part because, until our status as a Freemason actually began to affect how we lived our lives and we started to change our conduct to act in accordance with Masonic principles, we were just treading water and not taking that next step in the process of becoming a Master Mason. At an organizational level many of our Masonic leaders, concerned about this issue have focused on the need to practice what might be called Masonic decorum or Masonic courtesy. They advise us to stay grounded and not get wrapped up in the wrong end of Freemasonry, the accolades, the titles, or the offices we hold. What is more important is to stick to Masonic principles, which at its core must include treating people, all people, with respect, doing the right thing, acting honorably and with integrity, and reaching out to help others where and when we can. This comes close to capturing the Masonic way of life. One Grand Master has instructed his officers at the Grand Lodge and Blue Lodge levels to make everyone they come into contact with feel welcomed, wanted, and needed. Obvious. But how often do we say hello, or shake someone's hand without even looking them in the eye. We ask how they are doing, as we move along, making it clear to the person with whom we are speaking that this phrase is a salutation rather than a serious question or a real expression of interest. This is not making someone feel welcomed. How often do we sit with our friends in Lodge or in the dining hall ignoring a Brother sitting alone rather than sitting next to him, and not asking him to join us, or including him in our conversation?

This is not making someone feel wanted. And how often do we complain about the lack of help in a Lodge, although we never have called or reached out to a new member, or in fact to a long-term member, to ask for his opinion or his help. This is not making someone feel needed. Attending to all of this is important because two of the important values in Freemasonry are friendship and fellowship. But there is even more to Freemasonry than this, it is a progressive program of moral education which is supposed to improve our character and our lives. Yet some of us have found that the gap between theory and practice has loomed large. We found that some of our

There is a lot we can do to plumb the depths of Freemasonry through the enormous library of material available in print and now on the Internet, and there is more that we in the Scottish Rite can do to help you.

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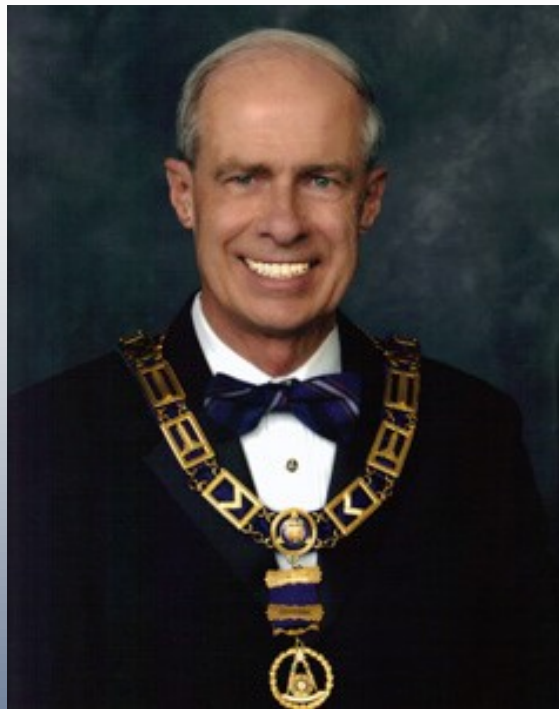
What are you expecting to get out of Freemasonry and the Scottish Rite?

Continued from page 6

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Brethren did not always live up to our expectations; worse yet, we found examples in our own conduct where we had not lived up to these expectations. This is not surprising. Changing behavior is neither quick nor easy, and it often appears that our bad habits have more staying power than our good intentions. We want to be accepted, and over the years we develop a persona that we think will make us popular. Sometimes in the guise of being humorous and fun-loving, we end up saying things that are unkind or even cruel. And today this can be even more damaging because, having become so used to immediately sharing our views on social media, we may post words and pictures without taking the time to reflect on the effect they might have on others or the impression they create about ourselves. We need to realize that those we meet rarely know what is in our heart or what we really think. We are known through our words, and judged by our actions. As Masons we are taught to set a guard at the entrance of our thoughts, to place a watch at the door of our lips, and to post a sentinel at the avenue of our actions, thereby excluding every unqualified and unworthy thought, word and deed, and preserving consciences void of offense towards God and towards man. Thus, it is that Freemasonry stresses courtesy and civility, and our Lodges, through the example offered by its officers and through the mentoring provided to new Masons, instruct us to avoid intemperate speech and teach us to show respect for our fellow men, most especially to our Masonic Brethren. Even if we attend to the issues of Masonic decorum and Masonic courtesy and are more careful and circumspect in our own behavior, the question still remains, how much are we getting out of Freemasonry and how well is the Lodge and the Scottish Rite meeting our expectations.

There is a lot we can do to plumb the depths of Freemasonry through the enormous library of material available in print and now on the Internet, and there is more that we in the Scottish Rite can do to help you. We are attempting to improve your experience in the Alexandria Scottish Rite in the context of our new strategic planning effort and by further improving our Educational programs. In my next message, I will talk more about some of the things that we are considering in both of these contexts, but you can become actively involved in these efforts. I suggest you contact Peter Terrill, our Strategic Planning Chair and also share your ideas with III. Loyd Davis, the Chair of our Education and Americanism Committee, Alexandria Valley.



Illustrious Loyd Davis, 33°, the Chair of our Education and Americanism Committee, Alexandria Valley.

