

The Waller Mason Lodge #808 Online Newsletter



The Waller Masonic Lodge Buildings From December 30, 1897 To The Present

Study Nights Mondays 6:30pm - Christmas 2014 Issue - Meetings 2nd Tuesday 7:30pm
Worshipful Master Jason Tones – Secretary – Bart Harvey – Editor John “Corky” Daut

A Waller Lodge Special Merry Christmas Edition Newsletter



The Waller Masonic Lodge Christmas Party 2014

Waller Lodge Held it's annual Christmas Party Saturday December 13, 2014 at the Lodge. There were about 70 or 75 Members, family and friends. (These photos were taken with my I-Phone at the end of the dinner and do not represent the number of attendees)



The meal was a little skimpy, but we made do with with heaping plates of baked turkey, baked ham, gravy, dressing, big butter beans, potato salad, macaroni and cheese, green beans, corn pudding, hot rolls, and a whole pile of pies and cakes. And, I am sure I forgot a couple of things.



We also had a very good donation of toys and food from the attendees' for the "Waller Assistance & Restoration Ministries" to help the needy. The Lodge had already donated \$200.00 to the "Waller Angels" organization to be used for the same purpose.



A Christmas Story

Little Leroy came into the kitchen where his mother was making dinner. Christmas was coming up and he thought this was a good time to tell his mother what he wanted. "Mom, I want a bike for Christmas."

Little Leroy was a bit of a troublemaker. He had gotten into trouble at school and at home. Leroy's mother asked him if he thought he deserved to get a bike for Christmas.

Little Leroy, of course, thought he did.

Leroy's mother, being a Christian woman, wanted him to reflect on his behavior over the last year, and write a letter to God and tell him why he deserved a bike for Christmas.

Little Leroy stomped up the steps to his room and sat down to write God a letter.

LETTER 1:

Dear God:

I have been a very good boy this year and I would like a bike for Christmas. I want a red one.

Your friend,

Leroy

Leroy knew this wasn't true. He had not been a very good boy this year, so he tore up the letter and started over.

LETTER 2:

Dear God:

This is your friend Leroy. I have been a pretty good boy this year, and I would like a red bike for my Christmas.

Thank you,

Leroy

Leroy knew this wasn't true either. He tore up the letter and started again.

LETTER 3:

Dear God:

I know I haven't been a good boy this year. I am very sorry. I will be a good boy if you just send me a red bike for Christmas.

Thank you,

Leroy

Leroy knew, even if it was true, this letter was not going to get him a bike. By now, Leroy was very upset. He went downstairs and told his mother he wanted to go to church. Leroy's mother thought her plan had worked because Leroy looked very sad. "Just be home in time for dinner," his mother said.

Leroy walked down the street to the church and up to the altar. He looked around to see if anyone was there. He picked up a statue of the Virgin Mary, slipped it under his shirt and ran out of the church, down the street, into his house, and up to his room. He shut the door to his room and sat down with a piece of paper and a pen, and wrote his letter to God.

LETTER 4:

I got your mom.

If you want to see her again, send the bike.

Signed,

You Know Who



Masonic Symbolism and Christmas, The Tree

From "The North Eastern Corner website.

Up here in the Northeastern corner of the United States, while digging through ice and snow from a recent Nor-Easter, I came upon a branch of Douglas fir that I had trimmed off the bottom of our Christmas tree and thrown out in my front yard for future disposal. Its dark blue-green needles poked out of the icy white snow with a promise of life amidst the coldest winter fury that Mother Nature could muster. It reminded me of the sprig of Acacia, symbol of the immortality of the soul.

I sometimes think up here in the Northern parts of the Northern Hemisphere, when in the grips of a cold and snowy winter, the evergreens symbolic meaning rings truer than in warmer climes because of its stark contrast with the rest of the environment, but like in the picture above of the famous Tree of Ténére, an evergreens tenacity for life is evident even in the hottest environment.

That is why the Acacia is an important symbol in Freemasonry and the evergreen tree has become one of the symbols of the Christian celebration of Christmas. But how did the evergreen tree end up in a Christian festival of Christ's birth?

There are many myths and stories from all over the globe claiming paternity to the Christmas tree. But we must first discuss the day which Christmas is celebrated around, the Winter Solstice.

