

The Waller Mason Lodge #808 Online Newsletter



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

Worshipful Master Gary Mosmeyer - Editor John "Corky" Daut
The March 2013 Issue

Especially For The Newer Masons

I got to thinking the other day, after one of the new Masons ask me about "Endowed Memberships." Well, of course since I know most everything, I had kinda figured everyone else did also. CORRECTION, since I may have known most everything at one time and have probably forgotten most of it, I figured maybe I had better write it down, So, I decided to explain some of the things a newer member may not know.

Endowed Memberships,

At this time you can buy an endowed membership in Waller Lodge for \$500.00. I say at this time because many Lodges are raising the price. An endowed membership means you are a paid up member of Waller Lodge for the rest of your life. Actually, that hurts the Lodge a little because the interest payments we get from the Grand Lodge each year for each endowed member is less than we would have gotten from your annual dues. However, in the long run, it is a good for the lodge, because the Lodge will continue to get those payments after your demise for as long as the Lodge is in existence.

Becoming An Officer Of The Lodge

Almost every Member of the Lodge can become the Worshipful Master if he is willing to spend the time and effort in order to earn the privilege (I was 78 in my year as Worshipful Master, so it can be done). The lesser seven chairs (officers) Junior and Senior Stewards, Junior and Senior Deacons, Tyler, Chaplin and Master of Ceremonies are appointed at the beginning of each Masonic year by the incoming Worshipful Master. The upper five chairs, Treasurer, Secretary, Junior and Senior Wardens and the Worshipful Master are elected in a formal election each year during the June stated meeting and usually installed in their chairs before the July stated meeting.

Everyone who wants to "work his way through the chairs," as it is called, must start at the lowest rung of the ladder and serve as a Steward. The Stewards job is to provide a meal for meetings that have meals such as the monthly stated meetings and called meetings when an E.A., F.C. or M.M. degree is conferred. And, he is to maintain the kitchen area. The Lodge does reimburse the Stewards for all expenses related to the food and supplies used for these meals.

Each of the other officers has a specific duty to perform during the meetings and each one has specific parts of the ritual openings and closing of the Lodge meetings, to memorize and be proficient in before he can take that office. Waller Lodge has study nights every Monday night except holidays where Members can learn the parts,

The Wages Of A Mason

The wages of a Mason as is traditionally taught in the Fellowcraft Degree are Wine, Corn and oil.

In ancient days, "corn" was not what we think of as corn today. Instead it was a grain, such as wheat or barley, which was called corn. Thus, an ear of grain (corn) represents plenty. It is also a symbol of nourishment.

Wine is mentioned in Psalms 104 as something "that gladdens the heart of man" and, as such, can symbolize health and refreshment of body and spirit. On another level, wine can represent the completed and perfected human life. Wine starts as an inferior juice when newly pressed from the grape, representing youth or im-

maturity. But with time and through fermentation, it can become a completed product, wine. Wine represents the maturity of mind and spirit we should strive to obtain in our relationship with God, while the fermentation process symbolizes the struggles of life we encounter in developing that relationship.

The oil is olive oil, which was a necessity in ancient times as it served multiple purposes. It was used in the preparation of food, served as a medicine both internally and externally, and provided a source of light in the ancient oil lamps. In this view, oil can represent nourishment, health, and peace. As a food item, oil symbolizes nourishment for our physical bodies but also the moral development we as Freemasons should be striving to obtain. As a medicine or remedy, it represents physical health and the spiritual health (or joy) we obtain in our relationship to God. As a source of light, oil represents the physical and spiritual peace we obtain by overcoming the vices of life.

Taken as a whole, the corn, wine and oil represent both the physical and spiritual nourishment, refreshment and joy the Freemason receives for living an industrious life devoted to the service of God and his fellowman. The faithful Fellow Craft Mason is assured that his wages, his reward, shall not be just sufficient but plentiful to supply all of his physical, moral, and spiritual needs. He will have health of body, mind, and soul. He will enjoy peace in this life, in the hour of death, and in the life to come.

However the real wages of a Mason is beyond corn, wine and oil or even gold. The real wages of a Mason are the feelings of Brotherhood and Friendship you feel when you meet together in a Lodge meeting and when you work together in a community project or a fundraiser or when we put on a degree to be proud of. And the knowledge that if you need help in the middle of the night there are a number of Brothers you can call and will get help.