A Reflection on the Four Cardinal Virtues

Brother Brian Walaszczyk, 32°

As Freemasons, we put our faith in God, hope for immortality, and strive to be charitable towards all mankind. We actively forge the virtues of our institution into our daily activities, attempt to hammer out the vices and superfluities of our lives, and develop our character through self-reflection and Masonic labor. Despite these efforts, we remain imperfect creatures and make mistakes throughout the course of our lives. Understanding the inevitable imperfections of man helps a Mason understand the importance of forgiveness, and reminds us to whisper good council into our Brother's ear; but more importantly, it encourages us to improve our own moral character. One way we do this is by utilizing the tools and lessons of our Craft to smooth out the rough ashlar of our lives, slowly shaping the imperfections of our character into stones worthy of building our own spiritual temple. When I was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason, I asked myself, "Where and how do I begin to improve myself in Masonry?" I began to reflect upon the vital lessons of the four cardinal virtues: temperance, fortitude, prudence, and justice. I dwell on these virtues, which we were taught as Entered Apprentices, because sometimes in the desire for more light in Masonry we may seek to advance in the Craft too quickly. We may not take sufficient time to contemplate these initial Masonic lessons, perhaps considering them too basic or timeworn to require much reflection. This would be a mistake, for the four cardinal virtues help us to build a solid foundation upon which we can continue to improve ourselves in Masonry. As we progressed from infancy to youth and then young adulthood, and became socialized, we slowly began to chip off the rough edges of our imperfections. Before being initiated, we were judged to be worthy and well qualified, of good report, and well recommended. We were welcomed into Freemasonry because it was judged that we already possessed good moral character. Incorporating Masonry's cardinal virtues into our daily lives helps us to continue to improve ourselves and develop into better husbands, fathers, Brothers, and neighbors. Ultimately, we hope to become role models for those around us. Some have questioned if all of this striving to become a better person really makes a difference?

In the book *Esoterika The Symbolism of the Blue Degrees of Freemasonry*, Albert Pike stated the square was an instrument that can be applied to level surfaces and rectilinear angles only. He stated that anciently, the earth was supposed to be a level and so the square was a fit symbol of the earth and all that material in nature and man. Pike noted, "the compasses can describe circles, and is used in spherical trigonometry where the square cannot be used." This made the compasses a fit symbol of the sky and the heavens and, thus, all that is heavenly and spiritual. Pike explained that a candidate prepared to be initiated represents man in the state of ignorance and barbarism. At this point he is ruled by his animal passions; his moral sense and reason are only partially developed, and certainly not in control of his actions. When the candidate is brought to light, his attention is directed to the compasses and square on the altar. The two points of the compasses symbolize his moral sense and reason, while the two arms of the square represent his essential appetites and animal passions. In the Entered Apprentice degree he begins to get light, but the square is dominant. The moral imperfection of the Entered Apprentice is further referenced in Albert Mackey's *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*. Mackey alluded to the manner in which Entered Apprentices wear their aprons. He explained, "Apprentices at the Temple were said to wear their aprons in the peculiar manner characteristic of that class that they might preserve their garments from being defiled by untempered mortar. This is mortar which has not been properly mixed for use, and it thus became a symbol of passions and appetites not duly restrained.

Hence the Speculative Apprentice was made to wear his apron in that peculiar manner to teach him that he should not allow his soul to be defiled by the untempered mortar of unruly passions." This allusion further evidenced the importance of tempering the animal instincts of Entered Apprentices, symbolical of our days of youth and

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These cardinal virtues in conjunction with faith, hope, and charity enable us to complete our assent towards our goal of becoming better men, conscious of the immortal influence of our charitable actions towards all mankind, and becoming worthy of that Celestial Lodge above. But whence came our cardinal virtues?

A Reflection on the Four Cardinal Virtues

Continued from page 8



Pike explained that a candidate prepared to be initiated represents man in the state of ignorance and barbarism. At this point he is ruled by his animal passions; his moral sense and reason are only partially developed, and certainly not in control of his actions. When the candidate is brought to light, his attention is directed to the compasses and square on the altar. The two points of the compasses symbolize his moral sense and reason, while the two arms of the square represent his essential appetites and animal passions.

of the beginning of our Masonic progress. Pike explains that when an Apprentice becomes a Fellowcraft, the compasses allude to his beginning to subdue his animalistic vices by means of reason and action. He begins to circumscribe his passions and keep his desires within due bounds by actively utilizing the cardinal virtues of temperance, fortitude, prudence, and justice. Then, when the Fellowcraft is raised to a Master Mason, the compasses rather than the square is dominant, alluding to his attaining that condition in which the moral, intellectual, and spiritual forces of his nature have become superior to its material and animal forces and energies. As a Master Mason his moral sense and reason is supposed to have habitual mastery over his appetites and passions. The divine spark within him helps him to rise above his earthly and material desires and to transcend towards a point where he has mastered the four cardinal virtues and has obtained the power to achieve a perfect balance and harmony in his actions. The cardinal virtues may also be applied to the symbolism of the seven-rung version of Jacob's ladder enabling man to evolve beyond his animal nature. By applying the virtues, a man begins to climb the ladder toward the heavens above. Slowly climbing, man begins to move upward, perfecting his points of entry into the universal Lodge in the starry decked heaven above. These cardinal virtues in conjunction with faith, hope, and charity enable us to complete our ascent towards our goal of becoming better men, conscious of the immortal influence of our charitable actions towards all mankind, and becoming worthy of that Celestial Lodge above. But whence came our cardinal virtues? It may or may not be a surprise to learn these four cardinal virtues are neither unique nor solely that of our institution. Upon researching these cardinal virtues, I quickly learned that temperance, fortitude, prudence, and justice have been the moral virtues of many religions and philosophies throughout time. This makes complete sense as these virtues are as universal and timeless as charity and love. Temperance, fortitude, prudence, and justice have been applied as virtues by Greek and Roman thinkers, Christian and Islamic theology, and Vedic and Buddhist literature. Brother Professor Dr. U. Gauthamadas of the Lodge

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A Reflection on the Four Cardinal Virtues