The celebration of the Winter Solstice is one of mankind's oldest traditions. It marks the shortest day of the year. After days and months of growing darkness, light begins its gradual return to our planet with a promise of new life and longer days. Mankind has revered this day in one form or another and throughout all of history gathered together to rejoice. The early Christian Church was very good at integrating festivals from all sources, and although the actual date of Christ's birth varies according to scholars, December 25 was chosen by Pope Julius in the 4th century bringing the day of Christ's birth in harmony with the most cherished celebration in the ancient world.

Now to the Tree.

There are many stories from all over the world about the first Christmas tree. There is an old Scandinavian myth of a fir tree, which sprang from blood drenched soil where two lovers met a violent death, that lit with mysterious lights (like candles) on a certain night during the Christmas season. Another myth is about a chivalrous knight traveling deep in the woods coming upon a gigantic pine tree whose branches were covered with candles. Some were standing straight and some bent in weird crooked shapes and at the top of this tree was a vision of a child with a halo around its head. This represented the tree of life decorated with the deeds of mankind watched over by the Savior.

One of my favorites is of Martin Luther, who, while traveling one Christmas Eve in snow covered country, looked up through the trees and was struck with the beauty of the stars peeking through the dark green boughs above him. He returned home to his family and wanted to share his feelings of the beauty and peace of the scene he just experienced. So he went outside and cut a small fir tree from his garden and placed candles on its branches and lit them for his family to experience.

During Christmas we adopt one or all of these myths and bring an evergreen and decorate it with lights to be shared by all.

I have always loved to go out for a walk at night during snow storms. There is a ethereal quiet and otherworldly glow at night during a snow storm that soothes my soul. During the last snow storm I had to run out on an errand and after I stepped out into the cold and looked out on the beauty surrounding me, called my wife to get the two of them in their snow gear so I could share with them my vision of peace and light.

Christmas is a time to surround yourself with the people you love and share in the light of promise of the New Year ahead. My study of esoteric Freemasonry has reignited the spark of deeper thought and philosophy that was smoldering inside of me and I want to share my light with my family and my Brethren.

No matter what celebration of Winter Solstice you practice, may yours be filled with light and love.

M.M.M.

P.S. You may or may not have noticed but I have decided to shed a little further light into my identity by using my initials to identify the man who writes from The North Eastern Corner. Anonymity, while still a security blanket, grows tiresome when shedding truth and light in a dark world.



Freemasonry and Christmas

Compliments of Brother Neil Neddermeyer who writes Cinosam.

The observance of Christmas doesn't seem to bring satisfaction to some people. On one hand, many say it's too religious, and thus don't want Christmas trees in public buildings and nativity scenes within a shepherd's-crook length of government lawns. On the other hand, many say it's not religious enough; it's too commercial. They've been saying it for years-it's the central theme behind the charming animated cartoon A Charlie Brown Christmas which was made some 40 years ago.

Setting that aside, what does Christmas mean to the Freemason?

Certainly Freemasonry is not a religion, Christian or otherwise. It leaves the determination on spiritual matters to each individual Mason, so long as he believes in the Almighty Creator. But there are certain messages from the story of Christmas that are applicable to all Masons, not just those who celebrate a certain birth on December 25th.

Many Christians feel God gave his greatest gift to mankind, and that Gift's birth is marked on Christmas Day. And the spirit of giving is also outlined in our Masonic ceremonies. The new Entered Apprentice is reminded in the northeast corner of charity, and to practice it whenever possible. There's the monetary charity of that portion of our ceremony. And there's another kind. The one referred to in the Charge in the same degree which admonishes "to relieve his necessities, soothe his

afflictions, and do to him as you would that he, under similar circumstances, should do until you." In other words, the Golden Rule, from the Sermon on the Mount.

Christmas is a time of faith for our Christian brethren. But all Masons are reminded in the different degrees of the principle of faith. In the explanation of the First Degree Tracing Board, we hear "How ready and willing ought we to be to adore the Almighty Creator." Therefore, let this time of year serve as a reminder to all Masons to practice their faith, whatever it may be.

Faith and Charity are names of principal staves or rounds on the Ladder you see every meeting on that Tracing Board. But there is another round, and that is Hope in Salvation. While Salvation has a particular connotation to those who believe in the story of the virgin birth, the concept of some kind of reward for following Masonic principles during our lives winds its way through the various degrees, as those of you familiar with the working tools explanations of the Second and Third Degrees well know.

