

JUNE / JULY 2011



FREEMASON.ORG

CALIFORNIA

FREEMASON



In today's era of social media and corporate transparency, the issue of secrecy has attracted the public's attention. What should be kept private and what shouldn't be? Truth is, the public's interest in this hot topic of the past is that Freemasons have kept secrets for centuries. The purpose of Masonic secrecy has changed over time, but it remains an important part of the fraternal tradition. Inside, you'll find

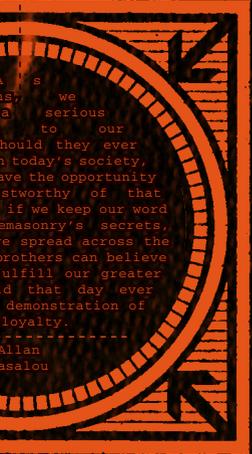


FREEMASONRY'S CONFIDENTIAL

THE IMPORTANCE OF MASONIC SECRECY

PAST & PRESENT





How much information

shouldn't you know

public?

Publication Board

William J. Bray III, Grand Master
Allan L. Casalou, Grand Secretary and
Editor-in-Chief

Editorial Staff

Terry Mendez, Managing Editor
Angel Alvarez-Mapp, Creative Editor
Megan Brown, Assistant Editor

Photography

p. 18: © Resolusean Photography
p. 16-17, 23-24: Courtesy of the Henry W.
Coil Library and Museum

Design

Chen Design Associates

Officers of the Grand Lodge

Grand Master - William J. Bray III,
North Hollywood No. 542
Deputy Grand Master - Frank Loui,
California No. 1
Senior Grand Warden - John F. Lowe,
Irvine Valley No. 671
Junior Grand Warden - John L. Cooper III,
Culver City-Foshay No. 467
Grand Treasurer - Glenn D. Woody,
Huntington Beach No. 380
Grand Secretary - Allan L. Casalou,
Acalanes Fellowship No. 480
Grand Lecturer - Paul D. Hennig,
Three Great Lights No. 651

freemason.org

CALIFORNIA FREEMASON

(USPS 083-940) is published bimonthly by the
Publishing Board and is the only official publication
of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of
the State of California, 1111 California Street, San
Francisco, CA 94108-2284.

Publication Office - Publication offices at the Grand
Lodge Offices, 1111 California Street, San Francisco,
CA 94108-2284. Periodicals Postage Paid at San
Francisco, CA and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster - Send address changes to California
Freemason, 1111 California Street, San Francisco, CA
94108-2284.

Publication Dates - Publication dates are the first
day of October, December, February, April, June,
and August.

Subscriptions - CALIFORNIA FREEMASON is
mailed to every member of this Masonic jurisdiction
without additional charge. Others are invited to
subscribe for \$2.00 a year or \$2.75 outside of the
United States.

Permission to reprint - Permission to reprint original
articles in CALIFORNIA FREEMASON is granted to
all recognized Masonic publications with credit to
the author and this publication.

Phone: 800/831-8170 or
415/776-7000
fax: 415/776-7170
e-mail: editor@freemason.org





12 FEATURE

Freemasonry Confidential

In today's era of government and corporate transparency, the issue of secrecy is gaining attention. What should and shouldn't be released to the public? It may be a hot topic in current news, but Freemasons have faced it for centuries. Though the purpose of Masonic secrecy has changed over the years, it remains an integral part of the fraternity's identity. Inside, find out why.



2	EXECUTIVE MESSAGE	19	FACEBOOK POLL
18	MEMBER PROFILE	23	LODGE SPOTLIGHT

3 HISTORY
For hundreds of years, authors have published exposés to reveal the secrets of Masonry. But rather than harming the fraternity, some may have actually helped it.

6 IN CALIFORNIA
In 1989 the Grand Lodge of California approved the cipher ritual, a slim volume that contains the fraternity's most private rituals – if you know the code.

8 MASONIC EDUCATION
Masonry's 39-plus exposés offer important clues to the history of the fraternity. John Cooper reviews some of the most intriguing, and the information – or disinformation – within.

20 AROUND THE WORLD
Since the 1700s, Masons have suffered for their secrets. From Russia to Spain, members have been persecuted for what others worried went on behind closed doors.

25 MASONIC ASSISTANCE
From Shriners hospitals to Scottish Rite centers for speech disorders, Masonry's charitable centers are known worldwide. In California, one will change the field of youth psychology.

CALIFORNIA
FREEMASON

CONTENTS

VOLUME 59 /// NUMBER 5 /// JUNE/JULY 2011

California Freemason Receives National Recognition

We are proud to announce that *California Freemason* was awarded a Silver Excel Award in the category of Magazine Redesign by Association Media & Publishing. Additionally, *California Freemason* received Bronze Excel Awards in the categories of Most Improved Magazines and General Excellence.

The *California Freemason* Mobile Application was awarded a Silver Excel Award.

Association Media & Publishing (AM&P) is a non profit, professional society serving a multitude of membership organizations, including the American Bar Association, Rotary International, National PTA, and Habitat for Humanity.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE

JOHN L. COOPER III, Junior Grand Warden



Our Secrets to *GAIN*

For an organization that is supposed to keep its rituals secret, Freemasonry has been singularly unsuccessful. Over the years the rituals of Freemasonry have been published for all the world to see, and with the advent of the Internet, peeking inside our rituals has never been easier. It is not a new problem. The oldest verifiable exposure known to us was written around 1696 – 21 years before the formation of the first grand lodge. And they have appeared with great regularity in the years since.

The early rituals afford tantalizing glimpses of what our work may have been like in those days. In 1702 the Scottish lodge of Haughfoot started a new minute book. The thrifty Scot who was secretary of the lodge used a book that already had some of the ritual written in it. He started the minutes on the back of the one remaining page, which had this snippet of ritual:

Of entrie

As the apprentice did Leaving out (The Common Judge) Then they whisper the word as before – and the Master Mason grips his hand after the ordinary way.

Most Masons would not recognize very much in this ritual, but this much is clear: From the beginning of speculative Freemasonry, keeping the secrets entrusted to us has been considered important.

Why? Why all the effort to keep our rituals secret? And why, once they became known, did we continue to keep them secret?

Brother Michael Pearce, a member of our Hollywood Lodge No. 355 in Tarzana, wrote a paper about it a year ago called

“The Function of Secrecy in the Work of Freemasonry,” published in the Spring 2010 issue of *Philalethes* magazine. He points out that the purpose of Masonic initiation is actually to reveal a secret. The secrets of Freemasonry are revealed to the candidate, which makes him a part of Freemasonry. But they are revealed only after the candidate assures us in the most solemn manner that he understands the necessity of maintaining the secrets entrusted to his care. He will, in turn, be part of a lodge that will reveal the meaning of our ceremonies to some other candidate in the future. Without this revelation to the candidate, there could be no initiation; without the promise to safeguard what has been revealed, the whole process of initiation would come to an end.

The process of initiation is a dynamic one, with the candidate moving from a state of not knowing to one where he is fully entrusted with the rituals themselves. The promise he makes “...is a powerful commitment that binds Masons to their fraternal obligation, raising the stakes of admission to the Order, for it obligates existing to the new members as much as the new ones are obligated to old,” Brother Pearce states.

Masonic secrecy does that. No one outside the fraternity really knows if all the exposés that have been published are accurate, because each Mason has promised to keep the initiatic process to himself, and to those who are “as lawfully entitled to the same.” It is perhaps this uncertainty that maintains our Masonic secrecy, when all the world would really like to know what our secrets are.

The *World* is in pain
Our *Secrets* to gain,
And still let them wonder and gaze on;
They ne’er can divine
The *Word* or the *Sign*
Of a *Free* and an *Accepted Mason*.

“The Enter’d ‘Prentices Song,” 1723 ♦

FREEMASONRY EXPOSED!

THE SURPRISING IMPACT OF FAMOUS MASONIC EXPOSÉS

by Cason Lane

There's always someone trying to "unmask" the Masons. Since the early 1700s, enterprising authors have tried to make money by exposing the secrets of one of the world's most famous "secret societies." Others were ex-Masons who wanted to exact revenge on the fraternity.

The ironic thing is that these exposés – many of which are fictional, sensationalized, or published with hostility – arguably have helped the fraternity. Some Masonic historians say the exposés spurred many men to join Masonry to experience the secrets they had read about. Others say the works have offered a valuable historical lens on Masonic ritual, and they became helpful reference documents for Freemasons trying to learn their ritual "mouth to ear."

When it comes to Freemasonry and these exposés, some historians call it a love-hate relationship. Brother Arturo de Hoyos, for example, addresses this relationship in the introduction to his book "Light on Masonry," which is a new look at the famous exposé of the same name published in 1829.

"On the one hand, they (exposés) are the product of betrayal and are ipso facto suspect," writes de Hoyos, who is grand archivist and grand historian of the Southern Jurisdiction of the Scottish Rite. "On the other hand, they present the possibility of authenticity and may teach us a great deal about the evolution of the ritual."