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	object	action
accident	P rudence <small>Hope + Charity</small> discern good in circumstance and the means to attain it	T emperance <small>Faith + Charity</small> moderate attraction of pleasure and balance in the use of created goods
substance	J ustice <small>Faith + Hope</small> constant and firm will to give what is due to God and then neighbor	F ortitude <small>Faith + Hope + Charity</small> firm in difficulties and constant in the pursuit of good

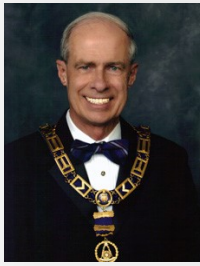
Prudentia No. 369 under the Grand Lodge of India wrote a research paper titled, “An Exploration of Moral Virtues as Applicable to Freemasonry” that further explores this topic in depth, which I recommend for those who wish to learn more about the historic application of these virtues. The Catholic Church’s virtues are temperance, fortitude, prudence, justice, hope, faith, and charity. The catechism of the Catholic Church notes: “The moral virtues are acquired by human effort. They are the fruit and seed of morally good acts; they dispose all the powers of the human being for communion with divine love.” *The Book of Wisdom*, Chapter 8 notes, “if anyone loves righteousness, her [wisdom] labors are virtues; for she [wisdom] teaches self-control and prudence, justice, and courage.” Chapter 13 continues, “... because of her [wisdom] I shall have immortality, and leave an everlasting remembrance to those who come after me.” Many of the world’s religious teachings are based on these fundamental virtues and the golden rule of love. This shows morality is universal, and it is the application of these tenants, not the method of how they are taught, which is of most importance.

The teachings of the great religions, and the teachings of Freemasonry come together in stressing the value of practicing self-control and charity. As Masons we have a plethora of symbols teaching morality. Incorporating the four cardinal virtues into our daily life will help us become better men. It will provide a key to living in harmony with our environment and our fellows. And as a consequence, we will act in such a way as to improve our communities and ourselves, and become more worthy of that house not made with hands.

References:

- Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Catechism of the Catholic Church. Citta Del Vaticano, 11 Apr. 2003. Web. 18 Nov. 2015. Gauthamadas, Bro. Prof. Dr. U.
- An Exploration Of Moral Virtues As Applicable To Freemasonry*. (n.d.): n. pag. Web. Sept.-Oct. 2015.
- King James Bible*. Official King James Bible Online: Authorized King James Version (KJV). N.p., n.d. Web. 18 Nov. 2015. .
- Mackey, Albert, M.D. *An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences*. Vol I and II. New York: Masonic History, 1916.
- Pike, Albert. *Esoterika The Symbolism of the Blue Degrees of Freemasonry*. Ed. Arturo De Hoyos. Second ed. Scottish Rite Research Society, 2008.

Understanding the inevitable imperfections of man helps a Mason understand the importance of forgiveness, and reminds us to whisper good council into our Brother’s ear; but more importantly, it encourages us to improve our own moral character. One way we do this is by utilizing the tools and lessons of our Craft to smooth out the rough ashlar of our lives, slowly shaping the imperfections of our character into stones worthy of building our own spiritual temple.



Illustrious Loyd Davis, 33°
Chair of our Education and Americanism Committee, Valley of Alexandria

You may be wondering how to approach your search for more Light using these books. Let me suggest that you look first at the degrees that were conferred at your Initiatory Reunion. If you do not remember which degrees are conferred, you need the Program from a recent Reunion. Of course, a better approach is to attend the next Reunion, get your own personal copy of the Reunion Program, and see the degrees again.

Let's Talk about Education

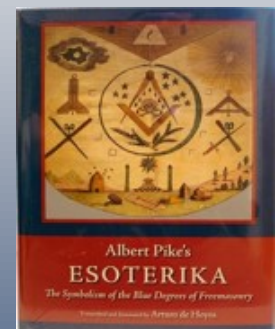
It seems to me that some of our newer Brothers may be interested in finding out more about our Rite, its history, structure, degrees, and current activities. And I suspect there are other Brothers who, in the past have been too busy to pursue these interests and are now in a position to take up that pursuit. I want to apprise you of some of the education documents available to you from the Alexandria Scottish Rite website: www.alexandriascottishrite.org, from books you received when you took the degrees at a Reunion, from other books available at the Supreme Council website's store: www.scottishrite.org, and, of course, from a Google search query. Let's start with the Alexandria Valley website. If you look under the publications, all published documents tab, you will find a document called "Two Constitutions" which traces the Scottish Rite from the Constitutions and Regulations of 1762 through The Grand Constitutions of 1786 to the Statutes of the Supreme Council of the Thirty-third Degree of 1859. This is a good introductory article about the documents which define our institution. If you desire more in-depth information, you now know the names of the documents to enter in your Google search for more information. Next you will note a document called "Soldier of the Light." This document discusses how you might approach obtaining more Masonic Light through books which you received from the Valley at your initiatory Reunion.

To learn what is entailed in becoming an officer in one of the bodies of the Valley, you want to check out "Alexandria Valley Job Descriptions from Scottish Rite Conference." You will also find the Valley Bylaws posted there. To keep up to date with current activities, you will find a copy of all Valley Bulletins under the publications tab. I will assume that many of you are interested in learning more about the legends, symbology, regalia, and philosophical teaching of the degrees. You may have heard that I am providing PowerPoint presentations of each of the degrees at seven of our meetings each year. Here's the deal, they are available only at the meeting when presented. If you're not there, you do not get to see it. It will not be posted on the Valley website. The reason for these restrictions is to encourage you to come to our meetings. If you have not attended in a while, you will find that we have overhauled the content and conduct of the meetings. You will find that we now have a Main Speaker whose topic will be of Masonic or current local interest. He is recruited by one of the Heads of Bodies to bring inspiration and enlightenment to our meeting. Second, we have my educational presentation entitled "The Degrees of the Scottish Rite ... the rest of the story." The remainder of the meeting includes remarks by the Personal Representative and conduct of the business of the Lodge.

