



Additional Lodge Light

(A.L.L.)

Handbook

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# Additional Lodge Light Handbook

## Introduction

On behalf of The Grand Lodge of Texas and Masons everywhere, we want to congratulate and welcome you into our Great Fraternity. You are now a member, with all the rights and privileges, of the oldest and largest Fraternal organization in the history of the world. In order to complete the concept "all the light this Lodge can bestow," this program provides some of the basic facts which will allow you to feel more comfortable with your new organization and its operation.

The program material contained in this handbook is to be used as an operating manual. It utilizes fundamentals and is a simple approach to much deeper subjects. The program also utilizes the "one-on-one" approach as was employed to teach Masonic principles in the degree proficiencies. In this case however, it is not memory work, but rather structured for discussion with a knowledgeable Brother. The knowledgeable Brother is the *Lodge Counselor* who is appointed annually by the Worshipful Master of each Lodge. Hopefully, this program, along with the Grand Lodge Candidate Information Program and the book entitled "Masonry and the Mason," will answer most of your immediate questions and make you feel more at home with us while in the Masonic environment.

The A.L.L. Program covers ten Masonic subject areas. These subject areas are covered in an individual self-help study approach that addresses some basic concepts of Masonry. These are purely of a practical nature and are constructed so that they are applicable to all Lodges, large or small, urban or rural.

The program material is contained in two books. The first is the A.L.L. Handbook that is composed of information and discussion material for each subject area. It contains reading material of a practical and useful nature and is intended to provide an introduction to a particular subject area. The Handbook is designed as a permanent and reusable manuscript that may be passed from one new Master Mason to another. The second book is the A.L.L. Activities Exercise Book that contains questions that explore and stimulate discussion in each subject area. After completing the activity, each exercise in the Activities Exercise Book should be discussed with your Lodge Counselor. He should then initial the signature line verifying your completion of the activity. The A.L.L. Activities Exercise Book is your personal copy and is designed to be

reproducible so that Lodges can make more copies as needed. Copies of both books are available from the Grand Lodge of Texas.

#### Directions

- 1) Read one Chapter in the A.L.L. Handbook.
- 2) Refer to the A.L.L. Activities Exercise Book and complete the activity relating to the chapter in the A.L.L. Handbook that was previously read.
- 3) Discuss your answers to the activity questions with your Lodge Counselor.
- 4) Continue reading chapters in the handbook and completing the activities in the Activities Exercise Book sequentially until all chapters have been read and activities completed.

## Chapter 1

# Now That I Am A Mason Who Am I?

I've received all three degrees—I've learned the memory work—I've met many of the Brothers in the Lodge. Where do I go from here? Who am I?

Congratulations! Now you can have fun becoming a working Mason. You've taken such care learning the memory work. It contains beautiful lessons and you have committed them to memory so that you will have them at all times and for the rest of your life. The lessons that you have learned teach *a system of moral conduct and a code of moral law* that will never need modification. They are yours, and you can use and enjoy them now.

Who are you? You are *a member of one of the oldest fraternities known to man*, one that is dearly loved by its members, and most importantly, you have been accepted into it. These members have devoted countless hours and days in assisting you in the completion of your Masonic work so that you can become a Brother among them and share with them in the Lodge they love so much. Join them in their labors so that you will be able to understand the beauties they hold so dear.

Who are you? You are now "one of those Masons" whom you revered as an example of the Masonic Fraternity. Be proud to be a Mason. Remember that all Masons should strive to be good men; however, not all good men are Masons. Therefore, do not hesitate to express your enthusiasm to your non-Masonic friends and to *offer them a neutrally worded invitation to join our Fraternity* if you feel they meet the membership requirements provided for in Article 393a of the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. *Masonry is not a secret society* and this article of our Constitution affords us the opportunity to discretely select those men whom we feel will be beneficial to our Grand Old Fraternity. If you should ever be approached about membership in our fraternity, be assured that it is our goal to *take good men and make them better*. Rest assured that any question asked you by a non-Mason can be answered by a knowledgeable Mason who will be as eager to help as he was to teach you the lessons of our fraternity. Remember that you are part of an organization that has included in its ranks many great and true men. To name a few; George Washington, Paul Revere, Stephen Austin, Sam Houston, David Crockett, Lorenzo De Zavala, Will Rogers, John Wayne, Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Harry Truman, Douglas MacArthur,

Arnold Palmer, John Glenn and many more. You have now become a part of their legacy.

**Who are you?** You are a man who has learned what it really means to be "on the level." Every individual in God's creation will recognize that beautiful part within you when this lesson is learned to perfection. The Masonic Lodge is the one place where all members of every station in life may meet on the basis of true equality. This is true because *Masonry teaches the Golden Rule!* However, *Masonry is not a religion* and we do not dictate what a man's religious or secular beliefs should be. President Theodore Roosevelt, writing shortly before his death, called attention to the fact that while he was President of the United States, the gardener on "a neighbor's estate, a most excellent public spirited citizen, was Master of his Lodge." And he adds, "He was over me, though I was President, and it was good for him and good for me. I violate no secret when I say that one of the greatest values in Masonry is that it affords an opportunity for men in all walks of life to meet on common ground, where all men are equal and have common ground."

Now that you have arrived, look back and see where you have been. Most of us seem to almost forget the details of the lessons taught in the preceding degrees. You have the books given to you after each degree. Go back and refresh yourself with those lessons. You should also have a small book entitled "Masonry and the Mason." This book is given to each new Master Mason and is filled with information that you will find to be invaluable. It also has many questions and answers that relate to matters you may never have thought about. As you continue in your Masonic growth, you will find an abundance of laws, traditions and customs. Realize that all of these have come into existence over many years of experience, necessity, and even trial and error. Become part of them. Join in the events and experiences that form our Great Fraternity into a living experience that is good for your life, your family and your country.