But, it all goes back to that old saying, **“You cannot get any more out of Freemasonry than what you are willing to put into it.”**

But after thinking about it, I have realized lately that, that statement is somewhat erroneous. It should read;
You can get as much out of Freemasonry as you put into it, BUT you can also get a whole lot more. Get Involved.

This Month's Humor

An elderly couple was celebrating their sixtieth anniversary. They had married as childhood sweethearts and had returned to their old neighborhood after they retired. Holding hands, they walked back to their old school. It was not locked, so they entered, and found the old desk they'd shared, where Andy had carved “I love you, Sally.”

On their way back home, a bag of money fell out of an armored car, practically landing at their feet. Sally quickly picked it up and, not sure what to do with it, they took it home.

There, she counted the money - fifty thousand dollars!

Andy said, “We’ve got to give it back.”

Sally said, “Finders keepers.” She put the money back in the bag and hid it in their attic.

The next day, two police officers were canvassing the neighborhood looking for the money, and knocked on their door. “Pardon me, did either of you find a bag that fell out of an armored car yesterday?”

Sally said, “No”.

Andy said, “She’s lying. She hid it up in the attic.

Sally said, “Don’t believe him, he’s getting senile”

The agents turned to Andy and began to question him. One said: “Tell us the story from the beginning.”

Andy said, “Well, when Sally and I were walking home from school yesterday . . .”

The first police officer turned to his partner and said, “We’re outta here!”



Dispatcher: Nine-one-one What's the nature of your emergency?

Caller: My wife is pregnant and her contractions are only two minutes apart.

Dispatcher: Is this her first child?

Caller: No, you idiot! This is her husband

What's Wrong With This Picture?

(The original article in the "STTME-mag" had a picture of a Masonic Lodge installation in this spot.)

What's wrong with this picture? Actually nothing. What, in this picture, threatens Masonry? Now, that is the real question. To me, what's wrong with this picture is that every one of the officers except the Worshipful Master looks about as old as me and I am 84. Actually, the W.M. doesn't look to young,

The real problem is where are at least 2 or 3 younger faces and who is going to take these Brothers places in a couple of years when they are gone.

You're probably getting tired of hearing, "Masonry is in trouble". . .

OK, what can we do about it? Although I am old enough, I've only been a Mason for 20 years, and don't have all the answers. But, maybe one, I still remember the disappointment I felt after being raised and finally allowed to attend meetings. After spending months studying and learning my thoughts after these first meetings were, 'Is that really all there is?'

I still remember a few years ago when I was taking my son-in-law home after his first stated meeting and he ask, 'Is that all we do dad, just talk about, raising money, who died, who's sick and paying the light bill?' The sad thing is that my answer had to be, 'Well Jim, I hate to admit it, but that's usually pretty much it.'

I did, and honestly believe that a great many other new Masons also expected that some degree of Masonic education would continue after being raised. Remember , "Masonry makes good men better" and not, OK, now you're better.

Don't misunderstand, I really didn't do much different when I was Master because I was also trapped in the same Masonic tradition most Masters still are. It's been done this way over 200 years and shouldn't be changed.

And yes, we shouldn't change the ritual, or even the order of business, just add a tiny bit of spice to meetings, We should start making meetings a little more interesting, like have a guest speaker, have an officer read some Masonic news or interesting story about a famous Mason or sports figure who is a Masons or some of our own Masonic Lodge's history.

We have to remember, for the first hundred and fifty years or so, a Lodge meeting was almost a social event. Men got out, met with the Brothers, had a meal and maybe a drink or two in some jurisdictions and weren't just sitting at home watching a candle or the flames in the fireplace flicker. Now Masonry is competing against a new world, for every Brother's time. Competing with things like ball games on a giant TV, games on the X Box, surfing the net with high speed internet or on their smart phone or shopping in stores that open til midnight or a thousand other things that didn't exist fifty years ago.

Make Lodge Meetings a little more interesting or loose those few young men whose petitions we do still get, back to this new modern world's entertainments, after the meeting boredom sets in.