These two books are available from the store at the Supreme Council website; www.scottishrite.org. The annotated version of *Morals and Dogma* contains elucidating comments and additions by Arturo De Hoyos, 33° G\C, Grand Archivist. As



you have heard, *Morals and Dogma* is difficult to read. It is filled with compound complex sentences similar to an engineering textbook. It takes several readings of each sentence to fully understand the information contained therein.



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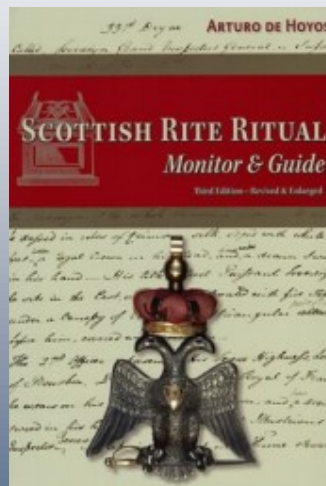
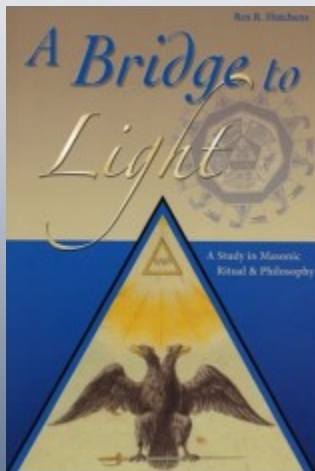
Let's Talk about Education

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You may be wondering how to approach your search for more Light using these books. Let me suggest that you look first at the degrees that were conferred at your Initiatory Reunion. If you do not remember which degrees are conferred, you need the Program from a recent Reunion. Of course, a better approach is to attend the next Reunion, get your own personal copy of the Reunion Program, and see the degrees again.

The annotations by Illustrious De Hoyos, 33° G.C. make that process much easier. You may not know that Pike authored rituals for the three Craft Degrees. They are presented in Albert Pike's *Esoterika*, which has also been edited by Illustrious Arturo De Hoyos 33° G.C. These Scottish Rite degrees are practiced in at least a couple of places that I know about; in La France Lodge No. 93, under the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia, and by Lodges under the Grand Lodge of Louisiana. Brethren, I have presented several resources for you to consult to begin or continue your search for Light. I do want you to understand the power of Google when it comes to Masonic research. A simple query on Google will send you to many places where relevant information resides. I've been known to have at least eight tabs open from one Google query and spend an hour down a path I had not thought about when I began my search. Start now. Enjoy your search for more Light.

Here are two of the books you received at your Initiatory Reunion. The *Scottish Rite Ritual Monitor and Guide* contains information on the early history of Masonry and the Scottish Rite, development of the Scottish Rite Rituals, structure of the Scottish Rite, general instructions, and the ritual of the 29 Scottish Rite Degrees. *A Bridge to Light* is a summary of each of the degrees which sheds additional light on its lessons.



You may have heard that I am providing Power-Point presentations of each of the degrees at seven of our meetings each year. Here's the deal, they are available only at the meeting when presented. If you're not there, you don't get to see it!

The Scottish Rite Research Society

The benefits of membership in the Scottish Rite Research Society are many. Some are intangibles, such as the potential for interaction and discussions with the brightest minds in contemporary Masonic philosophy and debate. The most important benefit is the availability of what we all came here for, which is more light in Masonry. This is manifest most particularly in SRRS publications and Masonic conferences.

The tangible benefits of membership in the SRRS include:

- access to some of the most thought-provoking ideas in contemporary Masonic research
- a 10% discount on Society books and certain items bought at the House of the Temple or via the on-line **Store**
- the annual hardback volume of *Heredom*[®], the preeminent publication of scholarly Masonic research
- the Society's quarterly research journal, *The Plumblin*[®]
- early notice for upcoming conferences and meetings on issues of Masonic importance
- your SRRS membership card and lapel pin SRRS Members may also receive:
- special discounted offers on advanced sales throughout the year
- a bonus book or other item

TO JOIN

There are two levels of membership in the Society.

Member

Life Member

In addition to receiving *Heredom*, *The Plumblin*, and discounts on Scottish Rite merchandise, SRRS members who pay their dues before the end of the year they are due occasionally receive an extra "bonus item" produced for that year. This is our way of saying "thank you" to members who stay dues-current.

Remember to visit the Scottish Rite Research Society section of the **Store** to see what products are available with your membership discount.

On-line

Join us via our on-line [Store](#) and click on "Scottish Rite Research Society."

By Telephone

Call the Scottish Rite Store toll-free at 1-866-445-9196, Monday through Thursday, from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Please have your credit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express, Discover) information ready.

On-line

Join us via our on-line [Store](#) and click on "Scottish Rite Research Society."



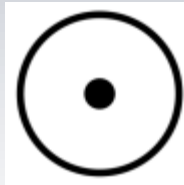
Sacred Circular Geometry: The Philosophical Elements of the Circumpunct

Worshipful Jonathan T. Ruark

Sacred Geometry is a very complex and detailed science relevant to the mathematical analysis of God's creation. There have been many tomes dedicated to the various facets of this art. Therefore, in order to narrow the scope, I have decided to focus this paper on the topic of sacred circular geometry.

The Circumpunct

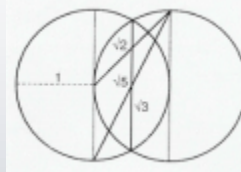
The point within a circle that we are introduced to in the Entered Apprentice degree struck me as a very special symbol, and the more I researched it, the more profound it became. It can only be drawn with the Mason's tool that represents the spiritual or heavenly things; the compasses. Since the point within a circle is derived from a spiritual tool, it therefore must be a heavenly symbol. In fact, upon reflection, we find that God is the point, and the universe is the circle around it. The symbolic link of the Divine and this symbol crosses ages and civilizations.