**Who are you? You are a Mason! Welcome!**

**Refer to the A.L.L. Activity Exercise Book and complete exercise 1.**

## Chapter 2

# Masonic Government

After we were raised, a lot of us had similar thoughts; well here I am, they have just closed the Lodge and all the Brothers have congratulated me....so far, so good. Up to now I've been so involved in learning memory work that I have not even thought about how the Lodge works. I think I'll ask one of the older Brothers so that I don't embarrass myself later. I'll bet that like everything else, it starts with history.

The thought was right. Starting with history is a good way to begin to understand how our Lodges came about and how they are governed. In a later chapter you will be introduced to Lodge operations; but first, let's look at the general Masonic structure.

In the early days there were very small and scattered communities. Distance, natural barriers, and language separated these communities. Therefore, there was very little interaction of communication between these communities. As Masonic Lodges formed in these communities, they were also independent and isolated. The Lodges were dependent upon their members for protection and security. As the populations grew and common governments were formed, the individual Lodges found it to be advantageous to belong to a much larger, consolidated group of Lodges who *shared similar beliefs, principals, and interest*. These larger, consolidated groups of Lodges were called "Grand Lodges." Your Lodge is a constituent member of such a group; The Grand Lodge of Texas.

For the good of all, these Grand Lodges adopted general guidelines, procedures, and laws. However, the individual Lodges were still independent units that were primarily self-governing. This is still true today. Each individual Lodge in Texas is self-governed by its own set of by-laws, but *The Grand Lodge of Texas provides general guidelines, procedures and laws which are adopted by our members on an annual basis. All Lodges within the jurisdiction of The Grand Lodge of Texas must follow and abide by these laws.*

These basic concepts remain today as the primary structure of our Lodges and Grand Lodges. As the Lodges formed along with the cities and towns, the Grand Lodges then formed by states and counties. For example, today we have Grand Lodges in England, Scotland, France, Japan, the Philippines, etc. In the United States we formed our Grand Lodges by state. *In our Great State of Texas, our Grand Lodge has its headquarters in the center of the state at Waco,*

*and includes and represents more than nine hundred Lodges throughout the state. Our Grand Lodge was formed in 1837 following Texas' fight for independence, with Brother Anson Jones elected as our first Grand Master.*

Although all of these Grand Lodges are independent and self-governing, they are *held together by a common bond. The basic Masonic principles are called the "Ancient Charges of Freemasonry"* and are documented in many old manuscripts. The most recognized was compiled by Dr. James Anderson in 1722 and contain the system of ancient laws and customs that are included in the Constitution and Laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas, Article III, Section 3b.

Today there are a vast number of Grand Lodges recognized by our Grand Lodge of Texas as being "Masonic" who encourage and welcome visitors from other Lodges and Grand Lodge Jurisdictions. While you are in their jurisdiction, you will find that there are some differences in procedures and ritualistic wording. Remember that there is no standardized Masonic procedure regarding "ritual." *Therefore, Masonic degree work in Louisiana may appear to be quite different from that of Texas. However, all Texas Masonic degree work should be exactly the same.*

We are connected by those common bonds as outlined in the ancient Masonic principles. However, these are not absolute but are only basics and guidelines. You will find that *there are other organizations that call themselves 'Masonic' but are not part of our Masonic structure.* To us, they are just organizations. We will discuss in more detail these organizations as well as the procedure for visiting these Lodges, in later chapters. It is sufficient to note that although there are many Lodges and Grand Lodges that are very independent and self-governing, those with which we share fraternal relations will welcome you as a Brother. You will need to remember your obligation and adhere to their customs and courtesies while visiting with them. *Your Lodge Secretary has a book listing all Lodges recognized by The Grand Lodge of Texas as being 'Masonic' and with which we share fraternal relations. This book is called the "List of Lodges Masonic."* Feel free to ask to view this book. Your Lodge Secretary will be glad to share it with you.

**Refer to the A.L.L. Activity Exercise Book and complete exercise 2.**



## Chapter 3

# My Lodge Operation

Thus far we have examined who you have become as well as the history of our Masonic government. Now it's time to get more specific. You need to know how your Lodge functions so that you can "fit in."

*Our Lodge meetings are of two types, STATED and CALLED. A stated meeting is one that is scheduled on a regular fixed basis as defined by each Lodge's by-laws. Some Lodges have as many as two stated meetings a month while others have as few as one per quarter, which is the minimum required by the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas. Any and all work may be conducted at a stated meeting, but the stated meeting is normally used to conduct Lodge business. A called meeting is one called by the Worshipful Master, or in his absence, by the Senior Warden, and in his absence, by the Junior Warden. This may be done at any time and should be called for a specific purpose or to act upon a specific item of business. Traditionally, stated meetings are held on a fixed night of the week. With a few special exceptions, called meetings can be held on any day of the week except Sunday and may be open or closed to non-Masons. Degree work is normally performed at a called meeting that must be a closed or "tiled" meeting. An open called meeting is one to which family and friends or the public is invited, such as Lodge dinners or awards banquets.*

We control Lodge operation under the general guidelines and laws of The Grand Lodge of Texas, the Lodge's by-laws and good common sense. The Worshipful Master is the central control and focal point of Lodge operations. Although we use many committees, the Worshipful Master must supervise both the business and the work of the Lodge. He is the embodiment of the Lodge. *In the constituent Lodge his word is final and his position is one with an awesome responsibility.* Similar to other organizations, he has a corps of officers and appointed committee chairmen to help him.