Here, Masonic scholars discuss some of the most well-known and historically important Masonic exposés.

"Masonry Dissected"

One of the most famous ritual exposures is also one of the first: Samuel Prichard's "Masonry Dissected," published in 1730 in London and subsequently translated into French, German, and Dutch. According to Masonic historians, this book – presented almost entirely in a question-and-answer format about the details of Masonic ritual – provides the earliest known description of a three-degree system including the Master Mason degree.

"Serious historians agree that the third degree was introduced into Masonry around 1725," writes Brother Robert G. Davis, of Guthrie, Okla., on his blog. "It became popular over the next two decades primarily because Masons adopted Prichard's exposure as an aid to the memory work. His unauthorized work essentially became the first Masonic Monitor and would be the unofficial ritual book of Freemasons for decades. It is also the first mention we have of the Hiram legend."

In his paper "600 Years of Craft Ritual," Masonic historian Harry Carr notes that Prichard's work was enormously successful.

"The book created a sensation; it sold three editions and one pirated edition in 11 days," Carr writes. "It swept all other exposures off the market. For the next 30 years, Prichard was being reprinted over and over again and nothing else could stand a chance."

Continued next page



encouraged by the Masons themselves

*an unauthorised
exposure*



1867

reprinted 30 times

reprinted 30 times
reprinted 30 times
reprinted 30 times
reprinted 30 times

reprinted 30 times
reprinted 30 times

reprinted 30 times
reprinted 30 times
reprinted 30 times

reprinted 30 times
reprinted 30 times

reprinted 30 times
reprinted 30 times
reprinted 30 times

reprinted 30 times

“Jachin and Boaz”

The content of “Masonry Dissected” became the basis for many subsequent ritual exposés, such as “Jachin and Boaz,” published in 1762 in London and soon introduced in America. According to the National Heritage Museum, this book was reprinted almost 30 times in the U.S. at the turn of the 19th century, and though it was an unauthorized exposure, the mass reprinting may have been encouraged by Masons themselves.

“Although curious onlookers probably picked up the pamphlet on occasion, only an audience of brothers seeking to learn the rituals better could have encouraged American printers to reprint the pamphlet twenty-eight times between 1793 and 1827,” writes Steven C. Bullock in his essay “Publishing Masonry: Print and the Early American Fraternity.”

Jeff Croteau, author of the article “Are Early Masonic Ritual Exposures Anti-Masonic?” published by the National Heritage Museum, says “Jachin and Boaz” – like some other exposés – may actually have done more good than harm.

“On the one hand, exposing Masonic ritual appears to serve the intention of betraying and antagonizing the fraternity and can easily be thought of as anti-Masonic,” Croteau writes. “On the other hand, a book like ‘Jachin and Boaz’ is not sensationalist in nature and, one might argue, served a need for the fraternity – both by helping Masons learn ritual, as well as potentially attracting the attention of men who became interested enough to join the craft.”

“Light on Masonry”

In 1829, a few years after the Morgan Affair in New York, a Baptist minister and ex-Freemason named David Bernard published an exposé called “Light on Masonry.” This book exposed early versions of the craft rituals of the blue lodge, the Scottish Rite, York Rite, and the Order of the Holy Cross.

According to Pietre-Stones Review of Freemasonry magazine, Bernard’s work was the largest exposure of Masonic rituals ever published in the U.S., running more than 500 pages and reaching five editions in its first year alone. And though it was intended

as a hostile work, the online magazine adds, “Light on Masonry” ultimately has illuminated the history of Masonic ritual.

Masonic exposés have continued until today, ranging from useful to pure scandal. They include unsanctioned works such as “Duncan’s Masonic Ritual and Monitor” by Malcolm C. Duncan, which many Masons continue to use as an illustrated reference on ritual, symbols, and regalia. The more scandalous end of the spectrum includes “Scotch Rite Masonry Illustrated,” published in 1887 by Jonathan Blanchard, who, believing that Freemasonry was evil, described sensationalized – and fictionalized – ceremonies.

Regardless of the writers’ intent, many Masonic authorities agree that the exposures through history have ultimately served to build Masonry up, not tear it down. Perhaps it’s best said in the 1952 “Short Talk Bulletin” published by the Masonic Service Association. The organization acknowledged that some exposés were written out of revenge, while others may have come from a real desire to help Freemasons learn ritual.

“All, however, have been too generally regarded as harmful by those Masons to whom the secrecy of the institution is the be-all and end-all ... and who believe any unobligated man who knows any of the ritualistic secrets is necessarily an enemy of the fraternity and able to destroy it,” according to the bulletin. “Actually, Freemasonry has grown from a handful of men in 1717 to five million in the civilized world, neither because of, or in spite of, exposés.” ♦

HIDDEN IN PLAIN VIEW

THE CODE AND CONSEQUENCES OF CALIFORNIA'S CIPHER

by Heather Boerner

There was a time when Masons kept their lodges secret, protecting their fraternity from forces that sought to root it out as a danger to the ruling monarchy.

Let's just say those days have passed.

Today, Masonic lodges are well advertised. Most brothers talk openly about their membership in a way that previous generations never did. But still, some secrets endure.

"Today, we have very few secrets, but the secrets we do have are embodied in our secret work, our rituals," says Paul Hennig, past grand lecturer of California. "Without our rituals, we are just another club."

To keep those rituals secret, the fraternity has long held that they should not be written down; the only way to teach them was orally, mouth to ear. This ensured that the ritual didn't fall in the wrong hands, and that non-brothers couldn't discover them. But in 1989 that all changed. The fraternity approved a

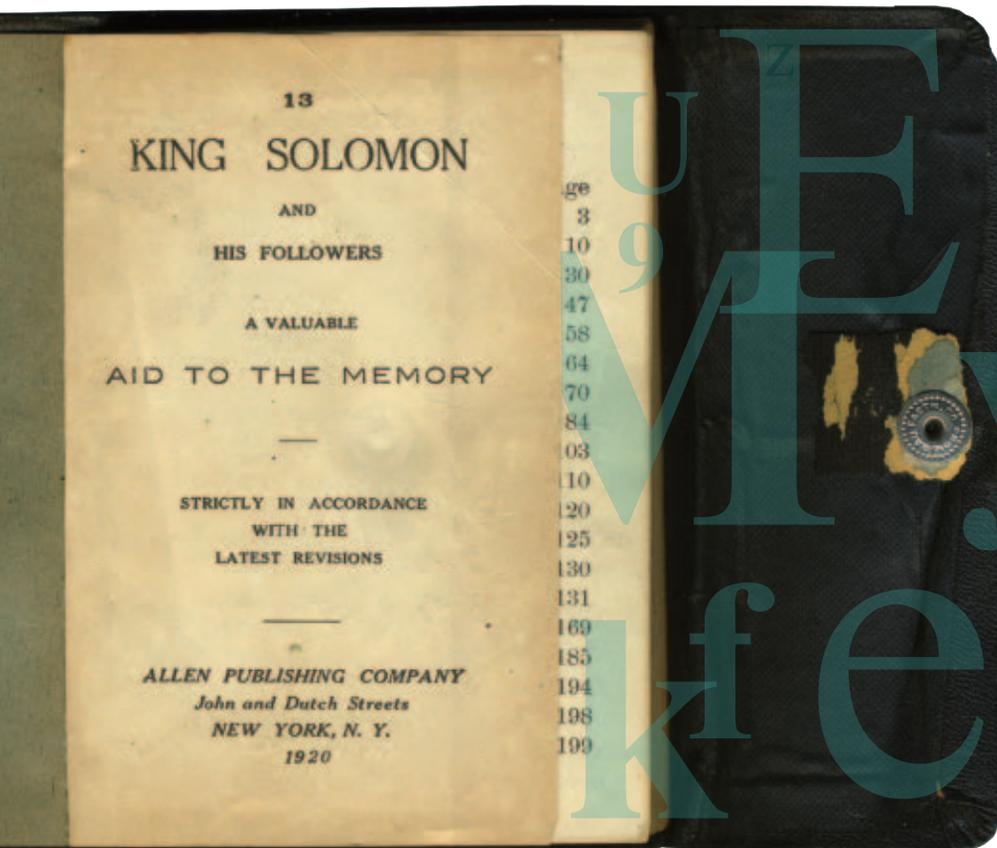
slim book, filled with symbols and abbreviations that describe the rituals – if you know how to read the code.

Correcting the code

There are two types of rituals performed at any Masonic lodge: One type comprises monitorial rituals, which are open for all to see. They're written in the monitor and available to all. The second type is the esoteric rituals. These are the heart of Masonic tradition, and the real work of the lodge.

Although these rituals – the esoteric heart of the fraternity – had always been taught mouth to ear, many brothers carried a secret of their own. Many lodges contained an illegal written description of the rituals – coded to be illegible to non-Masons. In 1987, the fraternity faced the question of what to do about this "cipher ritual."

"In 1987, we had two proposed changes to the Masonic law by resolution," recalls



Hennig. “Those resolutions sought to either make the illegal ciphers legal, or to approve only the parts that were correct.”