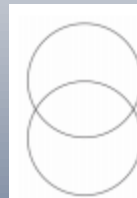
If God is the point of infinite energy and the source of all creation, then let's explore how He began creation from nothingness. First, if there is nothing, then the theory of relativity tells us that there is nothing in relation to Him. He exists without time or space. But if He wishes to create, He must will space to be created in order to have room for creation. Since God is perfect and uniform, we represent the radiation of space from the center point to be a uniform and perfect circle. We now have space for God to create. Being perfect, He moves one unit of radius to the edge of the first circle and creates a second circle of the same size. This is alluded to in the creation story where "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved across the face of the waters and God said, let there be light, and there was light" In fact, in some translations of the Bible, circular geometry is a given as it can be translated in Proverbs 8:27, "When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth."

Vesica Piscis

This symbol is known as the Vesica Piscis, literally translating to "fish bladder." The mathematical ratio of the height of the vesica piscis to the width across its center is the square root of three. This gives it more significance as a divine number. The hypotenuse of a square with sides of length one is the square root of two, while this geometric figure generates the square root of three and with other calculations can create the square root of five. Another way to generate the square root of three is by measuring the distance between opposite corners inside of a perfect cube; a symbol of perfection or squaring the circle.



Symbolically, the vesica piscis has many meanings. To begin, when placed in a vertical orientation, it can represent the duality of the earthly and the heavenly, and represent the alchemical doctrine of "as above, so below." Christians have symbolically linked Jesus Christ to this joining of the heavenly and the earthly. This shape is also the foundation for the fish symbol associated with Jesus, the Ichthys, and alludes to his miracles with fish, such as the full fishing nets and the feeding of the thousands.



When viewed in a horizontal orientation, with the vesica piscis standing vertical, it becomes the symbol of the sacred feminine by its similarity to the shape of the female anatomy. I find this fascinating since it balances the circumpunct as a male symbol and continues to support the hermaphroditic qualities of the creator as mentioned in other esoteric texts. This orientation has been used

The mystics of the past did not know the microscopic scientific explanations for the purpose of the seed of life. Today, we know that the human embryo forms this figure on the third day after fertilization.

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Sacred Circular Geometry: The Philosophical Elements of the Circumpunct

Continued from page 14

in Christian art to enclose Saints, the Madonna, and even Christ himself. Keep in mind that so far we are representing creation in only a two-dimensional manner. This also works in three dimensions with spheres and cross sections of them.

Continuing around

After God has created once, he will continue to create again, moving around the second circle in a perfect manner, especially toward the next innermost circular point. His next creation produces a linking of three rings, also called the Borromean rings. The perfectly aligned circles have their center points aligned in an equilateral triangle formation. As the equilateral triangle represents Holy Trinity in York Rite Masonry, so do the Borromean rings represent it as well. The Borromean rings are a symbol of the Christian Trinity as far back as thirteenth century manuscripts.



Creation continues around the center circle to add a fourth, fifth and sixth circle, representing the associated days of creation. This complete six-petal flower is where our geometry becomes interesting.

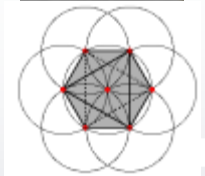


The Seed of Life

The newly created seven circle flower is known as the Genesis Pattern, or the seed of life, and is thus explained. We described earlier how each surrounding circle represents the days of creation, but this perfect figure has further knowledge buried within it. Not only is this shape useful in geometrically defining other mathematical proofs, but is a foundation for other areas of creation. Taken as a three-dimensional figure, we can visualize this as a cluster of cell-like spheres. The center of these compacted spheres form a perfect cube. The mystics of the past did not know the microscopic scientific explanations for the purpose of the seed of life. Today, we know that the human embryo forms this figure on the third day after fertilization.

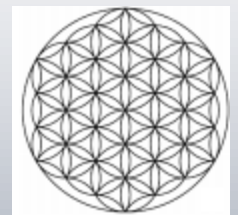


Also, by connecting the tips of the six flower petals of the seed of life, a perfect hexagon is created; as the honeycomb is found in nature.



The Egg and Flower of Life

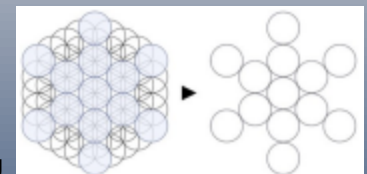
The intelligent design of the Architect does not stop there. By continuing this pattern on the outer circles, we will eventually arrive at what is known as the Egg of Life. This is another allusion to the beginning of creation. Repeat again, and we result in the Flower of Life. This pattern has been found around the world, from several cultures which could never have met. It has been found in Ireland, Turkey, England, Israel, Egypt, China, Tibet, Greece, Japan, Sweden, Lapland, Iceland, the Yucatan, and several other places. It is everywhere!



What is fascinating about the Flower of Life is that it stops at three rotations of the pattern. Often it is encompassed by a circular border to contain the knowledge. It has been recorded that this was no accident. The ancient mystery schools knew that another round of circular geometry yielded a far more important symbol, the Fruit of Life.

The Fruit of Life

By going beyond the third rotation and onto the fourth rotation, we end up in the mystery schools. Extending



When viewed in a horizontal orientation, with the vesica piscis standing vertical, it becomes the symbol of the sacred feminine by its similarity to the shape of the female anatomy.

