



Work & Lectures

A Metropolitan Atlanta Masonic Newsletter



david @ morelight . org

September 2009
Religion

http://news.morelight.org

In This Issue

- 1- Metro Area News & DCMA Report
- 2- Old Tiler Talks: *Atheist and Agnostic*
- 3- List of Special Events
- 4- Old Tiler Talks: *Book upon the Altar*
- 5- Edict 2009-01 *from the MWGM of Georgia*
- 6- Essay: *The True Secret Word of a Master Mason*

The DeKalb County Masonic Association Report

DCMA This Month

Monday, September 28th will find us back at Tucker 42 again. Tucker always has an awesome meal, especially the dessert prepared by the Ladies, and usually has some musical entertainment - we'll see if we can get Bro. Cliff to jump on the spoons again this year.



Tucker 42 is smack-dab in the middle of Main Street, Tucker - which is only about 1500' long, so how can you miss it?

Metro Area News

Brethren, hardly any lodges send me information to post here. Most lodge website schedules are woefully out of date - when they can be found at all.

DCMA Next Month

October is when we take the Children's Home on an outing to Stone Mountain; please come to the Tucker 42 for the latest details.

This space (and more)

DCMA Last Month

August found us at Panthersville 543. After a good, hearty meal, we convened in the lodge room. The guest program was PGM Joe Suttles presenting a 50-year award (assisted by RWBro. Merril Clark, Grand Treasurer), then giving us a speech about Masonry and Americanism. We had 28 present, and collected \$74.00 for our charities. Panthersville 543 won the Banner, and Clarkston 492 took the Gavel.

is available

DCMA This Year

- Pres: David Herman, Chamblee-Sardis 444 & Gate City 2
david @ morelight . org, 404 421 5279
- 1st VP: James Tyroff, Philologia 178 & Metro Daylight 743
jtyroff @ hotmail . com or 770 378 9531
- 2nd VP: Jim Cline, Clarkston 492 (*Jim needs a second lodge!*)
jclinejdcpa @ mindspring . com
- Sec/Treas: Bill Eleazer, Glenwood Hills 703 & EA Minor 603
billjoane256 @ aol . com or 770 922 5412

for your lodge news.

Feel free to add me to your lodge newsletter distribution if you don't want to have to send me special notices.

Special thanks to Bill Marsh for proofreading this mess!

*The DCMA... Determined to Cover Masonry in Atlanta!
We'd like for your lodge to join us - ask one of us how.*

Standard Disclaimer

This publication is created to inform the brethren. Any views or opinions that manage to sneak in are solely those of the editor, who does **NOT** speak for any organization whatsoever. Really.

Where's YOUR News?

We'd be honored to support the community by publishing *your* news and events - all you have to do is let us know by emailing david @ morelight . org with all the information you'd like listed.

Old Tiler Talks

by Carl H. Claudy
PGM, District of Columbia
Mostly written in the 1920s

Atheist and Agnostic

I HAVE had a shock!" announced the New Brother, sitting beside the Old Tiler.

"Shall I send for a doctor?" asked the Old Tiler.

"No, a minister," countered the New Brother. "I just met Smithkins in the lodge. He's a member and I never knew it."

"If you like Smithkins, that must have been a pleasant shock," answered the Old Tiler.

"Oh, I like him all right. But it was unpleasant to find him a member of the lodge. Smithkins is an atheist! He can't be a real Mason."

"Oh! So Smithkins is an atheist. Was he an atheist when he signed his application?"

"Of course he was! He's always been one!"

"Then your course is clear. You should prefer charges against him for un-Masonic conduct and perjury, and have him thrown out of the fraternity."

"But - but why should I do it? Smithkins never did me any harm!"

"Oh, yes, he did! If an atheist lied to gain admittance to the Masonic fraternity, he injured Masonry and injured all Masons, and you are a Mason. So he injured you."

"But, why must I do it? You do it! You know so much more about such things than I do!" answered the New Brother.