When the resolution passed in 1988, the Grand Lodge Ritual Committee agreed that a correct version of the cipher ritual ought to be produced. So Hennig and the other members of the committee set to work on the cipher, combing its pages for inaccuracies, inconsistencies, and misleading symbols. Those corrections ended up being 36 pages, single-spaced, says Hennig.

The cipher’s proper place

The cipher is a small, pocket-size book with a plain, unlabeled blue cover. Inside, prayers and descriptions are written in clear English. But the esoteric work is still indecipherable to the naked eye.

“There were a lot of places we could have changed it to make it more readable, but one of the points of the cipher is that we didn’t want it to be readable,” says Hennig. Still, he says California’s cipher is more legible than ciphers in other states. In Montana, for instance, the cipher includes just the first letter of every word, and that’s it. California’s cipher, he says, strikes a good balance between obfuscation and openness.

And while the approval of the cipher hasn’t compromised the fraternity’s closely guarded secrets, it has had other unintended consequences, says Ed Margherio, a self-described “hard-nosed Mason” who was assistant grand lecturer when the cipher was adopted. For instance, the cipher was never intended as a textbook for rituals, but it’s sometimes treated that way. Some brothers use it to cram, quickly forgetting the words after the ceremony.

Margherio, who was raised in 1952, remembers a time when Masons depended less on the cipher, and more on their ritual coach and mouth-to-ear learning.

“To me, when I met with my coach, I was going out for the evening,” he says. “There’s less camaraderie now.”

“People don’t have the time to spend on Masonry that they once did,” he adds. “The world is moving too fast.”

The poetry of ritual

According to Hennig, by the time a man goes through the officer’s line, he’s committed 35,000 words of ritual to memory, each word carefully chosen for a lyrical effect that makes the ritual sing. It’s the equivalent of memorizing every line of Shakespeare’s “MacBeth” – twice.

The cipher’s title page reads “An Aid to the Memory,” and Hennig says that’s all the cipher was ever intended to be.

“I’ve seen personally that the best work being done is the esoteric work taught mouth-to-ear,” Hennig says. “And as it stands, the area in which there are most often errors is monitorial work.”

“Let’s not let the quality of our ritual diminish,” Hennig says. “It’s the integrity of our work.” ♦



WEB EXTRA

Learn all the levels of ritual. Read tips and techniques from Past Grand Lecturer Paul Hennig in the October 2010 issue of The Leader.

INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW

THE 39 EXPOSÉS – AND COUNTING – THAT SHAPE MASONRY

by John L. Cooper III, Junior Grand Warden

How many exposures of the ritual of Freemasonry have there been? Coil's Encyclopedia lists 39. That is an incredible number for an organization whose rituals are supposed to be held in strictest secrecy. Some of these exposés are better known than others, and tell us important things about our history.

The first comprehensive exposure was published in 1730 in London. There had been others before, but Prichard's "Masonry Dissected" was the first that contained all three degrees with which we are now familiar.

Prichard claimed to be a member of a London lodge, but if so, he didn't name it, and the lodge has never been discovered. Analysis of "Masonry Dissected" leads us to believe that it substantially represents the ritual as it existed in 1730. We know that the 20 years before had been a seminal period for Masonic ritual, as it evolved from a simple admission ceremony to the three degrees that we know today. "Masonry Dissected" consists of a series of questions and answers for each of the three degrees, and not the kind of ritual that we know today. It actually consists of the degree lectures used in those days; not the narrative

lectures with which we are familiar today, but the candidate's proficiency lectures.

The next significant exposure was actually a set published in 1760 and 1762. The first, "Three Distinct Knocks," purported to be the ritual used by the Moderns, while the second, "Jachin and Boaz," represented itself as the ritual of the Ancients. They are both so similar that it is likely that the second one was copied from the first, and so we are still not sure how the ritual of the Ancients differed from that of the Moderns. The significance of these two exposures is that for the first time we find a Masonic lodge that we would recognize today. Deacons appear for the first time, and some of the ritual is in narrative format.

Morgan's infamous exposé

Perhaps the most famous exposé of all was that published by William Morgan in 1826, and which led to his kidnapping and presumed murder.

As with Prichard, we don't know when or where Morgan was made a Mason, or even if he was a Mason at all. He showed up in Batavia, New York, in 1825, and got involved in local Masonic activities. Although a ne'er-do-well, he had the gift of gab, and soon wormed his way into the local lodges. He also got himself invited to join the local Royal Arch chapter – in those days a significant honor. However, he got crosswise with the local Masons, and decided to make money out of his knowledge of the rituals by publishing and selling them.

It was this decision that led to his being jailed and kidnapped, and to his subsequent disappearance. As the story goes, Morgan was jailed on trumped-up charges of owing a debt. To prevent the publication of the rituals, Masons from the local lodges freed him from jail and carried him off. At the later trial they claimed that they had taken him across the border to Canada and released him. But he never returned.

This episode caused an uproar in New York, which quickly spread across the country. Masons were accused of being a subversive society which must be stamped out. Their reputation in some communities was very much like that of al-Qaida terrorists

No. V.

ANTI MASONIC ALMANAC,

FOR THE YEAR

1832:

BY EDWARD GIDDINS.



"THE LAW is still paralyzed by a hidden agent, that continues to prove stronger than the combined force of its machinery and its ministers; the Lodge of this agent, has become its sepulchre. There it lies, a spectacle for freemen to look at."

"In our boasted Republic, the blood of an American, who was taken from his home—bound—tortured—agonized—borne by the conspirators along the high roads with an impudent cavalcade of carriages and horsemen—east into a fortress over which had floated the sovereign flag of the Union—and at last immolated—by harpies belonging to an organized and powerful institution, who conceal their crime under the horrible delusion of their mystic tie."

UTICA:

WILLIAM WILLIAMS, PUBLISHER.

Sold also by D. P. Packard & Co. ALBANY; Collins and Hanny, H. C. Sleight, Skinner & Dewey, and M'Elrath & Bangs, NEW-YORK; G. C. Beckwith, PROVIDENCE; L. Paddock, WATERTOWN; Marshall & Dean, ROCHESTER; James Percival, GENESEO; Edward Giddins, LOCKPORT; Steele & Fayton, BUFFALO; Cyrus Prentiss, RAVENNA, Ohio; Stephen Wells, DETROIT; John Clarke and John Grigg, PHILADELPHIA; John L. Bunce, HAVERHILL, at the office of the New Hampshire Post;

JUNE & JULY 2011

CALIFORNIA FREEMASON

9

MASONIC EDUCATION

today. Men resigned from Freemasonry in droves, and lodges closed for lack of members. The Grand Lodge of Vermont even ceased to function because all its lodges went dark.

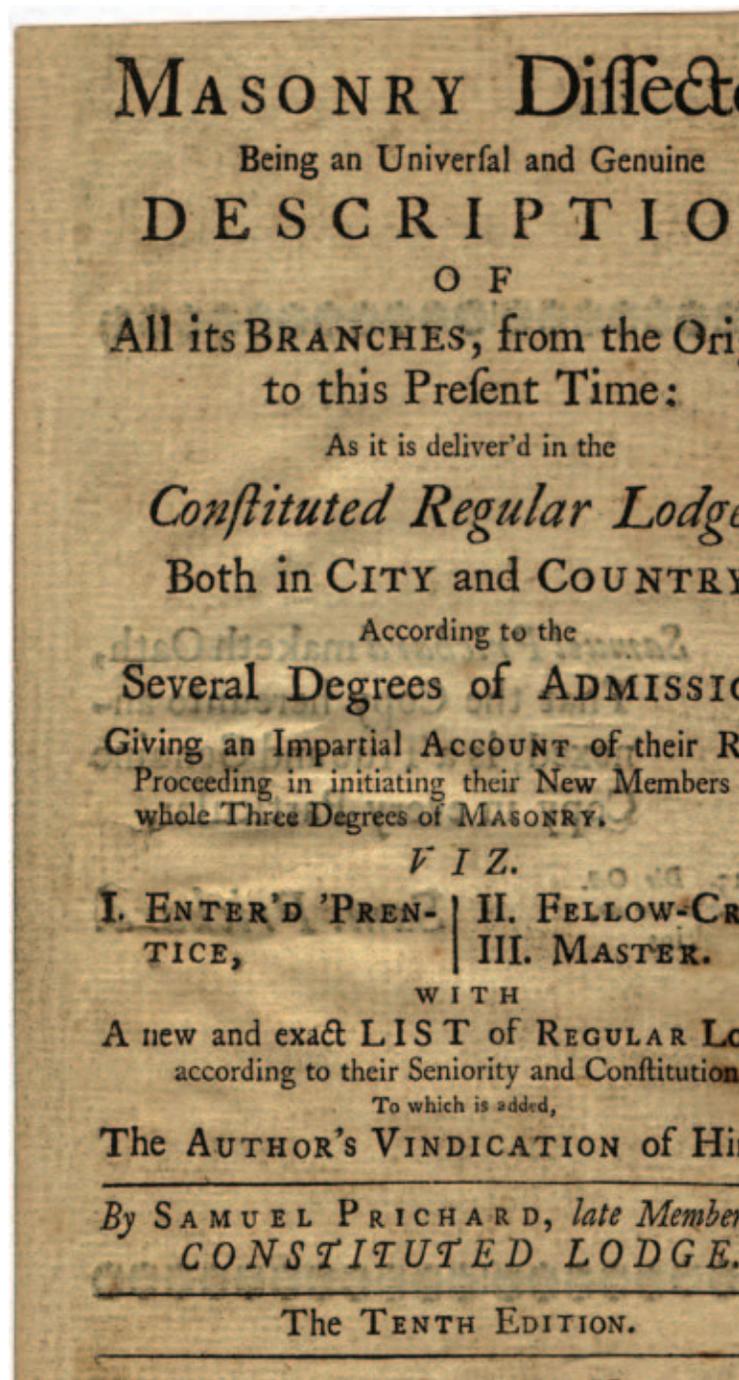
Although no one has ever learned the truth about Morgan and his disappearance, it took more than 20 years before Freemasonry began to recover from this disaster. The rituals were actually published, despite Morgan's disappearance. His business partner printed and sold the rituals, and copies are still available today – including a Kindle edition.

