



The Traveler

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Defining Freemasonry By: WB Cliff Porter, Master of Enlightenment Lodge
No. 198 - Colorado



WB Cliff Porter

What came you here to do? It is a reasonable question. If you have made it thus far, and your lodge is doing its job, then the Fraternity should have the expectation that you have an idea of your purpose, certain desires and expectations are necessary. If you have a goal, then how can you achieve it at all, if you have not a plan? If you have no goal, then what is the purpose?

It has become common place in the Fraternity, for the sake of false harmony, to claim that the Fraternity is all things to all men and that any and all symbols mean only what the particular viewer intends for them to mean. Worse, foolish statements such as, "You can't truly define the Craft" have become the norm in a sea of idle minds that would rather leave the Craft with no definition than have the courage to define it for themselves, or more courageous still, discover what the actual definition is.

False tolerance has become the mantra of the liberally minded and fear of failure causes even the most brave to keep their definitions to themselves, all to the detriment of the Craft.

Freemasonry is extraordinary. It changes lives, it builds buildings, it establishes governments when we want to be honest about it. It is the best of teachings and one of the most just and beautiful philosophies that has ever existed, and we, as its guardians and tylers of enlightenment, refuse to define it for the purpose of false harmony.

In fear of offending those who have never and will never appreciate the philosophies of Masonry, we have removed our mystical tradition to the point that we know it not. So, even the most loving men in lodge, with good intentions, refuse to assign meaning to a symbol so that a man who might assign a different meaning might not be offended. Or, worse, the Brother is afraid that he is weak minded and might be found wrong by someone who he considered intellectually superior. Intellectual cowardice is the sin of the man who should have never been allowed in the first place, for the sword is as much a Masonic working tool as any other.

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The Education Lodge

By: Bro. Ben Wallace

At our February meeting, we approved a budget that included a line item that would allow us to arrange for a national level speaker this year. This plan came to fruition at our October meeting, when W.B. Cliff Porter presented a fascinating program entitled "The Hidden Psychology of Freemasonry". W.B. Cliff is a member of Enlightenment Lodge No. 198 of Colorado Springs, CO. Both Cliff and Enlightenment Lodge are very well known nationally. While being a high profile Freemason is no guarantee that you will be able to present a great Masonic education program, it certainly does not hurt.



Bro. Ben Wallace

In the weeks that followed our meeting at Orphan's Lodge No. 761, I began thinking about the future of Wilkerson College Lodge, and the mission of our lodge in general. Part of our mission statement reads "As speculative Masons, education will be our greatest tool...". Like most of you, I am a member of multiple lodges and appendant bodies. Every year, when I write a check to those bodies, I justify to myself the reason that I am continuing to remain affiliated with them. The reason that I joined and continue to love Wilkerson College Lodge is due to the excellent educational programs we have. Are all of these programs a home run? No, but, for the most part they are very good. I am fortunate that my home lodge (props to Blackmer No. 127) is well known for our outstanding Masonic education programs and, for this reason, the bar for my expectations is set very high. Every blue lodge in the state has a different level at which their bar is set and this ranges from outstanding to (unfortunately), very low. My point is that if Wilkerson College Lodge is to be truly known as the "Education Lodge", we must continue to focus on the quality of our programs. If a brother visits our lodge, and finds the educational program to be subpar with his expectations, the title "Education Lodge" would ring hollow. Moreover, many of our visitors and potential new members are graduates of Wilkerson College. They *expect* excellence because they were fed a healthy dose of it while attending the college. If we are to live up to our reputation, we must continue to push the envelope. How can we do this?

It is not my place to develop a comprehensive plan, but I will just suggest a few ideas. First, given the resounding success of W.B. Cliff Porter's visit, I suggest that we not only continue this practice, but that we up the ante by bringing in two guest speakers each year. Second, we should continue to seek out local talent for future programs, of which we have an abundance in this state. Perhaps most importantly, we should be our own best ambassadors for the "education lodge". As such, we need to dedicate ourselves to developing, and presenting, quality Masonic education programs. There have been many times where I have said to myself "that would make a great program" but the hard part, as you know, is taking the next step to research and develop an idea into a presentation. If each member of this lodge would develop just one program, think of the impact we could have on Freemasonry in this Grand Jurisdiction! To that end, I would like to challenge you to consider developing that next "great idea" into a lecture and present it to your lodge!

Wilkerson College Lodge is special because of its mission. Let us continue to improve all aspects of our educational programs and earn the right to be called THE "Education Lodge".