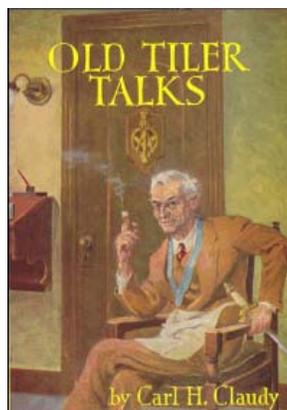
"Oh, thank you!" smiled the Old Tiler. "But I know nothing about Smithkins being an atheist. I never met an atheist. I don't know what one looks like. And if Smithkins is an atheist, then an atheist looks and acts just like a theist. Where are his horns and his tail?"

"Oh, don't make fun! This is serious! How can we allow an atheist to continue in membership of our lodge?"

"I don't think we can!" comforted the Old Tiler. "But how can you prove Smithkins to be an atheist? He must have signed his statement that he believed in God when he joined the lodge. Atheism is a matter of belief or non-belief; it isn't a thing you can prove if he chooses to deny it."

"I have heard him say he doesn't believe in the divinity of Christ!"

"Oh! Is that what made you call him an atheist? Many thousand Masons don't believe in the divinity of Christ; some are in this lodge. Jews do not; the Chinese do not; Mohammedans do not, but that doesn't mean they don't believe in God."



"But I have heard him say he doesn't believe in the God of the church."

"There is a conception of God in several churches in which I don't believe, either!" retorted the Old Tiler. "The God in whom I put my trust is not a vengeful God, swayed by passion or prejudice. The God in whom many good people believe is a terrible God, who gets angry and is revengeful and plans horrible torments for those who do not please Him. Because I don't put my faith in that particular idea of God doesn't mean I don't believe in God. And the people who believe in the Deity as pictured by Calvin and Luther and the Puritans may think my conception of Deity is all wrong, but that doesn't make them call me an atheist."

"The atheist is a curiosity. The very fact that a man says, 'I don't believe in God,' shows that he does. Where does he get his conception of the God he denies? The only real atheist is the man who never heard of God."

"Maybe Smithkins isn't an atheist, but he is an agnostic. He doesn't know what he believes!" defended the New Mason.

"That is different!" smiled the Old Tiler. "The agnostic is a mentally lazy person without enough energy to formulate a conception of Deity. The agnostic isn't satisfied with the God of Moses, or the God of Calvin, or the God of Luther, or the God of the Jews, or the God of Jesus Christ. He wants his own little God, made according to a formula which suits his particular kind of ego. But when he tries to make such a god he runs into so many contradictions that he gives it up and solves the problem by saying, 'I don't know what I believe!' Because he is then in a class by himself he gradually evolves a queer sort of pride in the negation; he is 'different' from' his fellows, and therefore, 'superior.' But it's just a pose; let his child be desperately ill or he be in danger of drowning, and you'll hear him. Yes, and the 'atheist,' too! . . . cry to God for help."

"Luckily for poor impotent humanity the Supreme Architect is a merciful God who hears the cries of His children in distress whether they are simple men you know and like, or strange-minded men like Smithkins, who distress us with their lack of understanding."

"Then you don't think Smithkins is a menace to the lodge because he is an ... because he believes ... differently from you and me?"

"I do not!" smiled the Old Tiler. "I know Smithkins pretty well. He doesn't lie so he must have some belief, or he wouldn't be a Mason. It doesn't concern us, or the lodge, or Masonry, what his belief is, so it is sincere. It takes all sorts of people to make a world, and if we all thought alike . . ."

"Why, then," interrupted the New Brother, "there would be no use for Old Tilers and their talks to the ignorant!"

"That would be terrible, wouldn't it?" agreed the Old Tiler, as he rose to answer knocks from within.



List of Special Events - September & October, 2009

The Grand Master's Calendar

12 Sep, Sat - 5th District Convention
at the Atlanta Masonic Center (216), Atlanta - 8:00 / 9:00.
Lunch follows. (tyled)

19 Sep, Sat - 11th District Convention
at Ocilla 134, Ocilla - 8:00 / 9:00.

26 Sep, Sat - 9th District Convention
at the Gainesville 219, Gainesville 8:00 / 9:00. (open)

27-28 Oct, Tue-Wed - Grand Lodge (*corrected dates*)
- sorry, I couldn't find the actual location of the GL session on
the GL site, only that the "Headquarters Hotel" is the Marriott
Macon City Center Hotel, 240 Coliseum Drive, Macon.