Motivating factors

Why all the exposés? Nowadays we have dues receipts to identify a visiting Mason, and if there is any doubt about identity, we can always ask for a picture I.D. We supplement this by asking him to “prove” that he knows something about Freemasonry by answering certain questions, posed by the examining committee. These questions are often perfunctory nowadays, but in the 18th century, they were very important. There was no other way to prove that a visitor had truly been made a Mason in a proper lodge. The exposures revealed the answers to most of the questions that were normally asked of a visitor in those days, and thus anyone who took the trouble to memorize some of the questions and answers from one of the exposés could worm his way into a lodge.

Some exposés were published by disaffected Masons who were angry at Masonry for some reason, and decided to publish

the secret rituals to punish the fraternity. Some were published and sold for financial gain: The public was interested in what Masons were doing behind closed doors, and were willing to buy copies to find out.



exposés

Other exposures originated in “crib notes,” written down to help a Mason remember the ritual. Some of these found their way into other hands, and were published. Some were published in code, much like our current cipher ritual, so that there would be a comprehensive copy of the ritual written down so that changes would not be made inadvertently.

At a later stage a decision was made to print some of the ritual in plain text – the origin of our monitorial work – so that only some parts of the ritual would be considered “secret.”

Keeping the public guessing

How did Masons cope with all these exposures? Thankfully, most did not resort to the drastic measure of kidnapping the author and causing him to disappear. In most cases, they simply ignored them. After all, if Masons didn’t say anything to confirm or deny an exposé, how would anyone know if it was accurate? However, in 1723 another tactic was tried, which was one of the more creative responses to the problem.

In 1999, prominent Masonic scholar S. Brent Morris presented a paper at the A. Douglas Smith, Jr. Lodge of Research No. 1949 in Alexandria, Va. While in London some years before, he had come across one of the early exposures, published in 1723 in one of the popular newspapers of the day, *The Post Boy*. It purported to be an exposé of the ritual of Freemasonry, one of several similar such publications around that time.

But Brother Morris noticed that while some of the questions were similar to other such questions in circulation, some of them

were peculiar. He made an exhaustive study of all the exposures on a question-by-question basis, and concluded that the one published in *The Post Boy* was a deliberate attempt to mislead those who were using the exposures to gain admission to a lodge. In other words, this was a “disinformation” project that some Masons had concocted in order to purposely lead astray those who tried to use this information to gain admission to a lodge. It was a brilliant ploy, and one that must have confounded those who thought that they would use the exposé to get inside a Masonic lodge! The project was using the exposures against their best customers, and it is likely that upon finding out that the information was worthless, the purchase of other such exposures diminished.

The story of Masonic exposures is a complex one, and in the long run they never posed a real threat to Freemasonry – with the single exception of the William Morgan episode of 1826. Students of Freemasonry use the exposures to gain a glimpse that they would otherwise not have into the rituals of earlier times. However, the basic questions as to their validity and accuracy still remain. And as long as Masons keep their obligation to keep the rituals secret, we will probably never know how accurate any of them really were. So it is that even today, Masons keep the public guessing as to what we are really doing in our lodges! ♦

Editor’s note: For a look at how Masonic exposés may have actually helped the fraternity, turn to page 3.

FREEMASONRY

CONFIDENTIAL



PAST
AND
PRESENT

past and present



BY **CASON LANE**

SEARCH

FREEMASONRY CONFIDENTIAL FREEMASONRY CONFIDENTIAL FREEMASONRY CONFIDENTIAL



LAST YEAR, THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION WIKILEAKS PUBLISHED THOUSANDS OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS FROM THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT, SPARKING A DIPLOMATIC CRISIS AND WIDESPREAD DEBATE. HOW MUCH INFORMATION SHOULD BE MADE PUBLIC? WHAT'S THE VALUE OF KEEPING SOME THINGS CONFIDENTIAL?

OTHERS IN THE DEBATE SEE SECRECY AS INHERENTLY DANGEROUS. THEY SAY SECRETS ARE THE DOMAIN OF TERRORISTS AND RADICALS AND EVIL, CLANDESTINE ORGANIZATIONS.

Continued next page

The police aren't going to come knocking on a lodge door today to make sure what's going on isn't dangerous to the state, but that was actually a big fear for Freemasons in early modern Europe.

MATTHEW CROW

This issue of secrecy versus transparency is a hot topic of the moment, but it's one that Freemasons have faced for centuries. Today, though Freemasonry is far from a secret society, it still has secrets – from degree rituals to passwords, grips, and other modes of recognition – that Masons continue to protect.

Why? Even though the secrets have evolved over the years, and some have been exposed to the public, they represent a strong tradition that holds Masons together.

“Having someone swear on the Bible to maintain secrecy has real impact, and that's been a binding force down through the centuries,” says Brother Jay Kinney, author of the book “The Masonic Myth” and member of Mill Valley Lodge No. 356.

FOR MASONS ONLY

In addition, secrecy is an important part of each candidate's transformation. If a candidate knows too much about a ritual beforehand, that knowledge can negatively affect his experience of the degree, Kinney says.

Others say that some information is only meaningful to Masons, and that's why it's kept secret.

“There's an esoteric quality to the information we pass on,” says Brother John Heisner, author of the book “The Secrets of Hiram Abif” and past master of Amity Lodge No. 442 in San Diego. “And there are matters that should only be known to members of Masonry, because if you weren't

a member, you wouldn't understand the information or how to make good use of it.”

SECRECY: IT STARTED WITH STONEMASONS

To explore the relationship between Freemasonry and secrecy, one needs to go to where it all began: the operative stonemason guilds of Europe in the Middle Ages.

“Historically, the Freemasons possessed trade secrets they passed on to their apprentices,” says Brother Brent Morris, managing editor of The Scottish Rite Journal, adding that these trade secrets may have included an understanding of geometry. “These secrets provided them an economic advantage.”

In addition to keeping trade secrets, operative stonemasons developed a variety of signs to help identify fellow masons as they traveled from town to town for work.

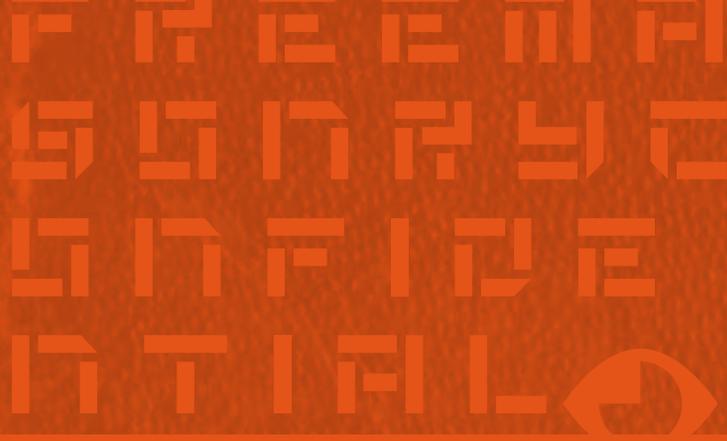
“It's believed that in the late 1600s, Scottish masons developed the ‘mason's word,’ which was a combination of secret passwords, signs, and grips that allowed a member of the union to identify himself from one location to another,” Morris says. “They didn't want that secret out, because then people who didn't go through the apprenticeship and the training could get a job with the union.”

SECRECY AND SELF-PRESERVATION

As the operative stonemason guilds gave way to speculative Freemasonry in Europe, the need for practical trade secrets became obsolete, but the need for secrecy did not.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, Masonry became the target of suspicious civil magistrates and clergy. Masonic lodges embodied values that were seen as subversive: religious tolerance; fraternizing among men of mixed social backgrounds; government by constitutions and elections.