I can still hear those voices in the background saying, "But, that ain't the way we did it in my year." And, they are right it isn't. But, that doesn't mean that we can't, or shouldn't change it just a little bit. All of us, like it or not, live in a completely different world now. We also don't walk or ride to Lodge meetings on a horse or in a wagon anymore or cool off by waving a cardboard fan stapled to a stick that was given out by the local funeral home in August when it's a hundred degrees, or have spittoons and ashtrays all over the Lodge room.



2013 Installation of Officers, Cortez Lodge A. F. & A. M. in Cortez, Colorado

Powers Of The Worshipful Master

There has been a question or two, regarding the powers of the Worshipful Master. The G. L. Laws are very specific and as follows.

“The parliamentary focal point in the Masonic Blue Lodge is the East. The Worshipful Master, unlike the presiding officer of any other deliberative assembly, is vested with virtually limitless parliamentary power, so much power, in fact, as to be awesome. It is his paramount duty to preserve order and decorum in the lodge room, and he may take just about whatever steps he deems necessary to fulfill this duty.

The W. M. has the right, indeed the responsibility to preside; however, at his pleasure he may request and permit another Brother to do so, provided that the Brother Is a current Warden or a Past Master of the W. M.'s lodge. The W. M. may then resume the gavel whenever he so desires.

Unique among presiding officers, the W. M. may propose any motion; may second any motion (except an incidental motion); may initiate, participate in, and terminate debate; and, subject to Grand Lodge Law and his own Lodge Bylaws, may open and close Lodge at his will and pleasure. The W. M., furthermore, may reject any motion which he deems to be in violation of Grand Lodge Constitution and Laws, in conflict with the landmarks and customs of Freemasonry, or in danger of jeopardizing the peace and harmony of the Lodge itself.

The W. M. decides and rules on all points of order, and there is no appeal from his decision except to the Grand Master and/or the Grand Lodge. Such an appeal must be in writing and signed by three members of the Lodge, pursuant to the provisions of Grand Lodge Law.”

The W. M. must supervise both the business and the work of the Lodge. He Is the custodian of the Lodge Charter, Is responsible for its proper display in his Lodge, and Is charged with its safe-keeping. He is also responsible for the accuracy of the minutes, and he may order any correction thereto at the next stated meeting.

When the W. M. raps the gavel, he takes charge of his Lodge, demanding silence in the room and requiring every Brother to be properly clothed and seated. Any Brother who disobeys the gavel may be reprimanded by the W. M. and/or may be ordered from the room.



An atheist was spending a quiet day fishing when suddenly his boat was attacked by the Loch Ness monster. In one easy flip, the beast tossed him and his boat high into the air. Then it opened its mouth to swallow both.

As the man sailed head over heels, he cried out, "Oh, my God! Help me!"

At once, the ferocious attack scene froze in place, and as the atheist hung in mid-air, a booming voice came down from the clouds, "I thought you didn't believe in Me!"

"Come on God, give me a break!!" the man pleaded. "Two minutes ago I didn't even believe in the Loch Ness monster!"



Happy Birthday Brothers

	<u>Age</u>
Kenneth Healy	97
John "Corky" Daut	85
Everett F. Hoover	76
Robert F. Willie	75
Herman S. Flanagan	70
Richard Ventrca	62
Eric Flanagan	55
Matt Stokes	37
Randal Dluhy	28
Jerry Schiel	68

Masonic Anniversaries

	<u>Years</u>
Carl Miller	52
Marshall Peterson	40
Steve York	38
John Daut, Sr.	23
David Reynolds	14
Marshall Peterson	38

The Waller Lodge Electronic Newsletter

Subscriber's Extra Features

Editor's note; I have prided myself for years by running this publication in a Masonic way, by trying to avoid politics and religion. I don't think this letter really violates either one although it may touch the edges. Corky

What has America become?

Editor,

Has America become the land of the special interest and home of the double standard?