*Masonic Lodges are not bound by any particular rules of order, such as parliamentary procedure or Robert's Rules of Order. However, the Worshipful Master may rule that Robert's Rules will be followed during a discussion involving motions and amendments to motions. A recommended set of parliamentary procedure rules is published by The Grand Lodge of Texas and may be obtained through the Grand Lodge Secretary's office. Freemasonry is rooted in history and tradition and is unlike any other organization. As stated above, one man, the Worshipful Master, is responsible, controls and gives*

direction. He is the parliamentary focal point in the Masonic Lodge. He, unlike the presiding officer of any other deliberative assembly, is vested with virtually limitless parliamentary power. It is his paramount duty to preserve order and decorum in the Lodgeroom, and at the same time, he must maintain peace and harmony among the Brethren. Although peace and harmony is of prime importance, it is critical that the Lodge continue to function properly, and the Worshipful Master has the power to take whatever steps he deems necessary to fulfill this responsibility. He is of course, accountable to the Grand Master and The Grand Lodge of Texas for his actions.

Every member (Brother) is on the same level in the Lodge. No one is more important than any other person. *In the Masonic Lodge, one Brother is entitled to one vote.* Any member, when duly recognized by the Worshipful Master, may speak on any issue, make a motion or be nominated and elected to any office. There is one exception to this rule. In Texas, in order to be elected to the office of Worshipful Master, one must have served as a Warden or as a Worshipful Master of a Lodge in this or in another jurisdiction. This rule is explained in Article 276, Chapter 12. Title II of The Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas.

Any member in good standing in a Texas Lodge is entitled to one vote. In some cases, as in the case of voting on a petition for the degrees, all members of a Lodge present must vote. If he deems it appropriate, the Worshipful Master can and may require all members of the Lodge present to vote on a specific item of consideration. *We conduct secret ballots by using a specific "ballot box," but in most cases we use a "show of hands."* This "show of hands" is called "the regular voting sign among Master Masons." *The third way we vote is by "paper ballot,"* but this is normally only done during the contested election of officers. These three voting methods will become second nature to you and will be easily understood after you gain experience and observe the other Brothers in your Lodge while voting.

The election of officers is held annually at the stated meeting prior to June 24th each year. *Five officers, the Worshipful Master, Senior and Junior Wardens, Treasurer, and Secretary must be elected in our Texas Lodges.* Other officers may be elected or appointed as required by each Lodge's bylaws. All officers, elected or appointed, must be installed between June 24 and the last day of July.

Ordinarily, a brother wishing to address the Lodge rises, and after being recognized by the Worshipful Master, addresses the Lodge by using the words "Worshipful Master, Wardens and Brethren." However, when items of a

parliamentary nature are under consideration, only the Worshipful Master is addressed.

An original motion, resolution, or proposition should normally be submitted to the Lodge in writing and in advance of the meeting. The Worshipful Master should have prior knowledge of such motions, resolutions and propositions. These may be submitted orally, but the Worshipful Master is not obligated to accept or take action upon any of these matters. Resolutions proposing to amend the by-laws of the Lodge, however, must be in writing and must be signed by the Brother submitting the resolution. The resolutions may then be considered by the Worshipful Master.

Lodge committees perform a great deal of Lodge work. Involvement in these committees is one of the best ways to learn about the organization and to become an active Brother. *There are two types of committees, "STANDING" and "SPECIAL."* The Standing Committees are appointed annually to help the Worshipful Master regarding permanent matters concerning the Lodge. Examples of Standing Committees are Charity, Sickness and Distress, Finance, etc. Special Committees are created to meet special needs. The Special Committees are used for many and varied functions. *One might be used for a fund raiser, a family party, planning for a new building, etc. One Special Committee that is extremely vital to the health of your Lodge is the "Investigating Committee."* This committee is used to examine the moral character and reputation of men who desire to join the Lodge. The Investigating Committee is composed of three brothers who each must examine facts relating to jurisdiction, physical qualifications and an applicant's moral qualities as a man. The Grand Lodge of Texas enumerates specific questions that must be answered, and a Grand Lodge form called an "Investigating Report" must be completed by each committee member after completing an investigation. Contained in the Investigating Report is a recommendation of "favorable" or "unfavorable," and this report is read prior to any balloting action by the Lodge. Masonry takes good men and makes them better and this committee identifies the good men. When requested to serve on an Investigation Committee, be diligent and punctual. Recall how you may have felt had your investigation been delayed, and act accordingly.

Masonry has developed its own conventions or Lodge courtesies by which its members act toward each other while in the Lodgeroom or within the Masonic environment. These conventions and courtesies are called "Lodge room protocol." Although failure to act in accordance with these conventions is not considered a Masonic offense, it does exhibit a lack of Masonic manners. Some Lodges take the time, or have a mentor explain these traditional rules of

conduct; but in most cases, you will have to attend Lodge and learn by observation.

Below are listed various Masonic conventions, courtesies and rules of protocol:

- 1) *When the Lodge is about to open, or is open, do not enter without wearing an apron.*
- 2) When entering and retiring from the Lodgeroom while the Lodge is open, you should advance before the altar and give the appropriate sign.
- 3) Always obey the gavels: One gavel calls the Lodge to order, declares a transaction of business, raises the secondary officers and seats the Lodge. Two gavels raise the principal officers. Three gavels raise the entire Lodge.
- 4) *No one should ever wear a hat or cap in the Lodge while in session, except the Worshipful Master.*
- 5) When the Lodge is open, do not "break the light" by walking between the East and the Altar.
- 6) Avoid unnecessary talking while on the sidelines.
- 7) Avoid discussing politics or religion while in the Lodgeroom.
- 8) *With the exception of the Junior Deacon relieving the Tiler, no one should enter or retire from the Lodgeroom while a ballot is open.*
- 9) It is discourteous to enter or retire from the Lodgeroom during a speech, degree, or lecture.
- 10) *Do not sit in the East unless asked to do so by the Worshipful Master or Presiding Officer.*
- 11) Repeat the words "So Mote It Be" after all Masonic prayers.

