



McAlester Scottish Rite

Orient of Oklahoma, AASR Southern Jurisdiction



www.mcalesterscottishrite.org

Newsletter Date

August 16, 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, 33° Elect Member

Stephen Gragg, 32° KCCH, Venerable Master

John Cunningham 32°, KCCH, Wise Master

Rodney Ryder, 32°, KCCH, Commander

Bobby Peters 33°, Master of Kadosh

GUARDING THE WEST GATE

We have fallen into careless ways in the investigation of petitioners. There was the regrettable incident in my own Lodge one time when I served on an Investigating committee. The petitioner was widely known; apparently, he was worthy; at least nothing to the contrary had reached my ears. Accordingly, I turned in a favorable report. The petitioner was elected. Several months later, from another source the bombshell burst. Not until then did I learn it was common knowledge about town that the petitioner was far from worthy. To correct the mistake there had to be some embarrassment and some unpleasantness. It has been a sobering thought to reflect that many of my brethren may have questioned the petitioner's worthiness, but gave him the benefit of the doubt simply because I had made a favorable report!



Whence came the idea that a man--almost any man--has an inherent right to become a Freemason? Is it not a privilege to be conferred upon the worthy?

And who's ideal was it that if a petitioner is rejected, a grave injustice has been done to the petitioner? Is no one interested in seeing that an injury is not done to the Lodge and all Freemasonry by electing one whose worthiness may be in question?

Such an Open Door Policy is not selectivity, it is come-one-come-all. And Freemasonry is a selective organization if it is to avoid the fate of a score of fraternal groups whose names are well-nigh forgotten.

Dwight Smith, PGM; Indiana

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT FREEMASONRY?



BeAFreemason.org



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 MAGIC NUMBER: 1,336,503

There were 1,336,503 Freemasons in the United States in 2011. Masonic membership hit its peak in in the United States in 1959 when 4,103,161 American men belonged to Masonic Lodges. It has been declining ever since.

Worldwide Freemasonry membership has been in decline for decades. So Masonic lodges are working to raise their profiles among the general public by opening their doors to lift the "veil of secrecy" around them. They don't actively recruit, but they are working to make themselves more accessible to non-Masons who want to learn about Freemasonry.

The idea is to bring in new Masons and to make it clear to the world that Freemasonry has nothing to hide---except some members-only passwords and bits of arcana, (special grips, initiation ritual, etc.)

NUMBER OF FREEMASONS IN THE UNITED STATES, DEC. 31, 2022 was 800,016.

Our decline has not been un-noticed by the public either. A couple of years ago, NPR (National Public Radio) published an essay about the decline of Freemasonry online. I have read it.

Since the contributors are not Masons (obvious to a Masons), there are many errors in thought and judgement. But that is not known to non-Masons.

The title of the essay is, ["Freemasons Say They're Needed Now More Than Ever. So Why are They Declining?"](#)

Most Masons can tell just by the headline that the authors are not Freemasons. Take a look at it and see what You think.

Donald Jones, 33°

2024 Dues Notices will be mailed out next week. If you haven't paid your dues for 2023 yet, call the office at 918-423-6360 and they can take your payment over the phone.

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.



Aug. 20, 21, 22; Biennial Session, S.J.
Supreme Council, A.A.S.R.;
House of the Temple; Washington, D.C.
See the web site for more information

Mon. Sept. 4; Labor Day holiday
McAlester Scottish Rite Center office
will be closed for the holiday.

Thur., Sept. 7; McAlester Scottish Rite
Membership Luncheon, Okla. City
10:30 a.m. - meeting
11:15 a.m. - lunch
Golden Corral, I-40 & MacArthur, OKC
All Masons & guests welcome

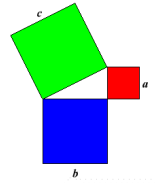
Mon. Sept. 11; LOP stated meeting
McAlester Scottish Rite Center
Richards Room on 2nd floor
All members are welcome.

Sat. Sept. 16; Lafayette Birthday
Marquis De Lafayette of France born
on this day in 1757
Revolutionary War hero; Freemason;
Leader in France's democracy movement.

**Petitions needed for
October 21 & 22 Reunion.
Welcome someone into the Rite!**



PYTHAGOREAN QUESTIONS for FREEMASONS



Pythagoras, the mathematician philosopher, was so interested in the mystery cults and religions of his day that he was initiated into the Egyptian priesthood at the sacred cave of Jupiter in Crete and at the Delphic oracle. He traveled extensively in Egypt, Chaldea and Phoenicia. He spent a number of years in Italy.

He was a pupil of Zoroaster, and believed in immortality of the human soul, the Omnipotence of God and of the transmigration of the soul--much like the modern Hindu doctrine.

"The Sage," as Pythagoras was called, subjected himself and his followers to a rigorous discipline. Each evening they asked and answered the following questions: Wherein have I transgressed today? What have I failed to do? The following morning, on rising, the questions were: What must I do today? Where can I repair the past day's forgetfulness?

It would seem that these questions would be equally appropriate for, and helpful, to Freemasons.

"The New Age:

FAMILY MATTERS

--- An optimist is a father who will let his son take the new car on a drive. A pessimist is one who won't. A cynic is one who did.

THE HANDYMAN

*No matter how tough the job,
He never quits in despair;
He'll stay right with it
Till it's fixed beyond repair.*

---To know love and lost is much cheaper.