Lets see: if we lie to the Congress, it's a felony and if the congress lies to us its just politics. If we dislike a black person, we're racist and if a black dislikes whites, it's their 1st Amendment right; the government spends millions to rehabilitate criminals and they do almost nothing for the victims; in public schools you can teach that homosexuality is OK, but you better not use the word God in the process; you can kill an unborn child, but its wrong to execute a mass murderer; we don't burn books in America, we now rewrite them; we got rid of the communist and socialist threat by renaming them progressives; we are unable

to close our border with Mexico, but have no problem protecting the 38th parallel in Korea; if you protest against President Obama's policies you're a terrorist, but if you burned an American flag or George Bush in effigy it was your 1st Amendment right.

You can have pornography on TV or the internet, but you better not put a nativity scene in a public park during Christmas; we have eliminated all criminals in America, they are now called sick people; we can use a human fetus for medical research, but it's wrong to use an animal.

We take money from those who work hard for it and give it to those who don't want to work; we all support the Constitution, but only when it supports our political ideology; we still have freedom of

speech, but only if we are being politically correct; parenting has been replaced with Ritalin and video games; the land of opportunity is now the land of hand outs; the similarity between Hurricane Katrina and the gulf oil spill is that neither president did anything to help.

And how do we handle a major crisis today? The government appoints a committee to determine who's at fault, then threatens them, passes a law, raises our taxes; tells us the problem is solved so they can get back to their reelection campaign.

What has happened to the land of the free and home of the brave?

— Ken Huber
Tawas City



Making Good Men Better

This is a great motto, if used properly, but lodges can quickly lose the meaning and spirit of this fine reminder if it is not monitored constantly by all brethren. There are many lodges where the brethren use these words, but don't always make an attempt to live them.

To make good men better, it takes "better men" to be role models for them " to see and learn from. We must remember, since December young men 18, 19 and 20 year old can become Masons in Texas

We are all part of this imperfect lodge, which prevents us from always being the model we should be all the time, but our charge is to learn to be as perfect as possible. How can we accomplish this if we do not make any attempt to "mind our manners" when in the lodge, or fraternizing with other masons?

Should you meet a mason for the first time on the street you would not address him with distaste, nor would you choose to tell him racist jokes or negative things about your lodge. Of course you wouldn't, because you are proud of your lodge! If you do any of these things in your lodge, are you not defacing the very thing you have sworn to uphold?

For those who have yet to mature into the world, here is the Masonic warning: This is not high school, college, or a "frat". It is not a place where you "let your hair down", or tell lewd jokes at the expense of another to make yourself feel more important.

It is a place where masons "meet to work"; a place meant to be a haven clear of all negatives toward each other, a place to model who can best work and agree.

MASONIC EDUCATION: A Subject Too Often Overlooked

by Richard E. Fletcher, PGM, Vermont

Conrad Hahn, a most distinguished Mason, once observed, **“The lack of educational work in the average lodge is the principal reason for the lack of interest and the consequent poor attendance in Masonry over which spokesmen have been wringing their hands for at least a century”**.

This quote stirs one to think about the importance and value of Masonic education within the Masonic Fraternity. It should further stir us to think about why this important aspect of Freemasonry has been so badly overlooked. We must not kid ourselves into thinking that Masonic education is playing the prominent part in Freemasonry that by right it should. This leads to the all important question, **“Why has this situation come about?”** The real problem in trying to answer this question is that there is no easy answer. We, as a Fraternity, have reached the point where far too few of our members have even the faintest idea of why they are Freemasons, let alone, have any real knowledge about our history and heritage.

To those of you who are **“ritual purists”** please do not let my next statement shock you. But the real truth of the matter is we have come to depend on the ritual as the basis for Masonic knowledge. The ritual does not make Masons. It only makes members! We cheat, wrong and defraud any candidate who is left hanging at the end of the 3rd Degree, having heard a lot of words and really not knowing what they mean. Until the Degrees are explained to the candidate he has no idea of what he has gone through. To suggest that the explanation is complete with the lectures of each Degree is again burying our head in **“Masonic Sand.”** Let me stress no one loves the ritual more than I do. The ritual has an important place in the life of the person who is becoming a Mason. But, that place is not the **“throne from on high”** from which there is no more to learn. In my opinion, it is far easier to memorize and recite the ritual than it is to study the history and meaning of Freemasonry. So, we tend to be far more comfortable in working the Degrees than in working with the candidate to teach him what our beautiful craft is all about.