Awards, Honors & PM Nights

03 Oct, Sat - 100th Anniversary
at Grayson 549, Grayson. (open)

Motorcycle Events

12 Sep, Sat - 7th Annual Ride for the Children (One Way)
Police escorted highway ride from Duluth 480 to the Children's
Home, with a stop at Big Dog Motorcycles. Coordinated by
Duluth 480. \$25 per bike (\$10 per passenger) donations cover
breakfast, T-shirt, pin and BBQ lunch at the Home; proceeds
go to the Children's Home Operating Fund. Unofficial,
unescorted ride back via GA 11.

26 Sep, Sat - Skeeter Run (One Way)
Back roads ride from Bonaire to Byron, past several middle-
Georgia lodges. Sponsored by Jeffersonville 133. Contact
Chuck Hall 478-328-0321 for more info.

Degree Conferals

Conferral schedules are TENTATIVE. Please confirm with host lodge.

01 Sep, Tue - Entered Apprentice Conferral
at East Point 288, Peachtree City. 6:30 meal, 7:30 start.

17 Sep, Thu - Fellow Craft Conferral
at Roswell 165, Roswell. 6:30 meal, 7:30 start.

19 Sep, Sat - Master Mason Conferral
at Master's 295, Decatur. 8:00am meal, 9:00am start.
Knights of Mecca to confer.

3 Oct, Sat - Master Mason Conferral
at Stone Mountain 449, Stone Mtn. 8:00am meal, 9:00am start.
Knights of Mecca to confer.

Associations, Clubs, Instruction

21 Sep, Mon - Gwinnett County Masonic Association
at Snellville 99, Snellville. 6:30 meal, 7:30 start. (open)

28 Sep, Mon - DeKalb County Masonic Association
at Tucker 42, Tucker. 6:30 meal 7:30 start. (open)

02 Sep, Wed - DeKalb Masonic Memorial Club
at Clarkston 492, Clarkston. 2:00 meeting; coffee served.

Fundraisers

05 Sep, Sat - Chicken BBQ
at Rockmart 87, Rockmart. 11:00 - 2:00.

07 Sep, Mon - Annual Labor Day BBQ
at Hunter Park, Douglasville (by Douglasville 289). 11:00 -
5:00.

07 Sep, Mon - Annual Labor Day BBQ
at Zingara 519, Conyers. All-you-care-to-eat (including
dessert), \$7.00 11:00 - 5:00. Car show, too...

02 Sep, Sat - BBQ
at Lawrenceville 131, Lawrenceville. All-you-care-to-eat.
11:00 - 7:00.

19 Sep, Sat - Spaghetti Dinner
at College Park 454, College Park. 11:00 - 5:00; \$5.
Proceeds go to Christian City Children's Care Center.

26 Sep, Sat - BBQ
at Clarkston 492, Clarkston. 11:00 - 6:00; all you can eat.

GACHIP Programs

07 Sep, Mon - Douglasville 289, Sponsors
at Hunter Park, Douglasville, 9:00 - 5:00.

12 Sep, Sat - Flint Hill 371, Sponsors
at Douglas Co. Court House, Douglasville, 12:00 - 6:00.

26/27 Sep, Sat/Sun - Sandy Springs 124, Sponsors
at the Sandy Springs Festival, 9:00 - 5:00.

26/27 Sep, Sat/Sun - Duluth 480, Sponsors
at the Duluth Fall Festival, 9:00 - 4:00.

Shooting Events

05 Sep, Sat - Charity Dove Shoot
Peach County, GA. \$100 per gun; kids using same stand are
free. Lunch on opening day. Contact Art Hatten 478-951-1519
or Alan Shaw - 478-987-0313 for more info.

21 Nov, Sat - Yaarab Legion of Honor Pistol Shoot
at the Bartow County Pistol Range. 8-11 practice, 11:30 safety
briefing, 12-3 shoot. Singles and 4-man team combined
scores. Proceeds to the Shriner's Hospitals.