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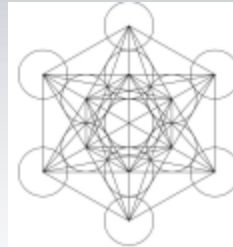
Sacred Circular Geometry: The Philosophical Elements of the Circumpunct

Continued from page 15

the Flower of Life to the outer parameter and detailing the circles that extend in the 6 directions from the center, we can create the Fruit of Life. This pattern, as the mystics knew it, is one of the primordial patterns that all creation is based upon.

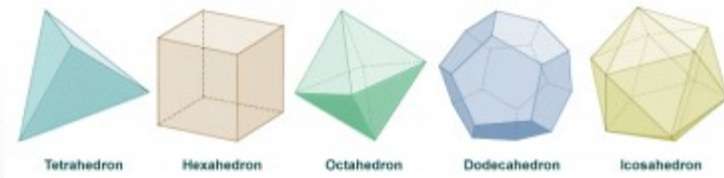
Metatron's Cube

The Fruit of Life is so powerful because with it, we are able to trace another foundational pattern. If we connect the feminine, circular shapes via straight, masculine lines, and ensuring that all possible paths are connected, we complete a diagram called Metatron's Cube. Metatron is an archangel in Judaism that is known as a celestial scribe, or "recording angel." Metatron's Cube when deconstructed contains the blueprints for all of the platonic solids.



Platonic solids

A Platonic solid is a regular, convex polyhedron. It is constructed by congruent regular polygonal faces with the same number of faces meeting at each vertex. Five solids meet those criteria, and each is named after its number of faces. Like the seed of life before them, these platonic solids have been scientifically proven to be the primary lattice structures for crystal structures, viruses, and other protein structures. These were constructed as far back as 4,000 B.C.



In conclusion, we have briefly demonstrated the relationship from the Mason's compass to an abstraction of creation, which, when iterated upon, reconstructs divine proportions that are the foundational building blocks of life. When one reflects on this, it supports the idea of an intelligent design set by a Grand Architect of the Universe. I encourage the reader to continue to research for himself the Flower of Life and its geometrical, philosophical, and spiritual implications.

Since God is perfect and uniform, we represent the radiation of space from the center point to be a uniform and perfect circle. We now have space for God to create. Being perfect, He moves one unit of radius to the edge of the first circle and creates a second circle of the same size.

The Scottish Rite Conference

September 23-24, 2016

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(Danville)

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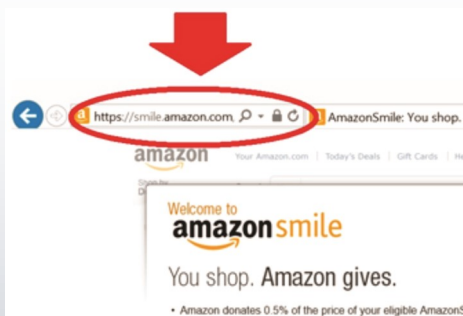
A Smile on the Valley

Brother James V. Cady and Brother Sean W. Watterson

Scottish Rite of Virginia

Masonic Brethren, their families, friends and businesses can now help their Valley at no cost to themselves and it's never been easier. When you shop on Amazon.com, you can direct a portion of your purchase price be sent to the RiteCare of your choice (see listing below), thanks to Amazon's charitable program called *Amazon Smile*. This program, Amazon takes 0.5% (one-half of one percent) of the price of any item purchased and donates that money to the shopper's charity of choice at no additional cost.

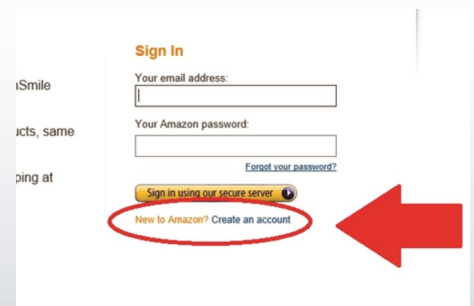
- ◆ Scottish Rite Childhood Language Center—Richmond
- ◆ Norfolk Scottish Rite Foundation Inc.—Norfolk
- ◆ Portsmouth Scottish Rite Foundation Inc.—Portsmouth
- ◆ Tidewater Scottish Rite Speech and Language Foundation Inc. Newport News—Newport News
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1-Go to <https://smile.amazon.com> (You must always use this address instead of amazon.com. The RiteCare Center of your choice will not receive money if you do not.)



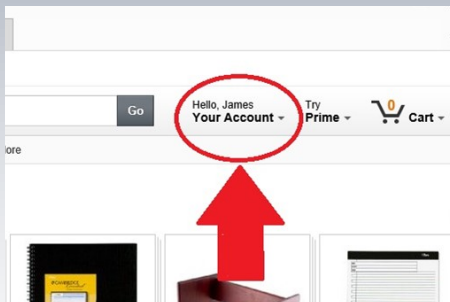
2-If you already have an Amazon login, log in here.



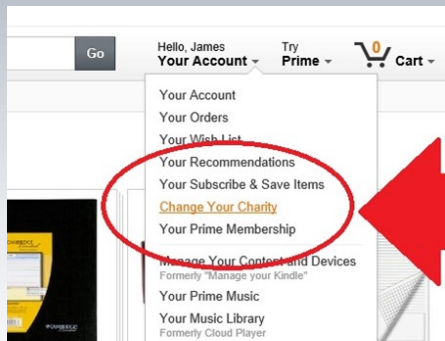
3-If you do not have an Amazon login, create an account by clicking on "Create an account."

A Smile on the Valley

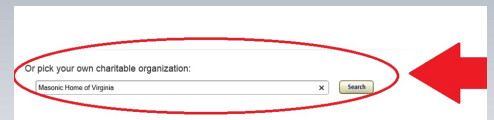
Brother James V. Cady and Brother Sean W. Watterson



4-Once logged in, click on "Your Account."



5-Select "Change Your Charity" from the drop-down window.