In other words, speculative Freemasonry during this time “provided a space for people to be freethinkers, to associate



freely outside the traditional hierarchical, social roles they were given,” explains Matthew Crow, a Ph.D. student who taught an undergraduate history class about Freemasonry at the University of California, Los Angeles. To the ruling authorities, these freedoms were perceived as a threat.

Masonic scholar Margaret Jacob gives one account in the book “Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe.” In December 1735 the States of Holland forced the lodges in The Hague and Amsterdam to close. The charges against the lodges state that “private meetings whatsoever are forbid, under the severest Penalties, lest Parties might be formed, to remove the Power...” The charges go on to say that lodge brethren should devote their loyalty to the prince, rather than to each other.

“The police aren’t going to come knocking on a lodge door today to make sure what’s going on isn’t dangerous to the state,” explains Crow, “but that was actually a big fear for Freemasons in early modern Europe.”

During this period, the Roman Catholic Church conducted a war on heresy, persecuting anyone it perceived as a danger. According to Kinney, the church thought that if Masons were obligated to keep their meetings and rituals secret, then that obligation could override a Catholic Mason’s obligation to undergo confession with a priest. Indeed, around 1738, Pope Clement XII issued a papal proclamation that effectively banned Freemasonry. That ban reportedly led to the persecution, torture and imprisonment of many Freemasons. It also reinforced lodges’ need for secrecy.

“You had the inquisition in the 1700s and into the mid-1800s, which gave itself the power to go after so-called heretics,” Kinney says. “If they defined Masons as heretics, then Masons were strongly motivated to maintain their secrecy and privacy.”

Allan Casalou, grand secretary of California, describes secrecy during this period as one “pathway to freedom.” Because of the privacy it afforded, a Masonic lodge was one of the few

spaces where members could exercise freedoms of speech and assembly, among others.

Today in the United States, we take such rights for granted. But in the 1700s, they were punishable offenses. According to Casalou, Masons were charged with crimes like “meeting for the purpose of electing leadership,” and “taking minutes of meetings.” In that climate, secrecy was crucial for lodges to be able to provide individual freedoms.

Of course, those freedoms would eventually find their way out of the secrecy of the lodge. With the help of Masons, they became a catalyst for the Enlightenment, and the foundation of democracy in the United States.

SECRET SIGNS OF BROTHERHOOD

Though they may have enjoyed greater individual freedoms in the United States, Masons in the new nation still needed secrets to survive.

In the 19th century, the American citizenry struggled with sickness and poverty, yet had virtually no public services to turn to for help. Some 300,000 gold-seekers surged west to California in search of fortune; few found it. In 1850, the same year that the Grand Lodge of California was established, Sacramento suffered a great cholera outbreak.

Continued next page

WEB EXTRA

For more tips on talking about Masonry to non-Masons, click here for a Freemasonry Q&A, published in the Dec/Jan 2010 issue.



“The request for relief was overwhelming,” Casalou says. As the fraternity doled out aid to brethren and their families, men began faking membership to claim a portion.

To safeguard against impostors, the fraternity had to rely more heavily on secret forms of identification. In the mid-19th century, the fraternity made the first provisions for dues cards and certificates of good standing. Around that same time, a Masonic congress in Baltimore discussed the need to create a uniform ritual across states, so lodges could easily tell who was a Mason and who wasn't.

The strain on resources wasn't the only reason Masons clung more tightly to their secrets. In the early 1800s, in the midst of a political power vacuum, a strong anti-Masonic sentiment was brewing. Once again, Masonry was targeted because it was an exclusive association. Non-Masons began to wonder, Would Freemasons be more loyal to the fraternity than to their country? Would the fraternity's laws take precedence over government law?

The Whigs, including Henry Clay and John Quincy Adams, stoked these concerns for their own political gain. In 1826, the anti-Masonry movement took off: New Yorker William Morgan went missing – purportedly

at the hands of Freemasons – after he threatened to publish a book exposing Masonic secrets. Morgan's disappearance fueled a firestorm of anti-Masonic sentiment in the U.S. In its aftermath, Masonic lodges nearly disappeared in the United States. Those that remained retreated further underground.

“The Morgan affair was both a cause of further secrecy and the result of the emphasis on secrecy,” says Kinney. “It's a two-edged sword.”

SECRECY TODAY

Today, Masons no longer need to keep trade secrets or evade real persecution. And anyone can do a Google search to find out some “secrets” of Freemasonry. So what does secrecy mean for the modern Mason?



IMAGES COURTESY OF THE HENRY W. COIL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM



The secrets have taken on a new meaning.... They represent a Mason's integrity. I took a promise not to tell anyone else what the secrets were. If I can't be trusted to keep my promise, what can I be trusted to do?

BROTHER BRENT MORRIS, MANAGING EDITOR OF THE SCOTTISH RITE JOURNAL

Historian Aimee Newell, director of collections at the National Heritage Museum in Lexington, Mass., adds that the secrecy associated with Freemasonry is part of its appeal and, arguably, one reason for its success. Without its mystique, she says, Freemasonry might be seen as just another service organization.

"If you think about Freemasonry without any of that (secrecy), it's not Freemasonry anymore," she says. "It wouldn't be the same organization."

"The secrets have taken on a new meaning," Morris says. "They're now symbolic secrets. They represent a Mason's integrity. I took a promise not to tell anyone else what the secrets were. If I can't be trusted to keep my promise, what can I be trusted to do?"

"As Masons, we take a serious obligation to our brothers, should they ever be in need," says Casalou. "In today's society, we may never have the opportunity to prove trustworthy of that obligation. But if we keep our word to uphold Freemasonry's secrets, even if they are spread across the Internet, our brothers can believe that we will fulfill our greater promise should that day ever come. It's a demonstration of our loyalty."

Morris adds that secrets like passwords and signs and even some ritual details – though great fodder for public curiosity – ultimately don't capture the real secrets of Masonry.

"It's a fact that the organization is reasonably effective at bonding men together," Morris says. "Why have they persisted for centuries? There's something that ties Masons together. There is a secret that I don't know how to explain." ♦

Recommended Reading

LIKE WHAT YOU'RE READING, AND WANT TO LEARN MORE? HERE'S A LIST OF BOOKS AND ARTICLES REFERENCED IN THIS "SECRECY" ISSUE OF CALIFORNIA FREEMASON.

Carr, Harry, ed. *The Early French Exposures*. London: Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076, 1971.

Croteau, Jeff. "Are Early Masonic Ritual Exposures Anti-Masonic?" Online posting. 4 May 2010. National Heritage Museum. <<http://nationalheritagemuseum.typepad.com>>

de Hoyos, Arturo. *Light on Masonry: The History and Rituals of America's Most Important Masonic Exposé*. Washington, D.C.: Scottish Rite Research Society, 2008.

Heisner, John. *The Secrets of Hiram Abif*. PublishAmerica, 2009.

Hodapp, Christopher. *Freemasons for Dummies*. For Dummies, 2005.

Jacob, Margaret C. *Living the Enlightenment: Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe*. Oxford University Press, 1991.

Jacob, Margaret C. *The Origins of Freemasonry: Facts & Fictions*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005.

Kinney, Jay. *The Masonic Myth*. HarperOne, 2009.

Morris, S. Brent. "The Post Boy Sham Exposure of 1723." Presented 30 October 1999. Transactions of A. Douglas Smith, Jr. Lodge of Research #1949 Volume 4, 2004: 78-96.

Pearce, Michael. "The Function of Secrecy in the Work of Freemasonry." Philalethes Spring 2010.

FACES OF MASONRY

MEET MICHAEL PEARCE PROFESSOR OF ART MASON SINCE 2005

by Laura Normand

Michael Pearce is an academic, an artist, and something of a secrecy enthusiast. He is so passionate about the subject that he recently published the research article “The Function of Secrecy in the Work of Freemasonry” in *Philalethes* magazine.

His interest in secrecy began with a fascination with symbols, and a doctorate in

Prehistoric British Art and Architecture. Today, Pearce – who is chaplain at Hollywood Lodge No. 355 – is prone to tangents about the connection between Freemasonry and other ancient emblematic societies, from the alchemists to the druids.

As art department chair at California Lutheran University, Pearce explores secrecy and symbolism in the classroom and the art studio. He incorporates Masonic symbols in many of his paintings – what he calls “clues” for fellow Freemasons – and says his art is inspired by the fraternity’s core values.

In his own words:

FINDING MASONRY:

Someone gave me Mackey’s *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* for a project on symbolism. When I saw the words “Great Architect of the Universe,” I thought, Wait a second, that’s what my dad used to say. Turns out he and my grandfather were Freemasons.

It all fell into place.

WHY SECRECY IS IMPORTANT IN FREEMASONRY:

It gives a man depth to have some things that can’t be shared. Many of us come to Freemasonry because we want to be part of an exclusive and private society. We value that. Without secrecy, it becomes a gathering of friends, rather than a brotherhood.