So let this season of the year remind all Masons, no matter what their religious beliefs, to follow those universal tenets of the Craft-faith, hope and charity. Doing so should bring satisfaction to you at Christmas-time.

Jim Bennie, PDDGM

Southern Cross No. 44, Vancouver B.C.

Posted by Frederic L. Milliken



Don's Diary - New Year's Resolutions

From The Lodge Devotion #723 Newsletter, Melbourne, Australia

It will not be long until we hear "Have you made a New Year's Resolution yet?" It is likely to be part conversation and part to remind us that the New Year is all but here.

As likely as not it will be a resolution will be about health and fitness, having more family time, getting out of debt and retirement plans later in the year. It will be a promise that you make to yourself to start doing something good or stop doing something bad on the first day of the year. The resolutions that I like are those are those made when you finally realize that tomorrow is the first day of the rest of your life.

This usually occurs after you recognize that we are not here on earth now for practice – this is as good as it will get, and everything is not your father's or mother's fault. It is called growing up but some never seem to do so. A New Year is not needed to initiate planning and action: it can start straight away. Wishes and hopes are no substitute for resolutions and commitment to action. Don't waste a day of your life. Associate yourself with achievers, with "lifters" not "leaners".

We are told that there are ancient religious origins to the custom. For example the Babylonians made promises to their Yaouis at the start of each year that they would return borrowed objects and pay their debts. The Romans began each year by making promises to the god Janus, for whom the month of January is named. There are other religious parallels to this tradition. It is usually about self-improvement.

However, we are told that a UK study in 2007 involving 3,000 people showed that 88% of those who make New Year resolutions fail despite the fact that 52% of the study's participants were

confident of success at the when the resolution was made. I wonder how many failed goals were hopes and wishes rather than Resolutions of Resolve.

Making a New Year's Resolution, in a management sense, is goal setting.

Commendable! The success or otherwise will depend to a large extent on establishing enabling measurers to achieve the goal. For example for a successful weight loss resolution you would expect the person to have a good knowledge of low fat nutritious food, scales to measure food quantities, scales to measure body weight and a record of body weight. Without this monitoring it would become all too hard to pursue.

To break an addiction to Credit Cards, financial strategies need to be adopted. The holder needs to know what is available to be spent on consumables in a period and carry this amount of cash for purchases leaving the credit card at home. Use a Debit Card, not a Credit Card if a purchase on ebay or has to be made or over the telephone.

If the Resolution is to have more friends or getting on with people better, more will have to be done than trolling the internet and joining a club for example. There is a need to "look at yourself in a mirror". If you see someone full of hate and anger, somebody who is all too "precious", their lot will be unlikely to be improved by the Resolution.

The thing to remember is that you cannot keep doing the same old things year after year and expect the outcomes to be different no matter how many New Year Resolutions are made.

Yours fraternally,
Don Paterson



A Masonic Christmas Card



**Twas the Night before Christmas,
And down at the lodge
Not a gavel was stirring,
And in the hodgepodge**

**Of aprons and jewels
And chairs East and West
You could savor the silence,
Most gladly divest**

**All metal and mineral,
It mattered not,
Since Christmas was nigh
And the coals were still hot**

**In the hearth of your home place,
All Masons abed,
As visions of trestle boards
Danced in their head;**

**When up on the roof there arose such a clatter
Our Tyler jumped up to see what was the matter!
He picked up his sword and ran fast to the door,
Three knocks shook the panels - he wondered "What for?"**

**He answered the knocking with raps of his own,
And once the door opened he saw, with a moan
Of delight, it was Santa, all jolly and red
Except for one notable feature instead!**

**Upon his large finger he wore what we knew
Was compass and square on a background of blue!
"Why Santa!" he shouted and lowered his blade,
"I see you're a Mason!" the Tyler relayed.**

**He looked toward the Master's most dignified chair
And said, voice near trembling, "Most Worshipful there
Is a Gentleman properly clothed at the gate!"
The Master replied, "Let's allow him - but wait!**

**You tell me a Gentleman, but I don't see
His apron beneath that red suit. Can it be
Our visitor hasn't been properly raised?
Must we offer a test that is suitably phrased?"**