**Refer to the A.L.L. Activity Exercise Book and complete exercise 3.**

## Chapter 4

# Masonic Ritual

Masonic ritual did not come into being complete and in full form. To begin with, men did their best to instruct other men in the simple essentials of early Freemasonry. They did this in their own words. They passed on what they had learned and instructed the newly made Fellows of the Craft in the rules of Freemasonry of the day. They taught the Apprentice to labor diligently to give a day's work for a day's wage, to bring no shame to the Craft, and to be true to the Creator.

Ceremonies grew naturally. When his seven year Apprenticeship was complete, the new Fellow received his working tools from friends or family. Someone would give them to him with a few words of admonition. Gradually those words became familiar and fixed. In calling the Craft together for a meeting, one leader would do so in a certain way, another in a different way, but as the years slowly passed, one particular method was found better than another and the same words were repeated again and again.

What was true hundreds of years ago is still true today. *Our ritual changed and grew as it was added to and expanded by the members of every age.* It has become the thread of continuity and the bond by which we feel a kinship with our Masonic Brothers. To act in accordance with the teaching "as all Brothers have done who have gone this way before me," is to express a Brotherhood of the mind.

Our Masonic ritual contains our history; and though much of our history is difficult to see, it is there. Words have their histories and are windows into the past through which those who look and use old ways of thought, old intentions, discoveries, adventures, romances, and ideas long forgotten, can gain much.

Mankind has always been ritualistic minded. It is as much a part of human nature to need ritual in life as it is a part of nature to provide a natural ritual. Perhaps man's earliest ritual was circumambulation (moving around a stone altar on which there was a Holy fire). Civilized life in all countries has lived by rituals. Births, Christenings, church activities, Confirmations, synague ceremonies, Bar Mitzvas, prayer and the bended knee, all involve ritualistic ceremonies.

*Ritual in the Lodge is the magic that makes Masonic "work" common to all,* and is vital to our common thread. Masonic ritual, while necessarily

repetitious, is a great bond binding us in unity and commonality. The ritual of a degree is spoken and/or acted by many. The officers speak, some Brethren conduct and those on the side lines take part at appropriate times. All Brethren participate when the candidate first sees light, or when we sing in Grand Procession. There are few who do not receive some pleasure from being a necessary part of this important ceremony.

The ritual is the core of our fraternity. While differences exist in the wording of degrees between Grand Jurisdictions, the fundamental message is constant. Obviously every teaching, every precept, every principle of Freemasonry can be communicated from man to man without the use of a single ritualistic phrase. To communicate any idea in a dozen ways presents little difficulty. "Twice two is four;" "the multiplication of two by itself produces four;" "two times two makes four;" these wordings express the same meaning but in different words. However, using the same words provides a sameness, a hub, a pivot point, and that "common thread."

Men do not feel comfortable in strange surroundings and prefer to socialize with familiar people. Our Lodges, because of our ritual, provide this familiarity and this "feeling of home." Ritual is the continuity that has kept the life-blood of Masonry flowing. Our basic landmarks and principles have given us a lasting framework; but it has been the ritual that has allowed us to become a great universal fraternity that has lasted through the centuries.

The following are some common rules of ritualistic protocol:

- 1) *With the exception of the Worshipful Master's station, any Brother may protem any station in a Lodge to which he is entitled to sit, including visiting Brothers from other Grand Jurisdictions recognized as being "Masonic" by our Grand Lodge of Texas.*
- 2) *It is desirable, but not absolutely necessary, that all officer stations and places be filled during the opening and closing ceremonies, as well as the degrees.*
- 3) *Elected and appointed officers do not have to remain in their respective stations and places during a degree.*
- 4) *Every degree should have a designated "prompter" and the Brothers on the sidelines should not prompt.*
- 5) *The esoteric ritual in all Texas Lodges should be exactly the same.*

- 6) *The esoteric ritual may vary from Grand Jurisdiction to Grand Jurisdiction.*
- 7) *The esoteric ritual should be performed in a solemn and reverent manner.*

**Refer to the A.L.L. Activity Exercise Book and complete exercise 4.**

## Chapter 5

# Law and Tradition

One concept that you might find confusing is the difference between **“Law”** and **“Tradition.”** It is important to understand that, to some people, one can be as strong as the other. Therefore, we need to examine what is actually law, where it can be found, and then define tradition.

Masonic law is the strongest standard for Masonic structure and conduct that has been adopted by The Grand Lodge of Texas. These laws are documented in an official publication appropriately titled, "The Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas A.F. & A.M." These laws are similar to the laws of our state and country. They are duly constituted statutes that govern our actions. Every Mason in Texas should be acquainted with these laws and conduct himself accordingly. He should also be aware that violation of them could result in penalties that range from being reprimanded to being expelled from Freemasonry. A copy of these laws is available from your Lodge Master or Secretary. If you would like to obtain a personal copy, they are available through the Secretary for a small fee. It should be noted that specific laws vary from Grand Jurisdiction to Grand Jurisdiction. When visiting another Grand Lodge, their law takes precedence over that of The Grand Lodge of Texas' Laws. When visiting another Grand Jurisdiction, remember that you are a guest and must conduct yourself accordingly.

In addition to Grand Lodge law, each Lodge is governed by its own set of "by-laws." These rules supplement Grand Lodge law for local needs and desires. The by-laws, and most amendments to the by-laws, must be approved by the Grand Lodge; and when so approved, become a part of the law of the individual Lodge. A copy of these by-laws can be obtained from your Lodge Secretary.

