



McAlester Scottish Rite

Orient of Oklahoma, AASR Southern Jurisdiction



www.mcalesterscottishrite.org

Newsletter Date

June 28, 2023

Editor : Don Jones, 33°



Masonic Center Hours:
8:00 AM to 5:00 PM (closed Noon
to 1:00) Monday–Thursday, Closed
on Fridays
305 2nd St.
McAlester, OK 74501
918-423-6360

Upcoming Events:

1st Wednesday of the Month

Duncan Scottish Rite Chapter, 11:30 AM,
Jimmie's Egg, Duncan

1st Thursday of the Month

Oklahoma County Scottish Rite Chapter,
OKC 11:30 AM I40 & Meridian

2nd Monday of the Month

Lodge of Perfection Meeting,
Meeting at 7:00 pm

2nd Wednesday of the Month

Indian Chapter, Scottish Rite Noon
McAlester Scottish Rite Cente

3rd Wednesday of the Month

Muskogee Chapter, Scottish Rite
Masonic Temple Noon

Note: Scottish Rite Chapters and Societies, be
sure to notify the office of any changes in
meeting place and times.

Advisory Council and Officers

Jack Inman, 33°, Chairman
Mike Ebert, 33° General Secretary
William C. Cox, 33°, Member
Thomas S. Crowl, 33 G.C., Member Emeritus
Wade Massey, 33°, Member
Phillip Johnson, 32° KCCH Member
Stephen Gragg, 32° KCCH, Venerable Master
John Cunningham 32°, KCCH, Wise Master
Rodney Ryder, 32°, KCCH, Commander
Bobby Peters 33°, Master of Kadosh

THE RED RIVER MASONIC CON, June 23-25, 2023



More than sixty Masons attended what may have been an historic gathering in Masonry. The venue was at the Chickasaw Retreat and Convention Center south of Sulphur, OK near Lake of the Arbuckles.

The event began on Friday evening with the Philosophers' Guild, which was actually a "work and eat" session. Facilitator Dan Hantula led the group through a workbook. The book had the brethren build their "dream" lodge and guide it to being a viable institution. This included little games involving star "stickers" and other "icky" kid things. But the book's activities did open doors that had been closed in some brains.

At the same time there was a one dozen pizza party in progress too. Hey! It works for teenagers.

On Saturday morning the attendees met in the main auditorium where they were welcomed by the Grand Master of Oklahoma, Glen Chaney. The visiting Grand Master of Mississippi, Stephen Yon was also introduced.

The first speaker was Freemason and author, Chuck Dunning. He spoke on "Nurturing the American Masonic Renaissance.": His Keynote speech started the day off with a positive tone.

Freemason and researcher, Jon Wages spoke on "The Calm Before the Storm" which covered his research on the Scottish Rite Degrees. His search began with the 16th century. From there to the "higher" degrees to a convoluted path to finally reach nine men who met in Charleston, S.C. in May, 1801.

Freemason Dan Hantula spoke on "guarding the West Gate or door" for those who lack the character that enables a good man to become better. The title of his session was, "We don't have a membership problem."

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If you do not wish to receive this email, please send an email to enews-unsubscribe@mcasr.org. For questions or comments email news@mcasr.org.

Upcoming Reunions:

2023
October 21 & 22
2024
April 13 & 14
October 12-13

Masonic Website on Interest

[Supreme Council 33 Southern Jurisdiction, Scottish Rite of Freemasonry](#)

[Supreme Council 33 Northern Jurisdiction, Scottish Rite of Freemasonry](#)

[Grand Lodge of Oklahoma](#)

[Scottish Rite, Valley of Guthrie](#)

[Scottish Rite, Valley of Tulsa](#)

[Scottish Rite Research Society](#)

THE RED RIVER MASONICON (continued)

Freemason and author, Alex Powers, from Kansas, spoke on "The Symbolism of the Skull". He traced this history from when a human skull was used as a religious object up to now when it is a Halloween mask?

Oklahoma Freemason and author, Robert Davis, PGM. for the "closing: Keynote speech, used a Roman tact. "Is it time to cross the Rubicon and battle our 20th century ruffians?"

There were two things that stood out for me. One was that we need to stress the importance of "initiation" and what it means. Secondly the increase formation of "Affinity" lodges.

Bro. Davis also left us with some "food" for thought.

Freemasonry membership is increasing world- wide, except in the United States.

After Saturday evening's dinner the brethren were treated to a Master Mason degree by the Mountain Men Degree Team from Mississippi. The candidate, also from Mississippi, was "raised" in true Mountain Man form. G.M. Stephen Yon did the King Solomon part superbly.



The degree was done at a special picnic and recreation area deep in the woods of south-central Oklahoma. It was a neat experience.

Saturday's festivities were closed with the 11:00 p.m. toast. For this, the group was joined by the brethren from Mississippi and the toasts seemed to never end.