"I do beg your pardon," ol' Santa said quick

**As he pulled up his coat and displayed not a stick
But a cane with engraving, two balls did appear
And oh, what an apron, he wore and held dear!**

**Adorned like the Master's, complete with a sign
Of "Lodge Number One, the North Pole" on one line!
"Now let this man enter," the Master declared,
And once in the Lodge room, the Brethren all stared,**

**For Santa was wearing a jewel not seen
For many a century - there in between
The fur of his coat and the splendid red collar
Gleamed two golden reindeer that shone like a dollar!**

**"It's Donner and Blitzen, who I must confess
Are actually images brought from the West
By my Warden, a craftsman like none in the world!"
And with a great laugh from his bag he unfurled**

**An ear of fine corn, and some oil from the East,
"My friend I have plenty. Tonight we will feast
On all that is good! We are Masons, kind sir!"
A murmur went throughout the Lodge, quite a stir,**

**As presents and promises flew from his sack!
This Santa, a Mason, showed he had a knack
For making this Christmas the best you could glean,
And soon even Deacons were laughing. They'd seen**

**On this very night only happiness reigned!
This jolly Saint Nicholas quickly explained
That only a Mason could be so inclined
To make all kids happy, make all people find
A Christmas so special. Yes, Santa was right!
Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!**

Author: Clayton L. Wright



Fidelity, Masonry and Christmas - A True Story

The following story was forwarded to us by RW Bob Cunningham, PDDGM-2010, and distributed to the December meeting of 17th District Master's and Warden's Association at South Seminole by outgoing M&W President Wor. Ed Rees PM-Mokanna. The author is unknown, as are many of these types of communications, but, this story, sadly, rings as a true statement for many Lodges, not only those close to us, but also others all around the world. The question is: After reading this, can we continue to allow this, and other similar oversights to happen? The answer lies within every true Mason's Masonic Heart..... What does your heart tell YOU to do??? What will you do to rectify this easily alleviated oversight that we all have much too often, overlooked?

There it sat, wrapped in green paper with drawings of little candy canes, surrounded by a carefully-tied broad red ribbon. The smell of the cookies inside the package lingered in the air. The



Merry Christmas

Master's wife had baked several dozen of the Christmas treats and put them into little parcels to be delivered to the widows of members of the Lodge. The Master had driven around to drop them off, along with a card and a holiday wish from their late husband's brothers in Masonry. But one package remained on the dining room table.

"All of the guys jumped up and volunteered at the last meeting to take these to the widows, but I'm the only one who's been doing it," thought the Master to himself. "I know! I'll call around and see who can deliver the last one."

He punched some numbers into his cell phone. The Senior Warden answered. "Dave, it's Rick," said the Master cheerfully. "Mrs. Wilson's cookies are over here and I was wondering if you could drop them off? We talked to her a few days ago and told her we'd do it tonight, and..."

"Yeah, I'd like to," replied the Senior Warden, "but tonight's a really bad night. You know Thursday's my Warcraft night and I'm kicking ass."

"Can't you play some other night?"

"Not now. I'm the middle of this. Maybe tomorrow, if I'm not at a new level in a few hours."



wARcRAFT???



Christmas Party Man,
Really!

The Master thanked him and put a call in to the Junior Deacon. "Steve, remember you said you could help deliver the widows' Christmas presents? Mrs. Wilson's is sitting here..."

"I'm sorry," said the Junior Deacon. "I know I said that, but my office Christmas party is tonight and I have to go to that. The boss kind of expects it."

"Can't you say 'no' to him?"

“Well, you know he doesn’t have a high opinion of us to begin with because he wants me to work late all the time and I can’t if something with the Lodge is happening. Besides, drinks are free. Talk to you next meeting.”

The Junior Deacon hung up. Somewhat forlornly, the Master tried a few other members, all of whom had promised they would personally hand out gifts to the widows. But one was going out with some buddies that night. Another was too tired after work. Yet another said the widow lived too far out of the way for him. Still another had a concordant body meeting he wanted to go to. Finally, the Master tried the last person on his list, a Past Master of the Lodge.



Jewell?? or Jaded??

“I need your help. Last meeting you said you’d help deliver the widow’s gifts. Mrs. Wilson’s is sitting here and...”