Tradition is a long established custom, practice, or usage that has taken on the appearance of law by repetitive use over a long period of time. Traditions can seem to be mandatory, but failure to comply with them can cause only reproach. Traditions are many and varied. Most are unwritten and their origins are difficult to understand. Some traditions are statewide and some are only practiced in individual Lodges. They establish individual Lodge character and demeanor. You should become familiar with the traditions of you own Lodge; because, like good manners, your adherence to them will indicate your desire to conform to accepted standards.



The following are some examples of traditions that exist in some Lodges. Failure to adhere to them does not subject you to penalties of Grand Lodge law.

- 1) Never pass between the Worshipful Master (when he is in the East) and the altar when the Lodge is open.
- 2) The apron is to be worn over and outside of all other garments.
- 3) A called meeting to honor Past Masters.
- 4) The Senior Deacon closes and locks the Lodge after meetings.
- 5) Visitors are called before the altar to be welcomed and introduced.
- 6) Wearing of a coat and tie to all Lodge meetings.
- 7) The Senior Warden or Senior Deacon organizes the degree team for the degrees.

We have examined laws, by-laws, and traditions. The most important point to remember, for you as a new Master Mason, is that all three can affect your reception, standing, and function as a Mason. Violation of Masonic law subjects one to reprimand, suspension, or expulsion. Violation of tradition subjects one to adverse treatment by other members.

**Refer to the A.L.L. Activity Exercise Book and complete exercise 5.**

## Chapter 6

# Visiting

One of the most interesting experiences in Masonry is to visit another Lodge, particularly one in another Grand Jurisdiction. Whether in the town next door, a foreign country or another state, there will be some interesting and surprising differences. However in most cases, one thing will always be the same; a warm welcome. A word of caution; you must comply with the laws and customs of the Masonic Jurisdiction in which you are traveling. Therefore, before you visit, find out what to expect.

Let's examine the legality of visitation. Refer to Articles 378-383 of our Grand Lodge Laws. Have I the right to visit? The answer is "Yes," but with limitations. The Worshipful Master of a Lodge enjoys peculiar authority with respect to a visitor's admission into the Lodge. It is somewhat similar to the head of a household who decides whether or not to welcome a guest into his home. However, most Worshipful Masters and most Lodge members are pleased to welcome and extend Brotherly hospitality.

When you plan a visit to another Lodge you must verify that it is in fraternal relations with The Grand Lodge of Texas. To do this, you will need to be familiar with two books. First, to determine if another Lodge in Texas is a member of The Grand Lodge of Texas, you will need to refer to a book entitled *the "List of Constituent Lodges in Texas."* All constituent Lodges holding allegiance to The Grand Lodge of Texas will be listed in this book. Second, to determine if a Lodge outside the State of Texas is in fraternal relations with and recognized as being "Masonic" by our Grand Lodge of Texas, you will need to refer to a book entitled *"List of Regular Lodges Masonic."*

Your Lodge officers or your Lodge Counselor can help you find the Lodge's copy of these books. In fact, some Brothers who travel a great deal buy copies of these books and carry them when they travel.

Now that you have the necessary information concerning getting into another Lodge, let's look at what happens when you get there. In most cases, but not all, a current dues card is required as proof of membership in a recognized Lodge. Visitors are also required to demonstrate knowledge of Masonic craft work to an Examination Committee. In most Grand Jurisdictions there is no set examination, so do not be surprised if questions asked you are different from that which was taught by your Lodge Brothers concerning examinations. The committee must be satisfied that you are a Brother eligible to visit their Lodge.

Always remember that the Examining Committee is composed of Brothers who are trying to get you **into** the Lodge, not keep you **out**. If you visit with another Brother whom you have "sat with" in Lodge, he can "vouch" for you, and you will not have to be examined.

So, are you ready to visit? The following is a simple checklist that is useful when planning to visit another Lodge.

- 1) **Always carry a current dues card.**
- 2) **Make sure it is a recognized Lodge that is in fraternal relations with The Grand Lodge of Texas.**
- 3) **Know and be prepared to demonstrate the grips and words of the degrees in the Lodge in which you plan to visit.**

**Refer to the A.L.L. Activity Exercise Book and complete exercise 6.**

## Chapter 7

### What May I Talk About?

You've probably thought about this question at one time or another since your initiation, and the answer is simple: "Almost everything!" If you haven't already been asked about Masonry by a member of your family, co-workers or friends, rest assured that you will be. This presentation is designed to give you an idea of what you can tell them. *With the exception of the modes of recognition, passwords, esoteric degree work, questions and answers of the degrees, lectures, etc., (which are termed "private" rather than "secret"), almost everything else may be free for discussion.* Masonry is coming out of the dark ages wherein everything was considered "secret" and when even the fact that someone was a member of the fraternity was not revealed to the general public. Masonry has long been considered "a secret organization" but with members wearing Masonic jewelry, buildings clearly marked with the Lodge name and number as well as the Masonic emblems, it can hardly be considered "secret."

If someone says "I've heard about Masonic Lodges and Masons but what is it all about?" You can tell them that Freemasonry is an association of men whose membership is entirely voluntary. It is a group of men of high moral character with a common desire to help good men become better men by living the lessons of the Craft on a day to day basis. It consists of men who do not forget that they are Brethren who share the common bond of friendship and Brotherly love. Good moral conduct is essential, and each of the three degrees offer many lessons on how to achieve this goal.

