



Union Masonic Lodge #618, A.F.&A.M.

Happenings at the April stated

35 of us fellowshipped at this stated; 10 of these brothers were from Allen-Graham #695 who retrieved the District 28 Traveling Gavel to return to their Lodge.

Discussed District Meeting attendance plans, and determined that three members preferred to travel to Temple Lodge in Charlotte on the 24th, and one will be traveling to King Solomon Lodge in Gastonia on the 23rd.

Announced the death of our Brother Franklin R. Waltmyer on March 13th.

Mandatory Five Hour Lecture Service was held on March 29th.

Scheduled presentation of Masonic Service Awards for eight brothers at our May stated.

Received Military Veterans Certificates for three more brothers, and WB Mike Blythe—being present—was presented his certificate.

Announced planning for the School of Instruction which WB Tommy Cohen, DDGL, intends to conduct prior to the start of summer vacation by the schools.

Announced that our Pancake Breakfast netted \$554.07 for the charities.

Presented a Certificate of Life Membership to WB Bobby Burgess. Congratulations!

Upcoming events of interest

May 12th—Stated Communication. Supper at 6:30, meeting at 7:30.

Schools on 2nd and 4th Sundays. Next

scheduled on March 24th.

GM Dalton's District Meetings—various local dates—April 22, 23,24.

Masonic Education. “Discretion and Secrets”

(Richard D. Marcus, George Washington 1776 Lodge, #337, F&AM, Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin)

Discretion and Secrets

We live in a time that celebrates openness about one's deepest feelings and worst foibles. The media enthusiastically report infidelities of community leaders. Newscasters tell us the lurid details of the lives of Gary Condit or Robert Blake. Our society's habit of public confession can even become brutal. On TV, Jerry Springer encourages people to tell all and thereby jolt their friends and family into outrageous action. Bluntly stating what you know *regardless* of the

(Continued on P2)

April Birthdays (by age)

AGE / BIRTH DATE REPORT (sorted by age on birth date)

86 04/24/1928 THOMAS A. JOYNER
81 04/21/1933 ROBERT L. LITTLE
75 04/21/1939 HOWARD L. JONES
74 04/03/1940 ARNOLD J. PRICE

74 04/09/1940 LEON E. SNIDER
73 04/26/1941 ROGER D. LONG
76 04/29/1947 GARY D. HARTSELL
60 04/09/1954 RICKY L. RUSHING
57 04/04/1957 JOHNNY SMITH
57 04/08/1957 JERRY L. BENNETT

56 04/24/1958 CHARLES T. SMITH
56 04/30/1958 BRADFORD S. REITZEL
54 04/04/1960 EDWARD W. GREENE
54 04/26/1960 TAB G. MORRISON
53 04/03/1961 RUSSELL N. DRAKE
43 04/26/1971 THOMAS L. NASH JR

May Birthdays (by age)

AGE / BIRTH DATE REPORT (sorted by age on birth date)

84 05/16/1930 JASON M. SALYER
70 05/09/1944 OSCAR Y. HAR-
WARD
67 05/24/1947 VICTOR J. GIAN-
GRANT

66 05/04/1948 RICHARD D. TUCKER
66 05/06/1948 DAVID F. BARBEE
64 05/05/1950 MITCHELL A. EL-
LIOTT
64 05/14/1950 RONNIE L. SNEED
62 05/31/1952 JON R. STEWART

60 05/31/1954 AMBROSE A. PURS-
ER
59 05/14/1955 CURTIS A. BELK
31 05/07/1983 DUSTIN S. GROOMS

(Continued from P1)

damage done is oddly praised as candor and forthrightness. It is almost a part of the American character to "say what you mean and mean what you say," without artful diplomacy or courtesy.

Yet we, in Freemasonry, continue to practice the art of keeping secrets. We learn in our posting that we can tell everything about Freemasonry except the modes of recognition. The question we will investigate tonight is why do we continue to keep some things secret?

Some have suggested that secrecy was needed because political and religious persecution has at times led to the death of Freemasons. Even so, the deliberately public announcement of the founding of the Grand Lodge in London in 1717 would seem to have ended the need for further secrecy. Nevertheless, we persevere in our attachment to secrecy.