“Wilson?!” he interrupted. “Did you know her husband? He dumped on me the whole year I was in the chair. He kept giving me hell for all kinds of little things.”

“That doesn’t have anything to do with his widow. It’s a Lodge tradition we go out and deliver...”

“And another thing,” butted in the Past Master. “Last meeting you came down to the altar at the wrong time. And you gave the wrong knocks to close the Lodge. Can’t you follow traditions? Don’t you pay attention at practices or know what’s in your ritual book?”

“We were talking about Mrs. Wilson...”

“Wilson. The hell with him.” With that the cell went dead.



The Widows and Orphans??

The Master prepared to pick up the lonely little parcel when the phone rang unexpectedly in the other room. He picked up the receiver.

“My name is Mrs. Lane,” the feeble old voice at the other end quavered. “I live next door to Gladys Wilson. I thought I’d better call you. She has been taken to the hospital.”

“What!?” answered the stunned Master.

“I had invited her over for dinner tonight, but she said she couldn’t come because she was waiting for the Masons. She got a little tired while waiting and went to call someone to see if there was a problem, but she slipped on the carpet and fell. I think she had been on the floor for awhile. It looks pretty serious. I thought I’d better call you.”

“My father was a Mason a long time ago,” Mrs. Lane went on. “He didn’t talk about it much, but all I know is when I was a girl during the Depression, the Masons helped us.”

One Christmas we had nothing. And there was about two feet of snow. But a bunch of the Masons came over with a tree and a huge baked turkey. They put up the tree and decorated it, then we ate the turkey and they sang Christmas carols to me and my three sisters until it was bedtime. It was so wonderful. I learned then that when times are tough, you can depend on the Masons.”

“Thank you for calling me, Mrs. Lane,” said the Master.



A Christmas to Remember

“It’s just too bad someone didn’t get here a little earlier because this probably wouldn’t have happened,” added the old woman. “But God bless you Masons.”

“Yes, thanks again,” replied the Master, and gently hung up the phone.

And as the Master put on his jacket, and picked up the little wrapped parcel to take to the hospital in the clear, moon-lit evening, he wondered if the Masons today really were as dependable as their forefathers. Or, if the admonition of not letting “public and private avocations” interfere with Masonry had turned into nothing more than a convenient excuse.

Look into your heart and see if you truthfully can answer this question: “Am I a Mason who follows my Obligation?” Or, “Am I a Parrot Mason who say’s what I will and can do, but doesn’t follow what I say??”

If you can “*Talk the Talk*, then, *Walk the Walk!*”

Happy New Year, I Think?

Editor’s Note; Thanks to Brother Carlos Zapata MM From the Evolution Lodge #931 Melbourne, Australia.

I wanted to send some sort of holiday greeting to my friends, but it is difficult in today's world to know exactly what to say without offending someone.

So I met with my lawyer yesterday, and on his advice I wish to say the following:

Please accept with no obligation, implied or implicit, my best wishes for an environmentally conscious, socially responsible, low stress, non-addictive, gender neutral celebration of the winter solstice holiday practiced with the most enjoyable traditions of religious persuasion or secular practices of your choice with respect for the religious/secular persuasions and/or traditions of others, or their choice not to practice religious or secular traditions at all.

I also wish you a fiscally successful, personally fulfilling and medically uncomplicated recognition of the onset of the generally accepted calendar year 2015, but not without due respect for the calendar of choice of other cultures whose contributions to society have helped make our country great (not to imply that the USA is necessarily greater than any other country) and without regard to the race, creed, color, age, physical ability, religious faith or sexual preference of the wishee.

By accepting this greeting, you are accepting these terms:

- *This greeting is subject to clarification or withdrawal.*
- *It is freely transferable with no alteration to the original greeting.*
- *It implies no promise by the wisher to actually implement any of the wishes for her/him or others.*
- *And is void where prohibited by law, and is revocable at the sole discretion of the wisher.*
- *The wish is warranted to perform as expected within the usual application of good tidings for a period of one year or until the issuance of a new wish at the discretion of the wisher.*

Best Regards (without prejudice)

Name withheld (Privacy Act).

A Note from the editor. To all of my Lodge Brothers and friends.

This special edition newsletter is also my Christmas card to you. With my sincere wish that you have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Corky