If you feel uncertain or uncomfortable in explaining what Masonry is and is about, this affords the perfect opportunity to allow your friends and family the pleasure of listening to the *"Between Friends" audio tape. This tape was produced by The Grand Lodge of Texas and does a wonderful job of explaining what Masonry is and what we do, in a clear and straightforward fashion. It is a tool to be used to attract prospective members to our Fraternity.*

It is said that Freemasonry is a way of life. What can we possibly mean by that? Well, the primary thought here is that each lesson learned from Freemasonry should be applied in our daily lives. For instance, a Mason is taught to divide the day into three parts, to make optimum use of his time, i.e., a portion of the day should be used in the service of your God, your Brethren, their widows and orphans; a portion is to be spent in honest labor, earning a living; and a third portion for refreshment and rest. A Mason is taught that he

should walk uprightly before God and man, squaring his actions by the square of virtue, while observing the principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. Applied to our every day lives, it does become a way of life.

A question you may be asked by a non-member is "What do you do when you go to the Lodge?" Well, you can reply that at least once a month we have what is called a "Stated" or business meeting where future programs are planned, bills are paid, petitions for membership are reviewed and acted on, and committees are established for various functions. Other meetings on various nights are called for the initiation of new members, recognizing the achievements of members, family night programs, and sometimes for Masonic education.

You may also hear the statement, "That's all well and good, but I've heard that Masonry is a religion." This is probably the most common misconception of what Freemasonry is about. Nothing could be further from the truth. Masonry is religious in character, but it is not a religion and doesn't claim to be a substitute for religion. We open and close our meetings with prayer, and while at labor, the Holy Bible, Koran or the Book of any faith, whether it be Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, Muslim or Hindu, rests upon our Masonic altars. In Texas, it is the Holy Bible. Each man, at some point in our ceremonies, expressed a belief in the existence of a Supreme Being. To refuse or decline to do so would deny him the opportunity to become a member. No atheist can be made a Mason, and we do encourage Masons to be attentive to their chosen beliefs. That's about as religious as we get.

You may also be asked about our support of children. You can tell the inquirer that Texas Masons support a home and school for children in Fort Worth. We are responsible for its funding and operation. The home and school is supported by a permanent endowment fund that has built up throughout the years by voluntary contributions, wills and bequests, and a \$10.00 contribution made by each Master Mason when he receives the Third Degree in Masonry.

*"Why do you wear those funny little white aprons?"* It can be said that the concept of wearing an apron goes back at least as far as the Middle Ages when Stone Masons wore leather aprons to protect their clothing. The same can be said of people in other occupations who wear an apron of some sort while doing their job. The apron, therefore, is associated with "labor." When a Mason puts on his apron, he is signifying to the world his willingness to work at his accepted responsibility. Furthermore, the white lambskin apron is considered an emblem of innocence and should constantly remind a Mason of that purity of heart and uprightness of conduct, so essentially necessary to

being admitted into what we like to term "The Celestial Lodge Above" (in reference to being in the presence of our chosen God).

*"I've heard that you Masons call the Lodge leader Worshipful Master. Do you really worship him?" Your response should be an emphatic "Of course not!"*

Then explain that 'Worshipful,' used in the context in which we use it, is an Old English term defined in Webster's Dictionary as "Honorable by virtue of position or rank and used in titles of respect." The title of "Master" is defined as "A workman qualified to teach apprentices and to carry on his craft independently, or the head or presiding officer of certain clubs, orders or institutions."

In summary, there is a world of Masonry that you can talk about, and we can't cover all of the possible questions that may arise, but let me leave you with this word of caution. When asked a question, be sure of your answer. If you're not sure, seek the advice of a well-informed Brother, perhaps your Lodge Instructor. Remember that no man should be condemned for asking, but the same cannot be said for guessing.

Our Grand Lodge publication "Masonry and the Mason" states that "**Proof of Masonic membership can be a current dues card, but proof that a man is a Mason is displayed by the life he lives.**"

**Refer to the A.L.L. Activity Exercise Book and complete exercise 7.**

## Chapter 8

# The Family and Freemasonry

Masonry is a male fraternal organization; and as we live our Masonry, it becomes a way of life. This life is full of many activities and very much includes our families. While we are active members, the Lodge is a hub for programs and get-togethers. After we have passed on to be with the "Supreme Architect of the Universe," the Brothers and Lodges assist in providing the family with protection and security.

Today, more and more, Freemasonry is oriented toward family activities. Changes are being incorporated that encourage and accommodate more open meetings and the Lodgerooms are being used for programs that include family participation. For example, in 1996 the opening and closing ritual was changed so that a Lodge does not always have to open in "Due and Ancient Form" prior to an open meeting when family and visitors are invited to attend. This change was enacted to accommodate family and visitors who would otherwise be required to wait outside the Lodgeroom until the Lodge was opened. Now everyone can come in as a group, and the Worshipful Master only has to "declare" the Lodge open and closed.

Some open activities that do not require a formal opening can include programs for Service Awards, Past Master Recognition's, Community Builder Awards, Lamar Medal Presentations, Golden Trowel Awards, Widows' Nights, and Lodge Anniversary Celebrations. The exception to this rule is when the Lodge holds an Open Installation of Officers. This particular open meeting where family and visitors attend, does require a formal opening and closing.

As these events are planned, be sure to let your family know that they are scheduled and inform them of the nature of the meeting. Encourage them to attend with you for a family night out. They will enjoy being included as a part of the Masonic Family.

Here is a great idea that some Lodges have instituted. On the night of the stated meeting, the wives are invited to join their husbands at the refreshment table prior to the meeting. After refreshments, and while the Masons are in the Lodgeroom conducting business, the ladies can fellowship with each other or have their own programs. Not only does this provide the opportunity for a family evening out, but it also has been said that Lodge attendance has shown an increase. Be sure to verify that your Lodge has special family programs.