Sunday morning was set aside for a post mortem review of the weekend event. I did not attend; however, I overheard several comments the evening before like, "I hope they make this an annual event." Time will tell.

PRINTABLE QUOTES

--He is not only dull himself, but is the cause of dullness in others." Samuel Johnson

--- The exchange between Winston Churchill and Lady Astor. She said, "If you were my husband, I'd give you poison. He said, "Madam, If you were my wife, I'd drink it."

---They never open their mouths without subtracting from the sum of human knowledge. Thomas B. Reed

--- He had delusions of adequacy. Walter Kerr

SCOTTISH RITE ACTIVITY MASONIC ACTIVITY



Weekly, Wednesdays, 9:00 a.m.
Social Hour at the McAlester Temple
Free coffee and rolls or donuts.
McAlester Scottish Rite Center
Masons and friends welcome
Use south door.

Sat. July 1; Open House
Grand Lodge of Oklahoma building
Guthrie, OK

Tue., July 4; Independence Day
Fly the U.S. Flag today

Mon., July 10; Stated Meeting
Lodge of Perfection
McAlester Scottish Rite Center
7:00 p.m.

Fri, June 28; Birthday
William Preston; b. 1742
Ritualist and instructor

August 20-22; Biennial Session
Supreme Council, S.J.
Washington, D.C.
See web site for Registration

Sat./Sun. Sept. 30-Oct. 1
2 Day Scottish Rite Reunion
Guthrie Scottish Rite Temple
Guthrie, OK

Sat/Sun. October 7-8
Tulsa Scottish Rite Reunion
Tulsa, OK

Sat./Sun; Oct. 22-23; Reunion
McAlester Scottish Rite Temple
McAlester, Okla.



"FREEDOM OF RELIGION", 1st Amendment

"Freedom of Religion" are the first 3 words of the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights of our Constitution. So, it must be important but it is probably the most misunderstood. In looking for the reason this "right" is first we must look at our colonial history.

Before we became a Nation there were 13 colonies, all along the east coast of the continent. A great many people came were fleeing religious persecution in Europe and were seeking religious freedom. Here. they found it, except:

A majority of the colonies supported state religions. The governments also taxed their residents in order to pay the wages of clergy and other church projects. In Virginia, for example, the Church of England was the state religion. Representatives from other religions were not allowed in the "Old Dominion" colony. If caught, they may be tortured, hanged or imprisoned. (I think it is interesting that men from Virginia wrote the Bill of Rights and pushed it through to acceptance.).

So where did the expression, "Separation of Church and State" come from? Thomas Jefferson, no less, who was a leading citizen of Virginia It happened this way.

Jefferson was elected President of the United States in 1800. In 1802, he received a letter from the Danbury Baptist Association. They wrote a letter to President Jefferson in which they said they were afraid that the First Amendment of the Constitution did not go far enough in protecting religious minorities from the overreach of government. In the letter they urged that the mistakes of the past not be made and that "no man ought to suffer in Name, person or effects on account of his religious opinions."

In Jefferson's reply to the Danbury Baptist Association, he wrote a clear expression of the place of religion in American civil society with its location of a "wall of separation between Church and state."

"Separation of church and state properly understood, is a foundational principle which secures the rights and privileges of citizens under a government."

Neal Hardin
University of Utah



ASLEEP AT THE WEST GATE

For years now we have the whispered complaint, "We used to be getting petitions for the degrees from the good, substantial leaders in the community. Now we are getting...."

Isn't it about time we stop our whispering and say some things out loud even if they are unpleasant to hear?

One of the conditions causing dismay in more than one Lodge is the fact that the sons of its highly respected members are not petitioning for the degrees. True, they may be busy getting ahead in the world; they may not have the money; they may not be interested. But that is not all. Why should intelligent young leaders in the community petition a Masonic lodge if they have little or nothing in common with its members? If they cannot find in Freemasonry a social, intellectual and cultural atmosphere that is comfortable, they will find it elsewhere.

(I saw some of those young men last Saturday at a Masonic function. They were having a good time. Maybe it was the country air.)

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

During a trip to the Vatican, the family had tickets to see the Pope say Mass, and their 5-year-old daughter was extremely excited.

Sadly, she fell asleep before he came out and didn't wake up until the event had ended. When she did, the first thing she asked was, "Did I miss the pimp?"

There are only 2 types of computers in the world.: Those that waste your precious time and those that waste your precious time faster.

"One can play this game", the secretary told her computer solitaire.

After and impromptu song, the pastor asked the church pianist, "What key did I sing that in?"

The pianist replied, "Most of them."



CELEBRATING THE SOLSTICE

We met at Gages Restaurant in Guthrie for our celebratory dinner. It was a pleasant meal with good food and good conversation.

Following dinner, we drove to the Lodge for our celebration. The Lodge room had already been set up with the proper paraphernalia. Parts were assigned, electric candles were passed out and the ritual began.