--- *"My son's intelligence comes from me,"
Bragged Mr. Pompenstine.
His wife remarked, "I quite agree---
Because I've still got mine."*

--- A young man was too timid to ask the man personally for his daughter's hand, so he phoned her father. "Do you care if Jane and I get married?" he asked. "No" replied the father, "Who's calling?"



A Tree Is Known by Its Fruit

Taken in full from the 5-15 Minute Talk by Br. Elbert Bede

When the Master is installed in one of the subsequent bodies of Freemasonry he is admonished substantially as follows:

"You should so conduct yourself and should so lead the lodge that to those in this community the fact that one is a Freemason will be an avouchment and his decency"

This reminds me of the old maxim that a tree is known by its fruit. It is difficult to think of a maxim with more of truth in it. In order to develop a Masonic lesson, in order to develop Masonic symbolism, let Freemasonry be visioned as a great tree towering toward the heavens, with its roots and branches spreading over the world. Its members are its fruit, and it is known by its fruit. It is judged by the acts of its members. Sometimes we hear the question asked by someone by speaking disapprovingly of something one of our members has done. "Can such a person be a Freemason?" The reputation of the Masonic tree is such that those who ask the question quoted are amazed and astounded by the possibility that the great Masonic tree may have produced some unfit fruit. The Masonic tree is being judged by its fruit. More frequently we hear the remark, made by one speaking approvingly of the actions of one of our members, "Why, he is a Freemason!" with an infection which implies that nothing less should be expected of a Freemason. One making the foregoing remark suggests that the Masonic tree produces only good fruit, sound fruit, fit fruit. Is each of us, as he goes about his daily tasks, so conducting himself – are his actions such – is the language he uses such that even the profane over the world may exclaim with approbation, "Why, he's a Freemason," just as though that were an avouchment of his honesty, his integrity, his temperance, and his decency?

If Freemasonry, as an institution, may be pictured as a great tree, the lodge may be pictured as a small tree. The Master would be the trunk of the tree, the larger branches would be the officers, and the smaller branches would be the general membership. With the Master symbolizing the trunk of the tree, he will be in direct contact with his members, the smaller branches. It is his duty to know that they have the food and the drink to be found in the fabric of Freemasonry, that come to the Master by way of the roots of the tree. The Master will at all times know how it goes with his members, so that when his term of office ends, the fruit of the tree will be rosily ripened and mellowed

A tree is known by its fruit. The Masonic tree is known by its fruit. Let each of us so live, so act, so talk, that the world may say of each of us with approval, "Why, he's a Freemason!" Let that be an avouchment of our honesty, our integrity, our tem-



LODGE OF PERFECTION AUCTION PLANNED FOR FALL REUNION

The Lions of Judah will once again be sponsoring a silent auction at the reunion this fall. The proceeds of the auction go to support the Lodge of Perfection budget for this year. Past auctions have always included items of interest.



Members are invited to donate items for sale in the auction. If you have an item you wish to donate to the auction, please reach out to the office at 918-423-6360. Donations should be in place by Saturday morning with bidding closing at 1:00 PM on Sunday.

Don't have anything to donate to the auction? Well come and acquire some treasures for your collection. Just remember to **BID HIGH AND BID OFTEN!**

HISTORY: "THE FIRST CLASS"

The "Movers and Shakers " of the First Class

We continue our discussion of the members of the first class of Scottish Rite Masons who took their Lodge of Perfection degrees in McAlester in 1901.

James S. Cameron

Born: 1864, Scotland

Died: Feb. 18, 1936

We have no record of when and where Bro. James S. Cameron came to the Indian Territory. However, the record shows that he was employed as Superintendent of the Western Coal and Mining Company in Lehigh at the age of 22 in 1898, a position he held until 1904. He then was appointed a Chief Engineer and was transferred to the St. Louis headquarters. About 2 years later, in 1906, he returned to Lehigh and resumed the office of superintendent.

Bro. Cameron was an active citizen of the Lehigh community. He was on the board of directors and Vice President of the Merchants National Bank for several years. During his tenure, the bank built a two-story office building in Lehigh. The building still stands and is on the National Register of Historic Buildings. Presently the building is the headquarters of the Lehigh Historical Society.

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HISTORY: "THE FIRST CLASS" (Continued)

Bro. Cameron was active in civic affairs and was elected Mayor of Lehigh in 1907. At the same time, he served as Director of the Lehigh Baseball Association and was also a player on the team. Showing no respect for the office of Mayor, Bro. Cameron was hit by a baseball in a game with Wilburton. He had to leave the game.

Another civic club Bro. Cameron participated in was the Commercial Club of Coalgate.

Being a lifelong Republican, Bro. Cameron was active in local politics. He chaired the county conference seven times and was a polling judge. On May 19, 1907, J.S. Cameron was up for the Chairmanship of the Republican Committee for Coal County. He was nominated, as was Theo. Von Kelle. Von Keller won by a vote of 8-5 upon which Brother Cameron moved that Von Keller (who was also a Mason) be elected unanimously, which was approved.

We have no record of Bro. Cameron's original blue lodge affiliation. He and Von Keller were members of the McAlester's first Lodge of Perfection class and they both belonged to Savannah Lodge in Lehigh at that time. This lodge consolidated with the Coalgate lodge on July 1, 1925.

(to be continued)

"Your participation in the Scottish rite has given you a greater awareness of your Duties to the world."

32nd Degree; Master of the Royal Secret

Don Jones, 33° Editor