The last part of this Chapter addresses something that may be uncomfortable, and to some, somewhat unpleasant; it is the solemn thought of death. We, as Masons, have a responsibility to our Brothers' families and at our death, our Lodge Brothers will be available to help our families. We hope that you will not have to think about this subject for many years to come, but we do sincerely hope you might take comfort in knowing that assistance is available to our families.

First, at the time of death, the Lodge will be there to share and assist in any way. Secondly, in the spirit of the Masonic family, we can assist with a final farewell for you as a Mason. Our services are performed as a last gesture of friendship and Brotherly love that the fraternity can bestow upon a Brother. We basically have two types of services: a memorial and a graveside service. Although these services contain some prescribed ceremonies, their content can be modified to meet the family's desires. Both types of services are very tasteful and pay tribute to the departed Brother. These services can be performed alone or in conjunction with a religious service. They can be applied in many different circumstances. For example; when the deceased cannot be found, when the body is being donated to science, or when it is being cremated or at a graveside. At some point in time you will undoubtedly attend the funeral of a Brother and have an opportunity to observe the proceedings. You should talk about it with your family, make your feelings known, and consider their feelings. In any case, it is helpful that your family know how you feel about a Masonic Funeral Service.

We as Masons, feel very strongly about our responsibilities to our widows and orphans. After your death, we, like a related family, will be there to love and support any of your remaining family. This will include both social and practical needs. We hope the fact that these strong bonds exist will be relayed to your family, so that they in time of need, may take comfort.

In conclusion, the most important point to remember regarding Masonry and the family is to make them feel like they are a part of our fraternity. In Chapter 7, we emphasized the fact that there is very little in Masonry that we cannot talk about. Feel free to discuss what you did in the Lodge. For instance, you can say that the conferral of degrees is a drama in which the candidate plays a significant part. If you worked in a degree, you can say that you performed the Senior Warden's part or the Junior Deacon's part, etc. You can state that conferring a degree is very similar to an actor playing a role. The degrees are like dramas. There are some complex roles to learn and there are floor movements and interaction with other participants.



Remember to tell your family what you do as a Mason. Don't shut them out by saying, "I can't talk about it."

**Refer to the A.L.L. Activity Exercise Book and complete exercise 8.**

## Chapter 9

# What About Other Masonic Affiliated Organizations?

A number of active organizations exist that have ties to our fraternity or whose membership is dependent upon belonging to a Masonic Lodge. Some of these organizations are somewhat obscure, while others are very well known. All of these organizations are completely independent, having their own governing bodies, initiation fees and dues. Although some have their own facilities and buildings, most meet in our Lodge buildings. We will examine three of the more predominant ones and also make you aware of others, but they are all part of our Masonic family and share common ideals and goals.

It should be noted, that as a Master Mason in good standing with your Blue Lodge, you are eligible to petition and join some of these organizations after your proficiency in the Master Mason's Degree has been turned in. However, in order to fully experience the working principles of the Masonic Lodge and enjoy the relationship and fellowship of your new Lodge friends, it is highly recommended that you continue to attend your Lodge regularly. You will find that joining many organizations makes it difficult to attend all the meetings and functions of all. Give yourself time to find out what Masonry is all about by attending your Lodge on a regular basis. **Your Lodge needs you, and you need your Lodge!**

To eliminate confusion, we must discuss the term "Higher Degrees," which is incorrectly used by some. The plain truth is, **no degree in Masonry is "higher" than the degree of a Master Mason.** For example, the term "Scottish Rite Mason" or "York Rite Mason" is often misused. Correctly stated, there are Master Masons who have received degrees of the Scottish Rite or the York Rite, who are members in good standing in their Masonic Lodge. A suspended or expelled Mason may not maintain membership in either of these "Rites" or any other appendant organization whose membership is based upon Masonic membership. Simply stated, the degrees of the "Rites" expand or elaborate upon the Masonic Lodge degrees.

### **ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE:**

The Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry originated in Europe where it was known as "The Rite of Perfection" and consisted of degrees numbered from the Fourth to the Twenty-fifth. It found its way into the United States soon after being formed. The Scottish Rite was established at New

Orleans, Louisiana in 1763, at Albany, New York in 1767, at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1781, and at Charleston, South Carolina in 1783.

The Grand Constitution of 1786 provides for the extension of the "Rite" to thirty-three degrees governed in each country under a Supreme Council of the Thirty-third and last degree. The rank and decoration of Knight Commander Court of Honor (KCCH) and the Thirty-third Degree (Honorary) may be conferred upon deserving members of the "Rite" in recognition of their outstanding service.

*The Texas Scottish Rite supports two primary philanthropies; The Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children and The Learning Center for children who have a disability known as "Dyslexia." Here, they are taught to read and write effectively.*

### **THE YORK RITE:**

In the United States, the York Rite of Freemasonry consists of four degrees in the Capitular Rite or Royal Arch, three degrees in the Cryptic Rite or Council, and three orders (degrees) in the Chivalric Rite or Knights Templar.

Each of these areas have philanthropic purposes. The Capitular Rite supports the Royal Arch Assistance Program, which provides funds for research in the area of Auditory Perception. *In Texas, the Grand Royal Arch Chapter and the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters sponsors and maintains a home for aged Masons which today, is known as the Texas Retirement Center.* A Mason does not have to be a York Rite Mason to be eligible for membership in this center. The Cryptic Rite provides funds for research in the prevention of Arteriosclerosis, commonly known as "hardening of the arteries." The Chivalric Rite funds two benevolent programs; The Knight Templar Eye Foundation, which provides hospitalization and surgery for the retention or restoration of sight, and the Knight Templar Educational Foundation, which assists needy young men and women in completing higher education through low interest loans.