The candle light passed up the ladder to the peak, or Solstice. At this point our leader gave a lecture on the relationship of the summer solstice with our Masonic John the Baptist observance.

In ancient times the Summer Solstice was a time to express gratitude to God for the return of Light which was necessary for a good harvest.

Following the brief, the candles were slowly extinguished as a reminder of the days to come.

Then the brethren left the Lodge room in silence and departed.

6:30 DEGREE

by Walter Belt

You may have a skillful Master
Who presides with practiced ease,
Who arranges clever programs
That will entertain and please,
One who calls witty speakers
Who knows his way about
But a lavish Junior Warden
Is the Boy who brings them out!



THE WORKING TOOLS OF THE
6:30 DEGREE

You may have a good degree team
Where each member knows his part.
Drilled to function as a unit
With especial skills and art,
With the finest of equipment,
Jeweled crown and sumptuous shroud
But a groaning banquet table
Is the bait that that draws the crowd!

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6:30 DEGREE (Continued)

Did I say I was different?
If the truth must be confessed,
Much as I like work and speeches,
I'm as hungry as the rest
And the ones they put in pudding
And my favorite kind of Plumb
When the cry is Come and get it!
Gangway, slowpokes! Here I come.

HISTORY: FIRST CLASS (continued)

In the previous issue of "The Blast" you were introduced to the first classes of the Valley of McAlester in Indian Territory to receive their degrees by ritual. Who were these men?

We are going to spend the next few weeks getting to know them. They were part of the pioneer men that opened and shaped what became our state of Oklahoma. They are unique. They are worthy of our time. They were dedicated to their purpose as they saw it.

The "new brothers" began their lives from around the globe. Seven were born in Western Europe from Germany to Scotland. Twelve were born in states east of the Indian Territory, three did not record a place of birth and the last one was a Native American.

Their occupations were varied. There were professional men, industrialists, merchants and tradesmen. Only one was a coal miner.

As the "movers and shakers" of early McAlester and the Territory we are about to discover who they were and what they were able to accomplish. Let's meet one of them now.

James Samuel Arnote

Born Dec. 10, 1862, Mercer County, Missouri

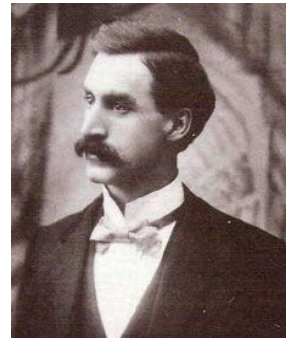
Died March 16, 1959, Pittsburg, County, Oklahoma

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HISTORY: FIRST CLASS (continued)

Brother Arnote's scholastic education began in a rural school in Missouri county. From there he went to the State Normal School at Kirksville, MO for his secondary education. Upon graduating from secondary school, he moved to Valparaiso, Indiana. There he attended the



Northern Indian Normal Institute School of Law. To pay his expenses while attending law school, Bro. Arnote took a job teaching school and at one time, served as the school principal. He graduated from Valparaiso with his law degree and moved to South McAlester in September of 1891. He practiced law for 63 years in McAlester.

Brother Arnote married Stella May Rock Nov. 6, 1900 and resided in McAlester. They had one son, Walter J. Arnote. Walter grew up in McAlester, became an attorney, served as mayor and his activity in the Scottish Rite earned him the 33rd Degree.

In 1904 and 1905, Brother James Anote served as an alderman, during which time he saw the first planks being laid for sidewalks in downtown McAlester. He had built the Arnote Block building for his law firm of Arnote & Rogers as well as other attorneys in McAlester.



Picture from Southeast Oklahoma Library system.

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HISTORY: FIRST CLASS (continued)

Brother Arnote was a pioneer member of South McAlester, Lodge, No. 96 and had a life membership. He took his Scottish Rite Lodge of Perfection degrees on May 30, 1901. On March 30, 1905 he was a member of the Alpha Class and completed his Scottish Rite degrees. He also holds the distinction of being the last member of the Lodge of Perfection class of 1901 to pass away. He was 96 years old when he laid down his working tools.

In 1958 Brother Arnote was presented a life insurance policy which he had purchased at the age of 57. The policy had matured to full value which the company said the odds were 100,000 to 3 against that happening. The company also said that Brother Arnote might be the first person in the state to have ever outlived the term of the policy. He had not only outlived the man who had sold him the policy, but the two subsequent agents who had administered it. Rather than take the cash value, Brother Arnote chose to keep the policy in place and collect the interest.

Footnote:

Brother Kish Thomas, 33°, who took his Scottish Rite degrees in 1967, recalls a later memorial reunion in Bro. Arnote's name.

to be continued

"My political ideal is democracy. Everyone should be respected as an individual, but no one idealized."

Albert Einstein

Editor Don Jones 33°