Annual Meeting along with Installation of Officers



Second "Dinning Out Experience" of 2010



You are cordially invited in attend Wilkerson College Lodge's annual meeting. This will be held on December 11, 2010 beginning at 4:00 pm at the Greensboro Masonic Temple. There will be a brief business meeting prior to officer installation. The installation is open to everyone.

Afterwards members & guests will adjourn to Mabi's Seafood Grill & Bar for dinner beginning at 6:00. RSVPs are required and the cost of the meal will be \$35 per person, which is all inclusive. (A cash bar will also be available). For more information and to make reservations, please contact Ray Hall (Lodge Secretary).

(Contact information is located on the back page of the publication)

Happy Birthday to the Following Members

December

Bob Ferris - 2
Ed Lawing - 2
Frank Ortiz - 12
Joseph Adegboyega - 21
Nigel Hawkins - 19
Steve Viers - 27
Tom Dolinger, II - 15



January

Allen Hinch - 21
Bill Mathis - 4
Carl "Pappy" Scheer - 25
Edd Little - 6
George Jones - 13
Leonard Safrit, Jr. - 3
Morty Jayson - 17

February

Randy Ogburn - 18
Rick Smith - 17
Scott Barta - 25
Shaun Bradshaw - 26
Tom Wilkerson - 11
Tommy Rash - 7
Kevin Combs - 23
Balvin Dunn II - 21

Thomas Jefferson, it's all over

By: WB Walter Klein, PM

Your denial of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence has been absolutely and finally repudiated.

Forty-five thousand North Carolina Masons just voted, through more than 1,000 Grand Lodge delegates, to express their faith in the honesty of their brothers who signed the Mec Dec May 20, 1775.

When you, Mr. Jefferson, silent for 44 years, in 1819 called the Mec Dec spurious, you generated trouble that continued for 187 years. Historians, writers and educators argued over the authenticity of the Mec Dec all that time, but never once doubted the existence or integrity of its signers!



WB Walter Klein

So forty-three Mecklenburg Masons, led by former NC Governor James Martin and John Belk, descendant of the Alexanders who founded Charlotte, took action to right a terrible wrong. They met September 19, 2004, at the Hezekiah Alexander Homesite to sign their historic Declaration of Mecklenburg Masons.

It said, simply, "We Freemasons of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, wishing to bring lasting peace to two centuries of concern about validity of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence of May 20, 1775, hereby attest to the honor and integrity of all brothers who signed that document. Their oath is our oath, their signatures and ours are as one. In this sacred structure, where Masons lived and met from 1774, we solemnly sign this declaration of fraternal unity and faith."

The Masons thus trumped Jefferson, who never uttered a word against the signers. Who were those Charlotte Masons who signed the Mec Dec 235 years ago?

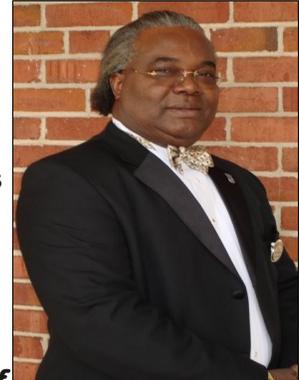
Thomas Polk. Dr. Ephraim Brevard. John McKnitt Alexander. Abraham Alexander. Hezekiah Alexander. Waightstill Avery. Robert Irwin. David Reese. And more—mostly leading Presbyterians. Only three of the 27 signers are confirmed as *not* Masons. Thomas Polk helped found Charlotte and became a Revolutionary War hero. Waightstill Avery became North Carolina's first attorney general. Several were Princeton graduates.

Masons were later to become a powerful bond among signers of the Philadelphia declaration: Benjamin Franklin, John Hancock, North Carolinians William Hooper and Joseph Hewes, Richard Stockton, George Walton, Robert Treat Payne, William Whipple and 15 others. When the 12-year-old republic established its constitution in 1787, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin and 19 other proven and presumed Masons signed it.

Masons warmly identify with their brothers through their sworn obligations, their reputation for absolute integrity and centuries-long tradition of loyalty to one God and one another. They are the world's largest fraternity. Masons walking the streets of Charlotte today consider George Washington, Benjamin Franklin and millions of other Freemasons, past and present, to be their solid brothers.

POSSESSED or MENTAL ILLNESS

By: WB Joseph Adegboyega, PM



WB Joseph Adegboyega

Mental illness is a serious disorder. To have proper control of one's mental faculty is a blessing! I have worked with some patients with serious mental or personality disorders. I thank God, everyday, for my mental stability. It is difficult to imagine being in the shoes of someone who is unaware of his or (her) behaviors as his or her personality changes. To suffer from (multiple) personality disorder is comparable to being demon-possessed. This condition is incurable though manageable with proper medication and therapy.