### **THE ANCIENT ARABIC ORDER OF THE NOBLES OF THE MYSTIC SHRINE:**

Members of the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, otherwise known as "Shriners," are members of the Mystic Order and adhere to the principles of Freemasonry; Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. The organization has a philosophy that has been expressed as "Pleasure without intemperance, hospitality without rudeness, and jollity without coarseness."

Shrinedom is also known as the "fun side" of Freemasonry. There are 188 Shrine Temples located in the United States, Canada, Mexico and the Panama Canal Zone, as well as informal Shrine Clubs located around the world.

Since its inception, the Shrine has been involved in many charitable endeavors. *The Shrine Children's Hospitals and Regional Burn Centers were established in tile 1920's.* These hospitals and burn centers are operated free of charge to children eighteen years and under, regardless of race, religion or relationship to Masons. The 1996 the operating budget for these facilities was \$419,000,000.00, all of which was derived from donations of Shriners, Masons and non-Masons alike.

### **OTHER MASONIC AFFILIATED BODIES:**

*Other Masonic affiliated bodies who share and practice many beliefs and moral values that we as Blue Lodge Masons do, are; The Order of the Eastern Star (an organization consisting of Masons and certain female relatives of Masons), the DeMolay (a boys youth group) and Job's Daughter and the Rainbow (girls youth groups).* These organizations are considered extensions of the "Masonic Family" and deserve much praise for their efforts in making ours a better world in which to live.

**Refer to the A.L.L. Activity Exercise Book and complete exercise 9.**

## Chapter 10

### **Other Organizations Called "Masons"**

Previously we discussed how you fit into our Masonic structure, its operations, ritual, laws, and traditions. We have touched upon the subject of talking about Freemasonry and what kind of organizations are affiliated with and are recognized by our Grand Lodge and Lodges.

Now we need to mention other organizations that bear the title "Masonic." It is easy to understand that we should relate to other good and well-known fraternal organizations such as the Eagles, Optimists, and the Lions. However, it is sometimes more difficult to define our relationship, or lack thereof, with other organizations styling themselves as "Masons."

Currently, there are at least five other "Masonic" organizations existing within the borders of Texas, which are called "Grand Lodges." These Grand Lodges each have chartered Lodges all over the State. We know that there are other Lodges, some Mexican and Chinese, but we do not know if they are organized into a Grand Lodge structure.

Of the other Grand Lodges, the "Prince Hall Grand Lodge" is the largest and probably the best known. There are other Grand Lodges that have split off from the Prince Hall Grand Lodge. We do not at present, recognize any of these, and we do not permit inter-visitation or communication with any of them.

A similar situation exists throughout Europe. There are as many other Grand Lodges in existence there, and we recognize only one in each nation.

We are informed that there is even one Grand Lodge that practices "co-masonry," and makes Masons of both male and female applicants. This is of course, forbidden in all regular Grand Lodges.

Most of these spurious Grand Lodges, whether in the United States or elsewhere about the world, use the same kind of outward identification, terms, insignia, and language as we do. It is difficult to differentiate between Lodges in these Grand Lodges and those of our own. It is therefore essential that you make yourself knowledgeable regarding which Lodges are available for you to visit and with which you may communicate.

Understanding differences between our Grand Lodge, along with the other

Grand Lodges recognized by The Grand Lodge of Texas, and any other organizations who style themselves as Masonic or claim to be Masonic, can be extremely confusing to you as a Master Mason. Those organizations appear to be similar to ours and advertise in the newspapers just as we do. In some cases, the announcements are side by side with ours in the newspaper columns. They use the same emblems and the same type of names and numbers that we do. They have many of the same affiliated organizations. To complicate matters even further, a number of the Grand Lodges from other states which are recognized by us, have begun to recognize many of the Prince Hall Grand Lodges in one form or another. In some states they may visit each other. In other states they exchange degree teams. It is our understanding that this recognition has taken place in over 20 Grand Lodges in the United States and Canada. However, the Grand Lodge of Texas holds allegiance to no other Grand Lodge and does not share geographic or territorial jurisdiction with other Grand Lodges. This is the sole reason for our not recognizing other Grand Lodges in the State of Texas.

From the previous information you can readily see that there are at least two things that you might be concerned with. You could be very easily put into a situation where you could be very uncomfortable or extremely embarrassed. First, recognizing Lodges that are members of our Grand Lodge and with whom you may visit and with which you may have Masonic communication, is of utmost importance. Secondly, if you are visiting in another state or country and there is another person present from a Lodge of a Grand Jurisdiction that we in Texas do not recognize, you would need to be aware of this.

In the first situation, the key is to know where to look for information. With whom we can communicate and visit Masonically is contained in two Grand Lodge books. These books outline the Lodges who are members of the Grand Lodges that The Grand Lodge of Texas recognizes. If they are not listed in these books, then we do not recognize them. These two books were described in Chapter 6. They are covered here again to emphasize the importance of knowing who is a part of our great Fraternity. The books are entitled: "List of Constituent Lodges in Texas" and "List of Regular Lodges, Masonic." If you should have a question regarding "who is recognized," contact the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Texas by mail at P.O. Box 446, Waco TX 76703, or by phone at (817) 753-7395.

In the second situation, you could be forced to make a decision. If you are visiting in another Grand Jurisdiction with whom the Grand Lodge of Texas is in fraternal relations, and someone is present in the Lodge whom you know to be from a Grand Lodge that we do not recognize, **what do you do?** Your

first thought should be of your obligation and to remember that you are a guest in their Lodge and Grand Lodge. You must follow their Grand Lodge laws and rules. If they permit it, then you must make a decision. If you feel that you cannot follow their rules and object that strongly, then you must excuse yourself and depart. If you can tolerate the situation, then you can remain and conduct yourself properly as a Master Mason.

**Refer to the A.L.L. Activity Exercise Book and complete exercise 10.**

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