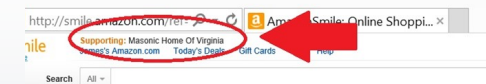
6-Type in the blank, RiteCare Center of your choice as illustrated.



7-Click the "Search" button.



8-Make sure you choose RiteCare Center of your choice by clicking the correct "Select" button.



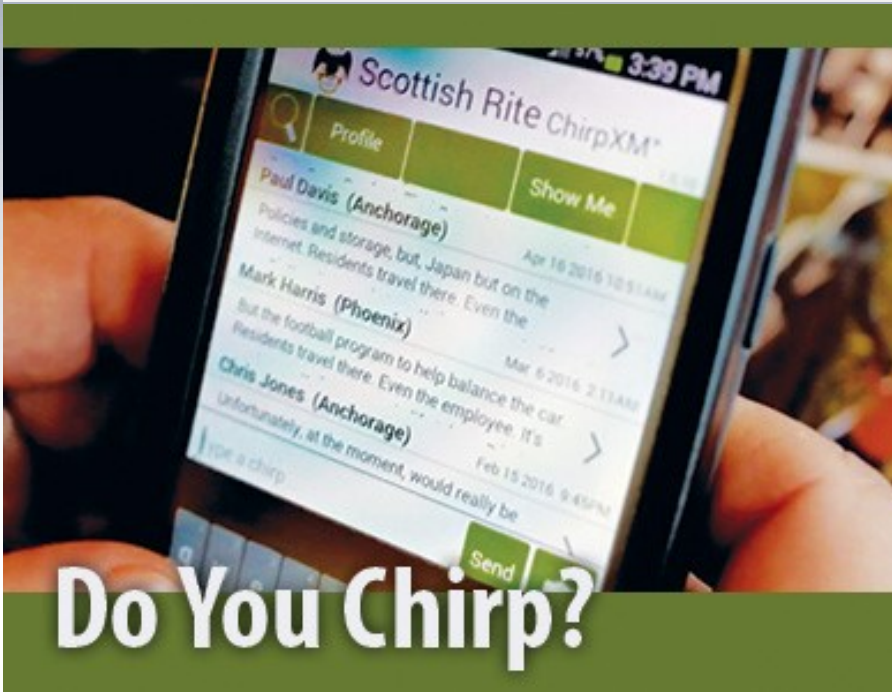
9-Verify your choice by looking at the "Supporting:" field near the top left of the page.

10-Remember! You must always log in to <https://smile.amazon.com> in order for the RiteCare Center of your choice charity to receive funds.

11-This wonderful feature is being made possible by Amazon, at no cost to the buyer.



Scottish Rite Chirp



SR Chirp is a Smartphone app that enables Scottish Rite Masons to communicate quickly and conveniently

[SR Chirp video](#)

The Scottish Rite of Freemasonry—Southern Jurisdiction is making a new tool available exclusively to Scottish Rite Masons, known as SR Chirp. This is a personal communication and messaging utility which operates as a mobile phone application and is unique to the Scottish Rite.

Maintaining meaningful personal communications in today's fast-paced and technology intense day can be challenging. Smartphones are everywhere, and a variety of services including Facebook, Twitter, and text messaging make keeping in touch possible using many different methods.

Each popular technology provides benefits as well as challenges. With so much information available to us, it's often hard to keep track of some of the messages that are most important.

The name "Chirp" was selected by the application's developer, which has other business-to-consumer projects apart from the Scottish Rite. SR Chirp messages are known as "Chirps."

Using the application, Scottish Rite members may to "Chirp" to each other

Continued on page 19

Scottish Rite Chirp

Continued from page 18

and share their experiences, day-to-day interactions and thoughts, updates from their local Valleys and Ori-ents, or simply stay connected throughout the jurisdiction.

The application enables Scottish Rite Masons to quickly and conveniently communicate and interact. Although SR Chirp is similar to text messaging in some ways, because SR Chirp is usable only by Scottish Rite members, it becomes simple to separate communications with brothers from the sometimes over-whelming number of messaging that are part of our personal and business lives.

SR Chirp users also customize the messages that they desire to see. A user might elect to view only mes-sages from his own Valley, or might decide to reach out to another Valley where he is traveling. Because the application is location-aware, users can elect to see messages and interact with other users easily and conveniently wherever they are—and not see messages from locations or Valleys that are not of immediate interest.

SR Chirp is available as a free download on Android mobile platforms and coming soon for Apple devices.

Installation is simple and registration requires only that you confirm your membership and create a user ID through the my.scottishrite.org portal if you have not already done so. Activation instructions are included with the application installation.

Please download SR Chirp and be part of the online and mobile community. We're looking forward to get-ting acquainted!

SR Chirp is available as a free download on both Apple iPhone and Android mobile platforms.

Here are the mobile links to download the free app from your phone.

Apple:

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/sr-chirp/id911534384?ls=1andmt=8>

Android:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=net.scottishrite.srchirp>

The universal link will route your phone to the appropriate store when clicked from your phone.

<http://qrs.ly/gr49ng2>

You can scan the QR code to take to either store your phone supports as well.

Celebrating the Craft Danville



L-R: Venerable Master Darin Prillaman, Tyler Ley, 32nd degree, and Troy Lewis, KCCH



L-R: Venerable Master Darin Prillaman, his wife, Dawn, Valley Secretary Herman Roach and Personal Representative W.A.



Danville Scottish Rite Valley Secretary Herman Roach with checkbook in hand.

Danville Valley Scottish Rite members had a good time watching "Celebrate the Craft". Members dropped by the Danville Masonic Center and make a donation or support the effort by making a pledge.

Wells III are watching the segments during "Celebrating the Craft: The Valley of Danville had a hotdog cookout with all the trimmings to raise funds to help restore the House of the Temple and Rite Care. Scottish Rite members enjoyed the variety of entertainment offered during the fundraising event.