MASONRY IN EVERYDAY LIFE:

Freemasonry has helped me a great deal with listening. I try to deal with students and faculty with patience and an open mind, and really listen to what they’re saying. At its heart, Freemasonry is about being moral and decent. People respond really well to that. ✧



THE SECRET INGREDIENT

FACEBOOK FANS REFLECT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF MASONIC SECRECY

We asked our 7,000+ Facebook fans what secrecy in Freemasonry means to them, and how they explain it to non-Masons.

It's been said that without secrecy, Freemasonry wouldn't be Freemasonry. From the landslide of responses, it's clear you agree.

Here's a sample.

Dale Radeleff

I've been asked, "If you can find everything on the Internet about Masonry's secrets, why do you still keep those as secrets?" My answer is, "Because I took a sworn obligation to keep those as secrets."

Jesus Muro

I always consider the secrets to be an opportunity to show you can keep a promise to make your word your bond.

Ed Fer

The fact is, we are all sworn to secrecy, and those secrets play a very important role in our cohesion. That Masons have secrets is not a secret, but it is precisely those that we hold secret among us that help hold us together as Masonic brothers.

Bryan Whaley

I tell non-Masons that it's an experience that is different for each Mason. If a person were told the "secrets" before he joined, his experience and interpretation would not be his own.

Carole Buxton

How do you explain the thrill of riding a roller coaster, without actually experiencing it?

Russell Wok

Knowing that you can trust someone strengthens a relationship. All we have in this world is our word. Masons have to prove they deserve the secrets by showing the commitment needed to advance in degrees. ...

Dave Banastre

Only a man of honor and integrity would scrupulously guard secrets that can be "discovered" in any well-stocked library or bookstore. But those secrets are only emblematic of the true meaning of Masonry. Knowing grips and words means nothing without the lessons behind them.

Prelate Shawn Bell

...The secret is – and I'm saying this in an untiled Internet space where everyone can see it – in the heart of the Mason. What this secret is is different for every Mason, and yet every Mason who has ever lived knows exactly what this secret means and that it's been the same secret for every Mason.

Want to share what secrecy in Freemasonry means to you? Visit the Masons of California on Facebook. ✧

THE TRIALS OF FREEMASONRY

MASONRY'S SECRETS FUELED A HISTORY OF PERSECUTION

by *Laura Normand*

In 1936, six scaffolds were erected in the town center of Malaga, Spain. The six men hanged shared just one charge: they were Freemasons.

A decade later, a newspaper article published the official penalties of membership: “The apprentices are condemned to twelve years in prison; Fellowcrafts to thirty years; and Master Masons anywhere from thirty years to the death penalty. There is a special gallery in the jail at Barcelona devoted exclusively to the imprisonment of Freemasons.”

It was a time of terror and persecution for any known Mason.

It was one of many.

Rome

As the saying goes, Freemasonry is not a secret society; it's a society with secrets. Throughout history, speculation about what those secrets might be, coupled with concerns about the fraternity's influence, have alarmed many a reigning authority. The Catholic Church was among the first to take action.

A Papal Bull of 1738, an official document issued by the pope, cast Freemasons

in this light: “men of whatsoever religion or sect ... are bound by a stringent oath sworn upon the sacred volume, as well as by the imposition of heavy penalties, to conceal under inviolable silence what they do secretly in their meetings. ... If they were not acting ill they would not by any means have such a hatred of the light.”

The fraternity, because they kept secrets, had been implicated in something sinister.

The papal secretary of state announced the consequences: Attending a lodge meeting was punishable by death. Harboring a lodge, neglecting to inform the state about lodge meetings, or even being invited to attend a lodge was punishable by imprisonment and confiscation of property.

The Bull set off shock waves throughout Europe. Princes and city councils issued their own decrees, followed by mob violence, official executions, and exile. The kings of Poland and Sweden forbade Freemasonry on pain of death. So did Switzerland's parliament. Lodges were closed in the Netherlands, and in Spain and Portugal.

If anything, the mania reinforced Freemasonry's need for secrecy. To survive, lodges withdrew further from society.

Russia

In Russia, Catherine II became increasingly suspicious of Freemasonry. Although their overall membership was small – estimated at about just 2,000 during her reign – Russian Masonry exerted a powerful influence on society. She accepted the fraternity throughout most of her reign, but in her final years, her attitude changed. She worried that the Masons' widespread activities, particularly in relief work during the famine of 1787, would undermine the existing government.





By 1791, Masonic libraries were being shut down; their documents burned or seized by the government. Influential Freemasons were expelled from Moscow; others, such as Nikolai Novikov, the president of the Masonic Directory – considered the founder of Russian journalism – was imprisoned.

Years later, Alexander I briefly reopened lodges, but only under supervision by ministry police. He quickly closed them again when members of the bureaucracy and military – who he perceived as potential revolutionaries – began joining. In 1822 a formal decree closed all Masonic lodges in Russia; furthermore, every member had to sign an agreement not to take any part in secret societies. Freemasonry disappeared from Russia until the early 1900s.

Spain

Spain throughout the years of 1939-1975 is usually referred to as “Franco’s Spain.” The dictatorship of Francisco Franco was

characterized by brutality, strict censorship, fascism, and right-wing politics. A secret police force helped squash any political opposition, and the personal freedoms that might lead to it.

Freemasonry fell under this axe. According to a Spanish newspaper, Franco had actually applied for admission in a Spanish lodge as a young colonel in the army, but his petition was denied. Nonetheless, when he came into national power, Franco quickly suppressed the country’s two grand lodges, and drove their grand masters out of the country. He publicly decried Freemasonry: “Masons go against God, and we are his soldiers.” His punishment for involvement in the fraternity soon followed – 12 years in prison for Entered Apprentices, 30 years for Fellow Crafts, and death for Master Masons.

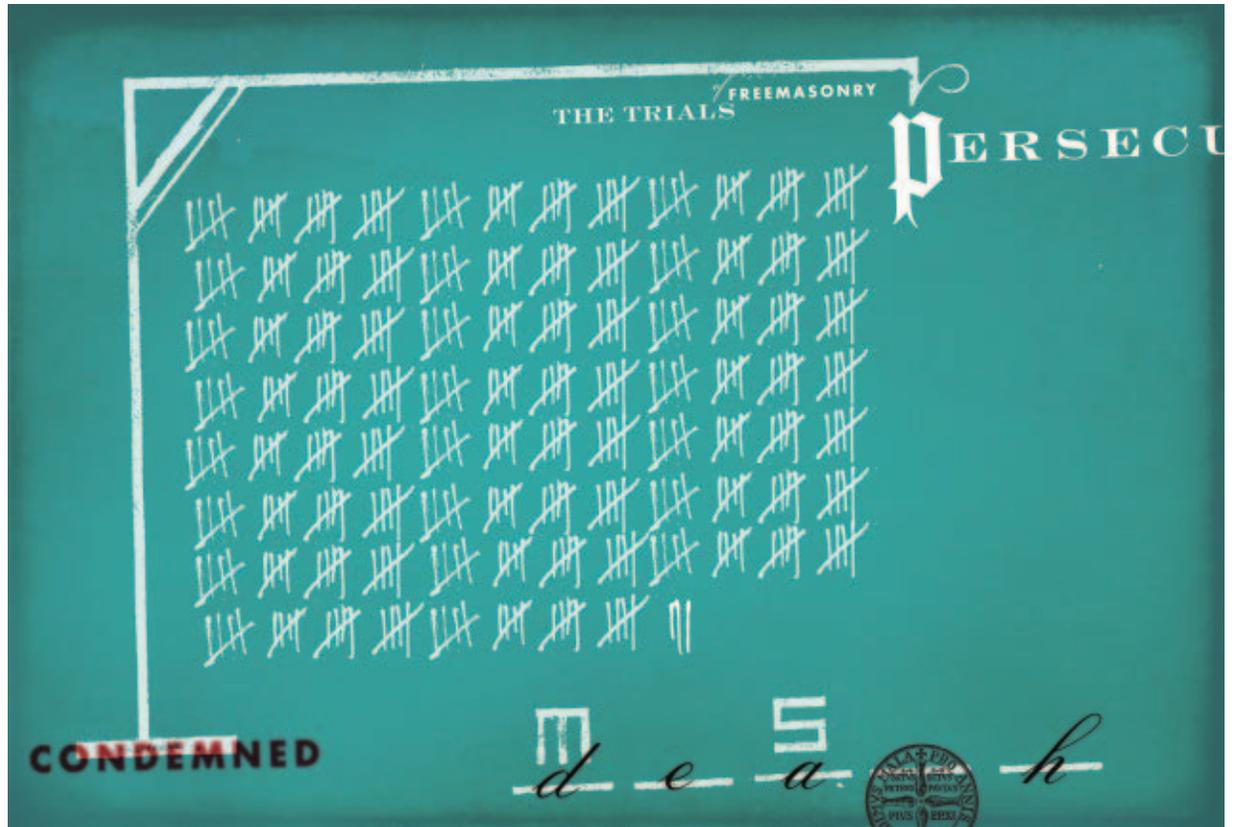
Most of the members of the Spanish grand lodges fled to Mexico or South America. As for those that remained in Spain, some 12,000 were arrested under charges of Masonry.