Quoting from KJV Holy Bible - Matthew 8:28-34 says, "... in the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. They were so violent that no one could pass that way. 'What do you want with us, Son of God?' they shouted. 'Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?' Some distance from them a large herd of pigs was feeding. The demons begged Jesus, 'If you drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs.' He said to them, 'Go!' So they came out and went into the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and died in the water..."

Every person is the embodiment of flesh and spirit. The body is like the suit – a space suit for Astronauts - which houses the spirit during our time on planet earth. There has to be balance and harmony between the body and the spirit. Wherever there is disharmony or instability, there surely will be mental illness or disease. This was what happened to the men who were demon-possessed.

I was watching the story of Serial Killer (Jeffrey Dahmer) this past weekend. Though I abhor torture, killing and eating of any human being, I still felt sympathy for him and for his parents. I will explain. Jeffrey Dahmer was born as a beautiful baby. The parents loved and raised him to become a good citizen. However, genetic and environmental conditions transformed him into a human-flesh-eating monster!

Mankind has made tremendous advancement in sciences over the past centuries. However, we are yet to discover how the human body and the spirit were matched at birth. No one has discovered how to negotiate the assignment of parents, environment and place of birth. Every child is born perfect and should remain as such; except for the fact that parental genes, environmental or external factors join in to create a child's personality; good or bad. If at least one of two parents has a history of mental illness, the child is likely to suffer mental illness. This is called genetic predisposition. Some people become mentally unstable after experiencing trauma in their life.

Conclusion : Using the 24-inch gauge, it is important to divide the day into three equal parts (8 hrs X 3): one part for usual avocations, one part for charity and one part for refreshment and sleep. There is need to balance the daily use of our time in order to avoid stress. This is because stress could cause disease and or mental disorders.

Work, give, pray and rest my friends and brothers.

Defining Freemasonry

It is the first working tool, presented to the tyler, by the symbolic mind of the lodge to guard the psychological work of betterment when the lodge is in session. This is to say, symbolically, that the layout of the lodge and the positions of the stations and places are symbols in and of themselves of the human consciousness and the first working tool of the lodge is a sword to guard it during its work. Courage is necessary so that moral relativism never creeps in.

Those who have little of the second working tool of Masonry, patience, often rush to the Eastern philosophies for fast food enlightenment, and after an elementary introduction to comparative religion, believe they have found truth, or with a Google search begin assigning Buddhist meanings, or other such traditions, to the rich and deep philosophies of Masonry. The tragic result is often some bogus teaching or preaching that morality is subjective, that there is no duality, and that each man must decide for himself how to interpret Masonry. Skuvbalon! As the Apostle Paul might have said.

Masonry is definable. It is labor. Its philosophies have absolutes and some of them include:

1. There is a God
2. There is right
3. There is wrong
4. There is good
5. There is bad
6. There is moral
7. There is immoral

Masonry, by design, provides a path to discovering how duality and unity exist in a material universe that should not be shrugged off for some fake and unworkable philosophy that does not assign importance to the material existence or pretends that all things are relative. Part of the journey the neophyte or initiate is on teaches one to learn and assign value to himself, to others, to his world, and to God.

Masonry assigns symbols or implements with meanings. The supreme importance in the meaning of a symbol, is the meaning assigned by the creator of that symbol in a given circumstance. In other words, we must try to determine the meaning assigned to the symbols by the original creators of Masonry to determine what mysteries were hidden in the degrees for us to discover. If we do not believe there was an original intent for the symbols and rituals of the Craft, then we are left with belief that they were randomly thrown together for everyone to judge for themselves the point of the entire thing. I find this idea intolerable and foolish. Masonry teaches, in its own degrees, a reference for order and definition. It states within its rituals time and again, continent to continent that Geometry is revered by Masons. Our symbols themselves are often blatantly referencing systems of order, foundation, and structure. We refer to the Mason himself as a Temple that must be designed, built, and improved upon.

So let us briefly examine the symbols and emblems presented, the archetypes they represent, and define Masonry; less it remained undefined and without value.

Defining Freemasonry, continued

The candidate for Masonry is first instructed to be silent. He has others who speak for him in most regards, he is told to trust his God and his conductor, he is advised to organize his time, and to rid his life of vice.