Has this always been so? The answer, of course, is no. But we have drifted so far away from true knowledge within our Fraternity that now it is very difficult to try to turn the tide. But we are going to have to do that very thing! What are in fact the origins of Freemasonry? Where did it begin? How did it reach the present state in which we find it today?

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could answer these questions in ten words or less. We cannot. We can only surmise what in fact may have happened. Historically, of course, Freemasonry did not begin with the forming of a Grand Lodge in London in 1717. Quite obviously, there had to have been Lodges to be formed at that time. So, they must have had some history prior to that date. When did it all begin? We simply don't know. One thing has always bothered me with the explanation we are usually given. That is: Why did the ancient Guilds of Cathedral builders need such an elaborate method of recognition. Why would they have needed signs and words, if in fact our early origins were with tradesmen plying their skill in building cathedrals? That they would wish to keep secret the method by which they constructed a building might perhaps be possible. But, they were out in the open, visible to anyone who wished to come near the building and certainly not in any danger from an outside enemy. So why would they need to have methods of recognition that would not have been known to the casual observer? This question has always intrigued me. Please let me tell you right now, I do not know the answer. One of the better theories that I have read concerning this matter is in a book by John Robinson entitled, *Born in Blood*.

Let me just say briefly that his theory is that Freemasonry very likely began with the suppression of the Knights Templar in the year 1307. At that time the Templars were crushed in France, but by the delay of the King in enforcing the edict in England and Scotland many escaped. It is Mr. Robinson's theory that they went underground and had to devise a method of recognition enabling them to travel safely and to establish safe houses where they would have an opportunity to rest and refresh themselves. It also gave them the ability to recognize each other as members of the order! While the suppression of the Knights Templar may or may not have anything to do with early Freemasonry, it certainly makes more sense to me that secret signs and words in this type of environment were far more necessary than with the simple workman plying his trade in building a cathedral. Just one more thought from this particular theory. **The suppression of the Knights Templar occurred on October 13, 1307. The particular day of the week was a Friday and ever since that event Friday the 13th has been considered to be the unluckiest day of the year.**

Now, the suppression of the Templars was crude and bloody but it was not an unusual event in those times. War, pillage, and confiscation of property were a way of life. There were other orders in existence who had their troubles as well. What was there about the Knights Templar that made them known and recognized and

respected? Why do I say respected? Because there wasn't any rejoicing at their suppression. Instead the day is remembered as unlucky! The only conclusion that I can reach is that this order held the respect of the people and their destruction brought about the omen of bad luck. Why were they so respected? Obviously, there is no absolute answer to that question, but one could surmise that if they were indeed practicing the principles of Freemasonry they would certainly have had the respect of the people! My conclusion is that Freemasonry has existed for a very long time. Not perhaps, as we know it today, but as an order of men doing good work where they were permitted to exist.

This observation is not to be taken in the context of the claims of many Masonic writers, such as: Masonry goes back to the times of Solomon or even Noah and the flood. In Masonic writing we must be very careful when making claims like this. Many times ancient symbols, which have in more recent times been co-opted by Freemasonry, are mistaken as evidence of early Masonic existence. Let me give you one example. The All Seeing Eye on the one dollar bill is certainly well known in Masonic circles and, unfortunately, has mistakenly been interpreted as a Masonic symbol. It is in fact an ancient symbol, which was taken into Freemasonry in far more recent times.

This lack of understanding of ancient signs and symbols has, in my judgment, misled many Masonic historians into false conclusions. The study of history, particularly, where the written word was not used requires a well trained person when interpreting its meaning. That is why we need to do a far better job of interpreting early Masonic history than we have done in the past. If Masonic history began in earlier times than we normally talk about, it is obviously going to make a reconstruction of our past difficult because we have very few written records to go by. Remember these were times when few people could read or write. So, we don't have minutes of early Lodge meetings available. Also remember, if their very lives were at stake, that was another strong inducement not to put very much information into written form!

The purpose of my tracing this obscure part of our history is simply to say to you that I very strongly believe that there was a far more significant purpose to the origins of Freemasonry than simply erecting buildings! I do believe that Freemasonry evolved into that stage, during its development, but the Cathedral builders reflected a time in our history and not its beginning! Let me carry this thinking one step further and bring it into the late 1700's. Benjamin Franklin and Voltaire did not join a workers guild! They joined what they believed to be an educational society, which was called, "Freemasonry." These were extremely intelligent men who had no time to waste on things that were not important to them, and yet Franklin was an active Freemason and Voltaire joined only shortly before his death! What was it that they saw in Freemasonry that eludes us today?