Others have scoffed that secrecy is merely a sociological tool for holding a group together through a shared knowledge. Certainly specialized knowledge helps keep groups together: be it people who love to sing madrigals, those who reenact Civil War battles, or professional groups of engineers or architects. But secrecy is not essential to these groups.

The answer to why we continue to practice secrecy, it seems to me, is to achieve our goal of becoming better men in Masonry. Maintaining secrecy is a lifelong discipline. Practicing the discipline of secrecy makes us better at doing it.

We are likewise commended to keep of the secrets of a Brother, rather than gossip what we know to others. Lax discipline in secrecy within a Lodge is a source of disharmony. Perhaps a Masonic allegory can help illustrate the benefits of secrecy to our fraternity and our lives.

(Continued on P3)

(Continued from P2)

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Adam Craftsman worked for several years in sales. His trips took him on long journeys to the North. Adam often returned dejected from these trips with more rejections than he'd want to tell anyone. Pondering his life's path, he mentioned his dissatisfaction to his good friend Buddy Freeman. Buddy, a Master bricklayer, enjoyed his work out East.

"There is plenty of work for you as a bricklayer," Buddy said. Adam asked to join the other laborers. Adam worked hard, advancing to Journeyman and Master status under Buddy's expert guidance.

After a hard day's work, Buddy became more serious than usual. "I want you to keep this in strictest confidence," Buddy whispered. "It's been something I have wanted to share with you for some time. My son, Lewis, was actually adopted. My wife's family wants it kept a secret. Eleven years ago, my wife's teenage sister was pregnant. Since my wife and I were married, the whole family agreed that the baby would become ours to raise. But we are to keep it a secret."

Adam felt privileged to share in Buddy's personal secret. Adam congratulated his friend on his fine parenting skills, as he knew how well Lewis was doing.

A few days later, Adam shared his knowledge to another bricklayer, who later confided in another. The story slowly spread, each time in strictest confidence, eventually finding its way to Buddy's distraught sister-in-law and to Lewis.

Buddy's family moved away. Adam's best friend was thereby lost through his violation of trust.

* * *

Adam's violation of his obligation reminds us of the enduring value of keeping secrets. We should reflect on our promise not to reveal the secrets of our worthy brothers, except in the case of treason or murder.

Keeping some parts of our craft secret is surprisingly difficult. In our public gatherings, for example, we may slip by giving the due-guard and sign when we know that we should not. Secrecy maintains harmony. When we can keep one simple secret, we grow in strength to keep larger secrets revealed inadvertently at work or in our community.

The modern German tradition in Freemasonry tends not to refer to the Fraternity as being secret (*Geheimnis*) but as being discreet (*Diskret*). Discretion conveys a sense of being tactful or silent, rather than a sense of hiding things from others. How can we feel free to communicate frankly and to grow in our development if everything we might say would be aired in public? Our emphasis on secrecy should be relabeled as practicing discretion. Since practice helps to perfect our actions, let us all live up to our promises in our obligation. We should continue to practice secrecy and discretion, not only in the modes of recognition but also in the secrets of everyday life that are daily entrusted to us. We need not say everything we know. As we remain faithful in keeping secrets and showing discretion, we will achieve our goal of becoming better men in Freemasonry.

Presented: June 18, 2002



OFFICERS—2014
 First Row left to right: Senior Steward, John Robert Nash; Senior Deacon, Thomas Lathan Nash, Jr.; Junior Warden, Vincent Joseph D’Andrea; Master, Thomas Michael Little; Tyler, David Lee Warwick; Junior Deacon, David Gordon Nash. Second Row left to right: Junior Steward, Perry Lee Sams; Treasurer, Robert Lee Little; Secretary, Roger Darrell Long, PM; Senior Warden, Mitchell Allen Elliott; Chaplain, Douglas Eugene Martin, PM.

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MAKING GOOD MEN BETTER.

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Secretary of Union Lodge #618

**Send any constructive criticisms or
 comments to**

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Don't forget to pass the word around that our Fellowship Hall is available to rent. Provide any interested party the mobile phone number for WB Darrell Cline, who manages all of the reservations. (704) 791-9470