Nazi Germany

Franco’s persecution of Freemasons came in the context of World War II; it wasn’t until after Gestapo chief Heinrich Himmler visited Spain that Franco created a special court for sentencing Masons.

When Hitler came to power in 1933, he spread fears of a Jewish-Masonic conspiracy: as he saw it, there was a Jewish

Continued next page



plot to take over the world's economic system. Freemasons were a front for world domination.

Freemasonry was outlawed in Germany. Wearing a Masonic ring meant prison or death. In every country invaded by the Nazis, Freemasons were arrested, sent to concentration camps, and put to death. Lodges were demolished. Anti-Masonic propaganda permeated Nazi-occupied cities. In Germany, and throughout the Axis, Freemasons went underground.

Secrets of survival

The list goes on. In the Spain-ruled Philippines in the late 1800s, royal decree proclaimed Freemasonry “illicit, illegal, and destructive to the State.” In Paris’ unsteady political climate in the 1730s, police began raiding lodge meetings, trying to discover what went on behind closed doors.

Persecution checkers Freemasonry’s past. How much of it was because of the fraternity’s reputation for secrecy? If Freemasons had relented and shared their secrets, how might it have changed the fraternity today?

We know this: during the worst of the police raids in Paris in the 1730s, the fraternity was a target of constant hostility. It might have splintered under such pressure. And yet, in those same years, there were an estimated 10,000 Freemasons in Paris – a city with a population between 500,000 and 600,000.

Over three centuries of trials, Freemasons have not renounced their fraternity – or its secrets. ✧

WHERE YOU LEAST EXPECT IT

THE SECRET SANCTUARIES OF TWO CALIFORNIA LODGES

by Heather Boerner

In the spring of 1854, the town of Volcano, Calif., would have been bustling with prospectors out to make their fortunes, loggers razing the lush Sierra foothills to prepare infrastructure for mines, and a general populace well-versed in what one account called “the confusion, lawlessness, and carnality” of the day.

But there was one sanctuary, located just out of town on the western slope of a hill. Under the towering rock that gave the town its name, there stands a cave with a 20-foot-wide mouth and a cool, pure stream in its belly. There, nine Master Masons stole away to do their work.

Volcano Lodge No. 56 was born.

To the cave!

In the two years that followed, the brothers requested and received dispensation from Sacramento Lodge No. 40 and then a charter from Grand Lodge. But for those first five organizational meetings, the cave was a quiet, secluded home. Volcano Lodge would become the first lodge in Amador County.

The cave might not look like an ideal meeting-place today, admits Ross Anderson, master. “But it used to be, back in the day when the town was being built,” Anderson says. “Then, there were no extra buildings. The caves were handy and out of the weather.”

Most importantly, it afforded the brothers the seclusion they needed to carry out Freemasonry’s most private rituals. Using a rock as an altar and baring only the regalia that they could carry with them, the brothers convened to create the new lodge. They

appointed a tiler to stand at the mouth of the cave and ensure no one wandered in during rituals.

That wasn’t the only way they protected their esoteric work from curious outsiders. A 1948 account in *The Rite News* reported that “the cave possessed an upper, second section reached by a rope ladder which could be pulled up after one, thus assuring the requisite degree of privacy.”

Even after the brothers built their own lodge on the rocks above the cave, they didn’t forsake their first meeting spot,

Continued next page

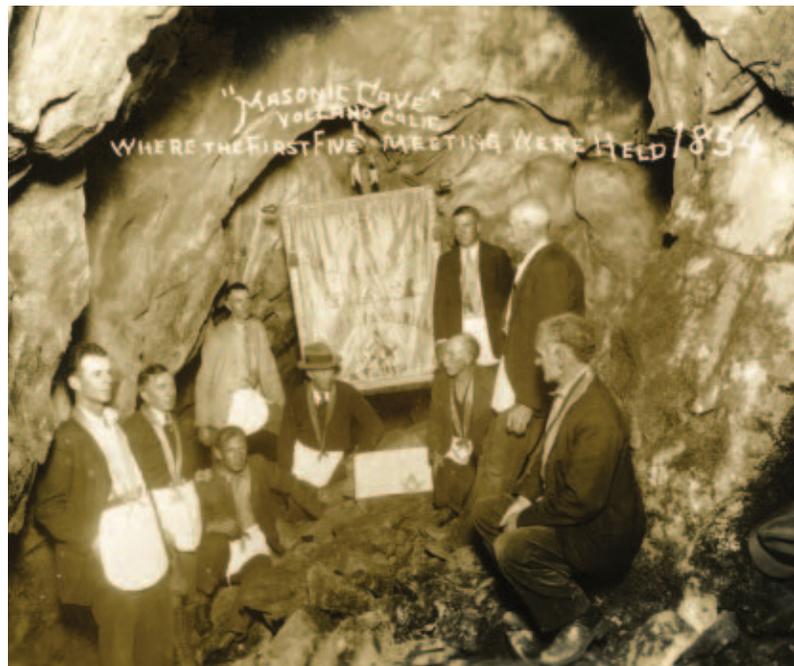


IMAGE COURTESY OF THE HENRY W. COIL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

LODGE SPOTLIGHT



Island City's secret rooms

There's more to Island City Lodge No. 215 than meets the eye. And it's Master Scott Colcord's favorite part of introducing brothers to the building.

"Their eyes go wide," says Colcord, 60, who was raised in 1991. "It's fantastic."

The main room is laid out like a traditional blue lodge, with an altar in the middle and standing room on the side for an audience.

But if you study the panels to the left of the entrance, you can find a break in the wall. Search carefully, and you'll find a hidden latch. Open the two secret doors, and you're greeted by two secret rooms: a shallow pool about two inches deep in one; generations of Masonic regalia in another.

One room is used for York Rite rituals that require initiates to cross the River Jordan –thus the shallow pool. The other is mostly used for storage, including items bequeathed to the lodge. Among other treasures, it contains a representation of the Ark of the Covenant.

That's not all. The lodge contains a third secret room, now walled off. It once housed a well, used in another York rite ritual.

Colcord insists that the rooms are more discrete than secret. "They're hidden away for more aesthetic purposes, so they don't get in the way or complicate the design," he says. But Colcord also admits that he didn't know about the rooms until he'd been a Master Mason for some time. When a potential member comes to the lodge, he holds off sharing the secret.

"If they're enthusiastic enough to come back and get more involved, then I'll show them the rooms," he says with a chuckle. "It's a great pleasure of mine to see the looks on their faces." ❖



IMAGES COURTESY OF THE HENRY W. COIL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

preferring to retreat to it in the heat of the summer for committee meetings.

A fire consumed the original lodge only a few years after its construction. But the foundation and stone path the brothers laid is still there. Today, visitors are welcome at the Masonic cave, and can follow a self-guided tour provided by lodge members.

"There's a very tight kinship among the brethren even today," says Anderson. "This lodge is what Masonry is all about."

CALIFORNIA MASONRY'S LEGACY TO CHILDREN

MASONIC CENTER FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES IS CHANGING THE FIELD OF YOUTH PSYCHOLOGY

by Laura Normand

As Masons know all too well, secrecy is sometimes forced upon us. When Masons were persecuted by the Papal Bull of 1738, secrecy became more than a fraternal bond. For the first time, it became a means of survival.

Throughout history, those who have struggled with psychological disorders have also been misunderstood, often persecuted, locked up, or pushed to the fringes of society. Even in the recent past, many common disorders have been treated as a painful secret – further isolating the individuals struggling to overcome them.

Thanks to the Masons of California, a new center will continue to dispel any secrecy and stigma that still clings to such disorders, and instead, help youth understand themselves and their incredible potential.

Masonry's commitment to children

From November to February, in an unassuming clapboard house in San Francisco's Presidio, staff gathered weekly for an unusual exercise: choreography. In what they dubbed “client flow” sessions, they walked through the paces of a hypothetical family. How would the family enter the reception area? How would they be greeted? Where would they sit?

The combined knowledge in those meetings was dizzying; the clinicians are leaders in the field of youth psychology, from family therapy to Rorschach testing. But for all their years of experience, this exercise was something new.

The Masonic Center for Youth and Families (MCYAF) opened in February. It offers outpatient services to youth age 4 to 17



with behavioral, emotional, social, or psychological problems. From the first “client flow” meeting, it began setting a new precedent for these types of services – not just in California, but worldwide.

Something different

Elsewhere in San Francisco, a community-based clinic offers a glimpse of the norm in youth psychological centers. Children and teens come to the adolescent psychiatric unit with symptoms that range from difficulty focusing to thoughts of suicide. Increasingly, their parents are told that they have a diagnosis as extreme as bipolar disorder. A prescription follows, and the medication can pack a powerful chemical punch.

These clinicians usually have, at most, just three days with the child before they settle on this diagnosis and treatment plan. They would like more time, but time is money. There isn't enough of either.