Well let's focus our thoughts more on modern Freemasonry and see what we can determine. It has been said that Freemasonry in Europe was for the elite and in America for the masses. With the great numbers of members that we have attracted over the years, there seems to be a certain amount of truth in that statement. Today we tend to overlook the fact that even though our numbers are dwindling we still have in excess of two and one-half million Freemasons in the United States alone. It would seem that when Freemasonry caught fire it did so in massive numbers. In the 1920's we were in the three millions in membership. In the 1950's and early 60's in the four millions and have been on a decline ever since. But, if we look at the membership in the 1700's, when by any standard of measurement Freemasonry was certainly at its most influential peak, there were not very many Freemasons! Lodges were small, intimate and every Brother knew every other Brother. With larger numbers, perhaps also, came the seeds of our own downfall. It is very difficult to have personal knowledge of each Brother when our numbers are so large. One of the most frequent complaints we hear in Freemasonry is a Brother saying that "I was in the hospital and no one came to see me. The chances are no one even knew he was in the hospital! We also have an extremely mobile population. It is no exaggeration to say that somewhere in the 30% range of the members of each Grand Lodge live somewhere else, other than the Jurisdiction in which they were raised. How do you keep a personal relationship with a Brother when you don't even know where he is? It would seem to me that one of the greatest mistakes we have made in Freemasonry is to try to run it as we did in the 1700's. You can't run an organization with a few thousand members the same way as you do one with millions of members. It just can't be done!

We did not develop, through Masonic education, the training programs, the communication, the leadership that was necessary to deal with these vast numbers. When we talk about the "old days" when all of the leading men of the town were in Freemasonry we overlook the fact that the town was very small and everybody knew everyone else. Now we have vast cities where people don't know everyone else. Yet we still think of Masonry in terms of those earlier times. It's impossible not to conclude that we simply have to do a much better job of communicating with and educating our membership! It is no secret that we have thousands upon thousands of books on Masonry and for the most part the one thing they have in common is that they are unread. We have to

find a way of developing material that will be used in the Masonic community. Realistically we have to get right down to the Blue Lodge Level and insist that every Lodge must offer a course in Masonic education. If they don't have the resources within the Lodge to provide that education then it must be done either by another Lodge or at the district level. We can no longer turn out members who do not know anything about our Fraternity. The price we are paying for that mistake is clearly evident today! Programs can be developed but it does require commitment on the part of the Grand Lodge but, more importantly, commitment, on the part of knowledgeable Masons within each Lodge who will actively accept the responsibility to see that all Masons are taught about the Fraternity.

Certainly Grand Lodges can be of tremendous help in developing a program common to all Lodges within their Jurisdiction a program that would be at least enough to whet the appetite of the recipient so that he would want to do more on his own but one that would teach him basic Masonic information! During a recent study by the Masonic Renewal Task Force one of the issues that kept repeating itself over and over again was the lack of interest by our present members.

The membership of Freemasonry can really be divided into three groups. If you will, imagine three side by side circles or, as I call them, a snowman lying down, the largest circle being the base which is the greatest percentage of our membership and largely inactive, a smaller circle in the middle which would be the body with a somewhat active membership; and the tiniest circle of all, the head, with the smallest group of Masons and the most active. It is with the large, inactive base that our attention should be directed. The deaths occurring are roughly the same in number as the new members being brought in, so one offsets the other. Where we are losing our members is in the two categories of non-Payment of dues and demits. Surveys have shown that of this very large base of membership, when asked why they pay their dues, 33% responded "to maintain membership" and 15% didn't even know why! These are the ones who, through lack of interest, are now leaving Freemasonry. This group I believe represents the residue of the "aura of Freemasonry" that used to say to a man "You Should Belong." Many joined believing this. Now we have a group of men who never quite knew why they joined and over the years have never found out why, have reached that point where, either through lack of interest, or cutting back financially have no incentive to remain in Masonry. They have been around for years and have never been active and now see no need to stay a member. We are losing that group. We are not replacing them and unless and until we can find a way to communicate intelligently with them and show them a reason why being a Freemason is important they will continue to drift away. It is inevitable! But the good news is we can do something about this situation! We can do something about lack of interest and that my Brothers is the challenge facing Freemasonry today! At the very least inactive members should be invited to attend the instructional classes for new members that we have already talked about. Let me not present Freemasonry as all doom and gloom. It most certainly is not. We have a tremendous amount of good work going for us.