Book upon the Altar

I heard the most curious tale," began the New Brother seating himself beside the Old Tiler during refreshment.

"Shoot!" commanded the Old Tiler.

"Friend of mine belongs to a midwest Lodge. Seems they elected a chap to become a member but when he took the degree he stopped the work to ask for the Koran in place of the Bible on the Altar. Said he wanted the holy book of his faith, and the Bible wasn't it!"

"Yes, go on," prompted the Old Tiler. "What did they do?"

"The officers held a pow-wow and the Master finally decided that as the ritual demanded the 'Holy Bible, Square and Compasses' as furniture for the lodge, the applicant was wrong and that he'd have to use the Bible or not take his degree. And the funny part was that the initiate was satisfied and took his degree with the Bible on the Altar.

I'm glad they have him, and not this lodge."

Why?"

"Why, a chap who backs down that way can't have very much courage; I'd have had more respect for him if he'd insisted and if he couldn't have his way, refused to go on with the degree."

"All wrong, brother, all wrong!" commented the Old Tiler.

"The Mohammedan initiate wasn't concerned about himself but about the lodge. He showed a high degree of Masonic principle in asking for his own holy book, and a great consideration for the lodge. This man isn't a Christian. He doesn't believe in Christ. He believes in Allah, and Mohammed his prophet. The Bible, to you a holy book, is to him no more than the Koran is to you. You wouldn't regard an obligation taken on a dictionary or a cookbook or a Koran as binding, in the same degree that you would one taken on the Bible.

"That's the way this chap felt. He wanted to take his obligation so that it would bind his conscience. The Master would not let him, because he slavishly followed the words of the ritual instead of the spirit of Masonry.

"Masonry does not limit an applicant to his choice of a name for a Supreme Being. I can believe in Allah, or Buddha, or Confucius, or Mithra, or Christ, or Siva, or Brahma, or Jehovah, and be a good Mason. If I believe in a Great Architect that is all Masonry demands; my brethren do not care what I name Him."

"Then think you this chap isn't really obligated? I must write my friend and warn him-

"Softly, softly! Any man with enough reverence for Masonry, in advance of knowledge of it, to want his own holy book on which to take an obligation would feel himself morally obligated to keep his word, whether there was his, another's or no holy book at all, on the Altar. An oath is not really binding because of the book beneath your hand. It is the spirit with which you assume an obligation which makes it binding. The book is but a symbol that you make your promise in

the presence of the God you revere. The cement of brotherly love which we spread is not material - the working tools of a Master Mason are not used upon stone but upon human hearts. Your brother did his best to conform to the spirit of our usages in asking for the book he had been taught to revere. Failing in that through no fault of his own, doubtless he took his obligation with a sincere belief in its sacredness. Legally he would not be considered to commit perjury if he asked for his own book and was forced to use another."

"What's the law got to do with it?"

"Just nothing at all, which is the point I make. In England and America, Canada and South America, Australia, and part of the Continent, the Bible is universally used. In Scottish Rite bodies you will find many holy books; but let me ask you this; when our ancient brethren met on hills and in valleys, long before Christ, did they use the New Testament on their altars? Of course not; there was none. You can say that they used the Old Testament and I can say they used a Talmud and someone else can say they used none at all, and all of us are as right as the other. But they used a reverence for sacred things.

"If you write your friend, you might tell him that the ritual which permits a man to name his God as he pleases, but demands that a book which reveres one particular God be used, is faulty. The ritual of Masonry is faulty; it was made by man. But the spirit of Masonry is divine; it comes from men's hearts. If obligation and books and names of the Deity are matters of the spirit, every condition is satisfied. If I were Master and an applicant demanded any one or any six books on which to lay his hand while he pledged himself to us, I'd get them if they were to be had, and I'd tell my lodge what a reverent Masonic spirit was in the man who asked."

"Seems to me you believe in a lot of funny things; how many gods do you believe in?"