Back at MCYAF, assessment alone takes two weeks. During this time, the youth is guided through inkblot tests and IQ

Continued next page

MASONIC ASSISTANCE



evaluations – tests specially selected for him, that create a picture of his emotional, cognitive, academic, family, and social world. He meets with his case manager, who urges him to open up about the things he is scared of or struggling with. Clinicians interview family, close friends, and the youth’s mentors.

After the two weeks, MCYAF’s staff – the clinicians who have been working on this case, and even those who haven’t – meet to weigh all of their findings. They talk through the possible diagnoses, and together, come up with a plan. In most cases, treatment doesn’t hinge upon medication. Sometimes, it’s not just the child that leaves with a treatment plan: It may include family therapy, or individual counseling for one or both parents.

The entire process is slower, more personal, and more complicated. That’s the whole point.

Slowing the pace

Clinical director Dr. Terrence Owens helped design MCYAF’s care model based on his 30-plus years in the field, and the

recommendations of some of the world’s finest youth psychological centers (among them, the Anna Freud Centre in London). It uses the best of what he has seen, and goes to great lengths to avoid the worst. Its holistic approach combines psychodynamic, psychoanalytic, and family systems.

When Owens explained what this meant to one parent – that they would look at every aspect of her 11-year-old’s world, including marital problems between her and the boy’s father – she said, “What a relief.”

Most parents with experience navigating the field have been pleased, albeit surprised, at this thoroughness. Others have balked. “I didn’t expect it to take so long,” one parent said, when told that evaluation took two weeks. She wanted treatment to begin immediately. It’s an example of the powerful trends that MCYAF is standing up against.

As Owens explains it, shrinking resources in the field of youth psychology has created a culture of immediacy. A child’s obvious symptoms get the most attention, and are quickly labeled with a trendy diagnosis: For example, the diagnosis of bipolar disorder spiked 4,000 percent in eight years.

The risk of error is great. By addressing only external symptoms, deeper problems are often overlooked.

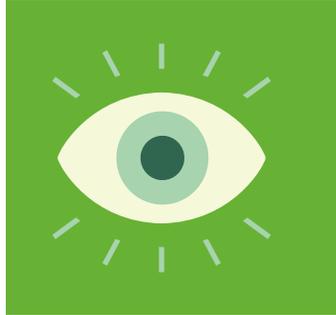
“If a kid has a hard time managing his mood, and it gets classified as bipolar disorder – that’s a tremendous stretch,” says Owens. “That misunderstands the problem. It can introduce quite powerful medication. And it misleads the child and family in how to think about themselves.

“At MCYAF, we’re saying that these things aren’t so simple,” he says.



WEB EXTRA

To learn more about the Masonic Center for Youth and Families, visit mcyaf.org.



Back to the family doctor

One clinician describes MCYAF as going back to the family doctor: “You’re not just a number, you’re a person.”

Medical director Dr. Michael Bronzo uses the example of a parent who calls the center for a depressed child. “The mom might be under a lot of stress, too,” he points out. “We’ll engage her in what she’s going through.”

Compare this with your typical doctor’s office. The receptionist is flooded with phone calls. She isn’t trained to listen to how the parent sounds, nor encouraged to ask. The mother wouldn’t make the same connection, and might never call back. She certainly wouldn’t receive a follow-up call.

Bronzo’s example works because of the professional acumen of every staffer, including those who man the phones. As for the clinical staff, MCYAF has what Owens calls “an all-star” team. Most programs use a hierarchy of clinicians with increasing experience, with just a few senior members at the top. MCYAF recruited only senior clinicians.

Something to talk about

Bronzo’s days at MCYAF are punctuated by conversations, scheduled and impromptu. One of his primary roles is as a sounding board for clinicians, whether they’re deciding a testing strategy or evaluating a recent therapy session. It’s another departure from the frenetic pace of most centers. “Here, we have someone to turn to and say, What do you think?” Bronzo says.

The staff’s expertise makes this possible. Senior clinicians share a knowledge base, and through collaboration, can

challenge and improve each other. Family therapist Kenneth Epstein predicts it’ll be another game-changer for youth therapy.

Many of the field’s most talented clinicians have gone the way of private practice, he explains. But MCYAF presents an opportunity to help deserving patients, regardless of insurance contracts or ability to pay. It also offers that rare opportunity to work with peers.

“If MCYAF is replicated, it could bring senior clinicians back to public care,” Epstein says.

Look at what you’ve done

At press time, MCYAF was serving 24 families, including eight Masonic families from seven counties.

A number of the children’s cases were remarkably complicated; they were referred by pediatricians or a nearby center that didn’t have the expertise or resources. MCYAF expects more of these. Other practices can address only fragments of the situation: family therapy, learning disorders, behavioral problems. But MCYAF addresses all of these, under one roof.

The model of care has been described as revolutionary, and the staff believes it will change the field of youth psychology. None of it would be possible without the vision and funding of the Masons of California.

“If I could say one thing to the Masonic organization,” Epstein says, “it’s this: Wow. Look at what you’ve done.” ✧



BRINGING THE BEST NURSING CARE TO CANCER PATIENTS AND FAMILIES

The Grand Master's Project for 2010-2011 is dedicated to those individuals and their families who are battling cancer.

Building on our partnership with the Association of California Nurse Leaders, By Your Side will provide support where it's most needed: educational resources for more California nurses to become certified nurse oncologists, a critical need in the state.

TO CONTRIBUTE, VISIT BY YOUR SIDE ONLINE OR CONTACT THE OFFICE OF PHILANTHROPY AT 415/292-9117 OR DAVILA@FREEMASON.ORG

Connecting with *Masonic Assistance*



MASONIC SENIOR OUTREACH

Masonic Senior Outreach, a program of the Masonic Homes of California, provides the senior members of our fraternal family access to the services and resources they need to stay healthy and safe in their homes or in retirement facilities in their home communities.

These services include:

- * Information and referrals to community-based senior providers throughout California
- * Ongoing care management at no cost
- * Financial support

Masonic Senior Outreach also provides interim financial and care support to those who are on the waiting list for the Masonic Homes of California. Contact us at 888/466-3642 or masonicassistance@mhcuc.org.

MASONIC FAMILY OUTREACH

Masonic Family Outreach support services are available to California Masons and their families who need help dealing with today's complex issues, such as the impact of divorce, the stresses of a special needs child, job loss, and other significant life challenges.

Our case management services are broad, flexible, and able to serve families in their own communities throughout the state. If you are in need of support or know of a family in distress, contact us at 888/466-3642 or masonicassistance@mhcuc.org.

MASONIC CENTER FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES

The Masonic Center for Youth and Families provides integrated psychological services to youth ages 4 to 17 struggling with behavioral, academic, emotional, or social difficulties. To learn more about MCYAF, visit mcyaf.org or call 877/488-6293.

ACACIA CREEK

To learn more about Acacia Creek, our new senior living community in Union City, visit acaciacreek.org or call 877/902-7555.

STAY INFORMED

You may request a presentation be made at a lodge meeting about the Masonic Homes and Outreach programs by contacting Masonic Assistance at 888/466-3642 or masonicassistance@mhcuc.org.

VISIT THE HOMES

Arrange a private or group tour to get a firsthand look at residential services on our two campuses. Be sure to call ahead (even if on the same day) so we can announce your arrival at the front security gate and make proper tour arrangements. Contact the Home at Union City at 510/471-3434 and the Home at Covina at 626/251-2232.

MASONIC 2011 EDUCATION

11TH ANNUAL CALIFORNIA MASONIC SYMPOSIUM

The 2011 Symposium, “The Morgan Affair: The Kidnapping that Changed American Freemasonry,” will be held June 25 at the Pasadena Scottish Rite Center.

Presenters will include:

- Henry Wilson Coil Lecturer Mark A. Tabbert, Director of Collections, George Washington Masonic Memorial
- R. Stephen Doan, Past Grand Master of Masons of California
- Art Weiss, President, California Masonic Foundation

2011 SUMMER HISTORY CLASSES

Freemasonry’s Impact on Civil Society

Join two UCLA historians as they explore the prominent role that Freemasonry held in the early development of modern thought, culture, and politics. Special emphasis will be given to Freemasonry’s contributions to the evolution of individual rights and democratic societies.

Classes will be offered at the following locations and dates:

- San Diego Scottish Rite _____ July 7, 14, 21
- San Jose Scottish Rite _____ July 11, 18, 25
- San Francisco Scottish Rite _____ July 12, 19, 26
- Anaheim DeMolay Center _____ July 12, 19, 26
- Pasadena Scottish Rite _____ July 14, 21, 28

Visit freemason.org for more information and registration.



162nd
Annual Communication

*Grand Lodge of Free and
Accepted Masons of California*

A FAIR TO REMEMBER

*September 23-25, 2011
San Francisco, California*

*Grand Lodge Opening
Friday, 1 p.m.*

- Ladies Tea at the Fairmont Hotel
- A Fair to Remember Banquet
- Public ceremonies
- Hotel packages available

Visit freemason.org for more
information and registration.