Then, after proving that he is dedicated to silent service to God, he is placed upon a foundation where he is told that duality is necessary. He is given pillars as symbols of duality and he is first allowed to observe them, then pass through them, and then enter into the heart of them beyond. He is told that the pillars contain the secrets of Masonry within them. This teaching stems from the oldest of the Masonic Noachite legends and ancient mystical traditions concerning the secrets of society and psychology wherein the original pillars were brick and bronze. These substances having a meaning of their own. It is upon this journey that he travels into the heart of the earth, for it is necessary to journey across the mosaic of life and material existence understanding and inculcating all she has to truly appreciate the spiritual spark within us.

We learn that it is within OUR middle chamber that the next phase of our journey begins and that once there we are to labor. The pillars contain emblems of earth and creation, the symbol of the pillar and globe symbols of generative force, wisdom as a crown upon the symbol of raw intellectual power. We were first shown the very nature of the earth in chalk, charcoal and clay. We are lectured as to her powers of nature to both poison and heal. As as Fellowcraft we journey through the earth, through ourselves, through the universe and recognize the power of duality and the importance of study and work. We are told that if we study the nature of things, that we will understand Nature and Things.

Foolish statements can not be born in the earth, for she never lies regardless of our beliefs or personal norms that we call truths. The earth and Nature never wage in ridiculous discussions of what is truth. For her, they are a constant and they never error. We can believe that we can fly, and she will have as fall as we leap. We can believe that we can breath underwater and she gently drowns us with the truth. She is real, beautiful and constant. She knows of evil, of good, of right and wrong. Incorrect statements of the none existence of evil elude her lips. She is born in reality, and the spirit is a very real part of that reality.

It is in our final approach to a new beginning that the material, the old way of looking at things dies a horrible death and returns forever to the earth and remains with her. Our material self, which was a good man to begin with we should remember, is honored in death and buried nearer the temple with honors, this is to say that it remains forever a part of us and it was for a short time during our awakening that we misunderstood this until the symbol of the ever-green and immortality reminded us of it.

The symbols of our personal evils; those of want, impatiences and a lack of disinterestedness are brutally killed removing the error of harsh and foolish speech (the symbol relating to the throat), the error of an impassioned and unreasoned emotion (the heart) and intentional ignorance (the gut, the place of intuition and at one time seat of the soul or mind in ancient mystical traditions which is why we still say 'gut instinct').

Lodge Secretary
5333 Audrey Rd.
Greensboro, NC
27406

Phone: 336-292-4633
Email: se-
cy76@gmail.com



The next issue of the "Traveler" will be published on or about March 21. Anyone wishing to contribute, please contact Editor Gary Handy or Asst. Editor Larry Thompson.

Soon we will have the upcoming schedule for 2011. Please continue reading correspondence for information concerning our meeting dates & programs in the coming weeks.

Wilkerson College Lodge's Mission Statement

The mission of Wilkerson College Lodge is to foster a flame of brotherly love and friendship that will surpass all differences, envelope all similarities and consistently travel that level of time in search of how to make good men better. As speculative Masons, education will be our greatest tool, so as to instill in our future Masters qualities of leadership, responsibility and compassion.

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Masonry teaches that our lives in this present existence should not be discarded and despised with hopeful wishes of an afterlife. It does not take time with decisions of the Gods and discussions of salvation.

Masonry is a philosophy of the here and now and it teaches us that we are working tools, to be loved, to be worked, to be worn. That God is closer than we think and the journey into the earth, is as much a journey within our selves.

It teaches that if we want to know God we can find him, but that once we admit a love for him and a trust for him, we must labor in this present existence. Masonry despises the lazy and has little use for the fools, the stupid, and the false.

Masonry is a philosophy of personal awareness and enlightenment with definable symbols, realtime lessons and a real life application.

So Brethren, next time someone says that Masonry is hard to define, define it for them. If we fail to define the Craft, then the Craft has no meaning. There is a very material, administrative, real danger in assigning no definition or no meaning to Masonry. It would mean that by default Masonry has no value. When this occurs statements like, "Masonry is many things to many men" is perverted into a belief that Masonry must be all things to all men. Then dues are reduced or remain artificially low so that Masonry can be fiscally of no consequence or sacrifice. Petitions are prostituted as waste paper and litter the tables of every lodge so that anyone might find one and fill it out. Members are sought like cattle instead of cultivated like an important commodity.

Define Masonry my Brethren, or you will lose it.

Brother Cliff Porter is an honorary member of Wilkerson College Lodge No. 760 and Worshipful Master of Enlightenment Lodge 198. His writings and ideas are his own and are not presented as the official position of any group or groups within the Craft. He may be reached for comment at cliffporter@enlightenmentlodge.com