"There is but one," was the Old Tiler's answer, "Call Him what you will. Let me repeat a little bit of verse for you:

'At the Meuzzin's call for prayer
The kneeling faithful thronged the square;
Amid a monastery's weeds,
An old Franciscan told his beads;
While on Pushkara's lofty height
A dark priest chanted Brahma's might;
While to the synagogue there came
A Jew, to praise Jehovah's Name.
The One Great God looked down and smiled
And counted each His loving child;
For Turk and Brahmin, monk and Jew
Had reached Him through the gods they knew.'

"If we reach Him in Masonry, it makes little difference by what sacred name we arrive," finished the Old Tiler, reverently.

"You've reached me, anyhow," said the New Brother, shaking hands as if he meant it.



August 19, 2009 - Edict No. 2009-01

Reproduced from <http://glofga.org/edict.html>

ALL CONSTITUTENT LODGES UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE GRAND LODGE OF GEORGIA, FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS:

WHEREAS: Freemasonry has existed in Georgia since its founding in 1734 and is the oldest Fraternal organization in the State, and;

WHEREAS: Freemasonry is universal in scope, being a Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God, and;

WHEREAS: the Grand Lodge of Georgia, Free & Accepted Masons, holds membership in this worldwide Brotherhood, and;

WHEREAS: our Ancient and Honorable Fraternity welcomes to its doors and offers its privileges to men of all races, colors and national origins who believe in a Supreme Being, as stated in our Degrees and Lectures, and;

WHEREAS: no reference is made to exclude any petitioner with regard to race, color or national origin in any of the Rituals or Masonic Code authorized for use in the Constituent Lodges chartered by the Grand Lodge of Georgia, Free and Accepted Masons, and;

WHEREAS: it is incumbent on all members of our Brotherhood to abide by the Rules, Regulations, Laws and Edicts of the Grand Lodge of Georgia, Free and Accepted Masons;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That no negative reference be made by any officer or member of any Lodge chartered under the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Georgia, Free and Accepted Masons, in reference to a petitioner's race, color or national origin, who believe in a Supreme Being, during any Lodge Communication, conferral of degrees, proficiency practice or proficiency examination; Further, be it resolved, that it is the responsibility of the Worshipful Master of each Lodge constituted under the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Georgia, Free and Accepted Masons, to insure and enforce strict compliance with this Edict, and, further, to have it read at the next two communications of the Lodge after receipt by the Lodge. Any Lodge reported in violation of this Edict will be disciplined.

Given under my hand as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Georgia, Free and Accepted Masons, this 19th day of August, 2009.

Attest

Signatory
J. Edward Jennings, Jr.
Grand Master

Signatory
Donald I. DeKalb
Grand Secretary



The True Secret Word of a Master Mason

By David J. Llewellyn, PM, East Point 288 & Gate City 2

At the beginning of his Masonic career, each candidate for initiation is instructed that "Freemasonry is a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. The design of the Masonic Institution is to make its members wiser, better and consequently happier...." To that end, we are reminded by symbols to circumscribe our desires and to keep our passions within due bounds. At the opening of each Lodge we beseech the Grand Architect of the Universe, whom each of us worships privately in his own way, to "[g]rant that the sublime principles of Freemasonry may so subdue every discordant passion within us, so harmonize and enrich our hearts with Thine own love and goodness, that the Lodge at this time may humbly reflect that order and beauty which reign forever before Thy throne."

Our degrees teach and constantly remind us of our duties to ourselves and our fellow men and women. In the Entered Apprentice Degree we are taught to extend true charity to all. Not just material charity, but also that more noble charity of mind and spirit which Saint Paul so eloquently exhorted men to practice. 1 Corinthians 13:1-13. We are reminded to act with Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice. The last of these cardinal virtues – Justice – "enables us to render to every man his just due *without distinction.*" The Fellowcraft Degree instructs us to engage ourselves in the pursuit of knowledge, not just at passing, but forever. In particular it encourages us to study the classical liberal arts and sciences, which lead to a liberal and enlightened mind. That mind is free from the dross of all prejudices, national, cultural, ethnic, racial, and religious. It could hardly be otherwise, for we are also taught that Masonry is universal, extending its benevolence throughout the entire terrestrial globe. By so freeing our hearts and consciences from all the prejudices we are taught that we will *earn*, not be given, wages of spiritual nourishment, refreshment, and joy. The Sublime Degree of Master Mason goes even further. It is called "sublime," that is "elevated in thought," "inspiring awe," because it teaches us of our further duties to each other and, indeed, to all humankind. In that degree we undertake certain serious and solemn obligations to each other as brothers. But these duties are not exclusive to us. The true, mature Mason understands that they apply to all persons of every kind in every situation. We bind ourselves to each other only as a starting point, a point from which the real Mason travels onward.