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Virginia Memorial Day Parade Portsmouth

Since 1884, the Portsmouth Virginia Memorial Day Parade, has always marched proudly down High Street. It is the oldest continuous Memorial Day parade in the United States.



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The Old Dominion university speech and language float, sponsored by the Scottish Rite foundation joined the 132nd Memorial Day parade. Jack Goodwin, Randy Reed joined the students aboard the float for its maiden voyage in public.

The students enjoyed, decorating the float, and greeting the many people who came to see the mile of bands, military units and

floats of all kinds.

The Masonic family was well represented, with Masonic Lodges, Scottish Rite, Commandery, and youth groups.

Hope this gives you a better picture.



Nineth Degree

“Elu of the Nine”

Elu of the Nine

Summary:

Fear and ignorance are the two major enemies which enslave men. It is important that we do not become slaves of certain ideas; that we have the power to fight against ignorance and intolerance for the sake of civilization and our own intellectual freedom. It is our duty to morally raise our own conscience, to enlighten our souls and minds so that we may actively participate in instructing and enlightening others.

DUTIES:

To enlighten our souls and minds.
To instruct and enlighten the people.
To be vigilant to the interests and honor of our country.

FOR REFLECTION:

Do principles shape and control your conduct or are you guided by sentiment?

IMPORTANT SYMBOLS:

The assassin Abairam, the cave with a pale light and fountain, the stranger Pharos, The Master Hiram as Human Freedom.



Dagger, jewel, cordon, and apron of the 9th Degree

Continued on page 25

Nineth Degree

“Elu of the Nine”

Continued from page 24

The apron is white lambskin spotted with red; it is lined and bordered in black. An arm holding a dagger is painted or embroidered on the flap. In the middle is an arm holding a bloody head by the hair. The apron is an emblem of Masonry and truth sprinkled with the blood of those who have been persecuted for the sake of both. It is also representative of the darkness of ignorance, error and intolerance, with which the world is shrouded, and through which Masonry moves like a star, dispensing light and knowledge and toleration. The arm holding a dagger reminds us of the execution of the sentence registered in heaven against ignorance and error. The hand holding the bloody head represents the just punishment of those who degrade and brutalize the human soul, by hiding from it the light of knowledge.

The cordon is a broad, black watered ribbon, worn from the right shoulder to the left hip; from the end of the cordon hangs the jewel. At the lower end are nine red rosettes, four on each side and one at the bottom. The rosettes symbolize the original nine Elu's or 'Elected' who were chosen by King Solomon to seek out the assassins of Hiram. They also represent the nine virtues taught in this degree; disinterestedness, courtesy, devotion, firmness, frankness, generosity, self-denial, heroism and patriotism. The color of the cordon reminds us ever to lament the prevalence of ignorance, oppression and error. We should strive to overcome them by means of the above excellent qualities of an Elu of Nine.

The jewel is a dagger, its hilt of gold and its blade of silver. These two metals in combination symbolize the brilliance of the combined light of the sun and the moon. We also see this meaning in the ancient Han characters of China where the character for 'sun' is merged with the character for 'moon' to form the character for 'brilliant'. This dagger is not an emblem of false bravery but of the weapons of legitimate warfare, which an Elu of Nine may lawfully use, and especially of the two-edged sword of truth with which every Mason should be armed. A reference to the dagger is also found in the lecture for the Knight of the Brazen Serpent Degree, "Even the dagger of the Elu of the Nine is that used by the Mysteries of Mithras [a Persian deity]; which, with its blade black and hilt white, was an emblem of the two principles of Light and Darkness." We shall see this symbol repeated in the poniard of the 30th Degree.

"For those who have received their initial Masonic instruction in Symbolic Lodge where the assassins are executed in the 3rd Degree, the drama of the Elu of the Nine may be confusing. The Scottish Rite degrees differ markedly from those of the York Rite Symbolic Lodge with respect to this portion of the allegory. The assassins are not apprehended in the Master's Degree, but in the 9th and 10th Degrees" (p. 56).

"The word 'Elu' which appears in this and following degrees is a French word meaning 'elect' and refers to those chosen or elected to find and inflict punishment upon the three assassins. 'Elect' was also a term used by the Gnostics. It defined someone who was in possession of the 'gnosis' or divine knowledge acquired by revelation" (p. 56).

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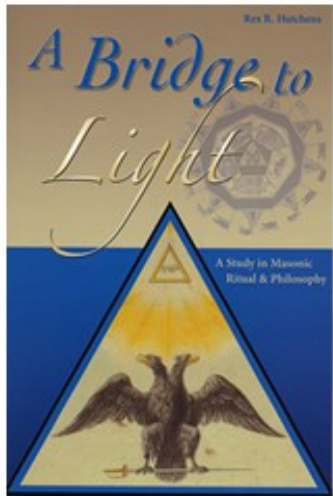
Nineth Degree

“Elu of the Nine”

Continued from page 25

Lessons of the 9th Degree

“Ignorance is the principal enemy of human freedom. A free press is indispensable to true liberty. Remorse and guilt are God’s punishment and more severe than that of man.”



A Bridge to Light

- ◆ New 2010 Edition Now Available
- ◆ Dr. Rex R. Hutchens, 33°, G.C.
- ◆ An introduction to the Scottish Rite’s Degrees and symbolism, this book is the most popular exposition available, by one of the Rite’s most articulate philosophers and writers.
- ◆ The 4th Edition of this classic work includes the changes introduced with the adoption of the Revised Standard Pike Ritual; the official Ritual of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction, U.S.A.
- ◆ Highly recommended by the Grand Archivist and Grand Historian.
- ◆ Softbound version; illustrated.
- ◆ 343 pages.