The Master's degree, however, comes with a warning. That warning is conveyed in the most dramatic fashion. It is that we must ever guard against the worst ruffians of our sinful natures and oppose them, even to death, if we hope to be placed as living stones in that "House not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." We must act. We may not just hope. This is consistent with the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth who said, "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matthew 7:21.

The Master's degree also informs us that the secret word of a Master Mason has been lost to us through the perfidy of our unseemly desires and passions – the ruffians that confront us daily and to which we so often succumb. It is our duty to seek out that secret word, that hidden meaning, even though it will always remain ineffable and inexplicable to others. It is our individual duty to become worthy of receiving it by subduing our passions and controlling our desires. Only then may we hope to obtain and understand it – the true meaning of Freemasonry – within our hearts and souls.

The Holy Bible, the rule and guide for our faith and practice, and the First Great Light of Freemasonry, tells us that "He that despiseth his neighbor sinneth...." Proverbs 14:21. And who is our neighbor but every human being without distinction? Jesus of Nazareth made this plain in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Luke 10:29-37. There He first agreed with the assertion that to inherit eternal life one must love God with all one's being and "thy neighbor as thyself." Luke 10:25-28. Then He answered the further question of the lawyer, "And who is my neighbor?" by demonstrating that the Samaritan who had mercy on the beaten, abandoned, and naked Jew by binding his wounds and paying for his care was neighbor to him in contradistinction to the Jewish priest and Levite [priest's assistant] who had ignored his distress. This was particularly noteworthy because Jews and Samaritans considered each other to be heretics and not bound by any duty to each other, while each was bound by duty to his own people. Jesus dispelled this ignorant conception of cultural, religious, and ethnic exclusivity. He clearly taught that *all men are brothers* and that *all* are bound by mutual duties to each other.

He who would receive the true secret word of a Master Mason must come to understand that it can only be learned by the constant practice of the virtues inculcated by our degrees. We each will one day stand naked and defenseless before the Grand Architect of the Universe. Before that Throne there will be no distinctions of nationality, class, or race. All those artificial distinctions, meaningful only to sinful man, will be worthless to us. If we would finally receive the true secret word, the word that has been lost, we must constantly resist the ruffians of our natures that keep us from it. We must not sow discord. "[H]e that soweth discord among brethren" is the seventh abomination to the Lord. Proverbs 6:19. We must resist the temptation to treat only those who look and think like ourselves as our neighbors and brothers.

He who allows the three ruffians of religious bigotry and intolerance, ethnic and cultural blindness, and racial animosity and hatred to dominate his thoughts and control his actions will no more discover the true secret word for a master Mason, no matter how hard he cries "Give it to me!", than did those ruffians whose evil deed bloodied the ground at the building of King Solomon's Temple. This is the great teaching of the Third Degree. It is of greater importance than any heled word or sign. And it is the hardest one for most of us to grasp. But grasp it we must if we are ever to become true Master Masons.

One does not become a Master merely by being raised. Rather one becomes a Master by truly embracing and living that which our ceremonies teach. In the end it is up to each of us to become a Master mason in spirit as well as in body. Only then will one be worthy to receive the true secret word of a Master Mason. Whether one ever reaches that goal, whether one ever becomes worthy to be placed as a living stone in that celestial Temple, will be known only to him and to our Infinite Creator when he finally stands before Him. Therefore it is well that we constantly strive to make smooth our rough natures by embracing and following the great lessons of Freemasonry – the lessons taught by symbols, types, and allegories in the Three Degrees – in all our thoughts and actions inside the Lodge as well as in the profane world.