Let me share with you some words from our May 1991, Short Talk Bulletin entitled, "And The Greatest Of These Is Charity." This quote is from that Short Talk Bulletin which was written by S. Brent Morris, a well known Masonic author:

"A study of Masonic Charities is a study of the evolving needs of the American society. When food and shelter were immediate and almost daily concerns, Masons responded with firewood and the fruits of their harvests. When care of the aged, widows, and orphans were worries, Masons erected retirement homes and orphanages. When education was needed, Masons built schools, and when these basic needs moved ever farther from common experience, Masons turned their philanthropy to crippled children, burn victims, the speech and language impaired, cancer patients, and others."

It is very clear that when Masons are challenged, they will respond! These are visible challenges of people needing help. Now we must accept the invisible challenge of Masons needing greater understanding of the history and purposes of the Craft!

Perhaps Freemasonry could never be more graphically described than in another quote from a Short Talk Bulletin. This one is entitled, "Ellis Island - The Golden Door" and was written by a man who is not a Mason, Mr. Dennis Hearn. Mr. Hearn worked very closely with members of the Grand Lodge of New York and did a great deal of research into the history of Freemasonry as the Ellis Island project developed. His association with Masons led him to this conclusion:

"The Freemasons among our Founding Fathers brought to their work the ancient Masonic Landmarks of Truth and Brotherly love, and they fashioned a constitution which, by the depth and strength of its conviction, embedded those principles in the conscience of a nation. While we as a people have not always lived up to them, neither have we been able to ignore them".

Those are very beautiful words to describe Freemasonry. Isn't it time we reintroduced ourselves to the meaning of Freemasonry and got back to living and practicing this beautifully descriptive picture of our order?!

Surviving The Big Ones

By John "Corky" Daut

The "Big Ones" for me started with growing up during that period between the Great Depression and World War II. And, the "Big Ones" continued with the just plain old getting by for 77 years. (That was written 7 years ago)

We were driving on Beltway 8 the other day when I realized we were right behind a big gasoline tanker truck and there were no sparks on the road. It reminded me of things gone by. Not gasoline tanker trucks themselves, but the fact that it didn't have a 'grounding' chain. Then I realized that none of them have 'grounding' chains any more.

It used to be that every gasoline tanker truck had a loop of chain hanging to within a couple of inches of the ground near the back axle. The chain ran through an iron loop, like a big bracelet, that touched the ground. As the truck rolled down the road, the iron loop was pulled along, rolling on the road like a small wheel so it wouldn't wear out so fast. The purpose was to ground the truck so it couldn't build up a charge of static electricity, causing a spark that could explode the gasoline. At night you would always know when you were following a gasoline tanker truck because you would see the sparks caused by the iron loop rolling and bouncing along the roadway.

That got me to thinking about other thing missing. Have you noticed how hard it is to find a corner mail box anymore. Growing up in Houston many years ago, there used to be a little dark green mail box hanging on the electric power poles every five or six blocks or so apart, on any major thoroughfare and in a lot of neighborhoods. You could walk a few blocks from your house and mail a letter anytime. These were later replaced by the big self standing drive up boxes on street corners every few miles apart. About the only place you can find one now is in front of a post office. Hey, I even remember when we used to get two deliveries a day. We would get a morning mail delivery and an afternoon mail delivery six days a week by a walking mail carrier.

We also used to have a little red box hanging on the electric power poles every four or five blocks or so apart where you could pull a lever to report a fire in the neighborhood. When you pulled the lever it rang a bell in the fire alarm building, where a dispatcher would send a signal that rang a loud bell in the fire station nearest to the alarm box. A very loud bell would ring at that station with a certain pattern, that would tell the firemen which alarm box had been pulled. The location pattern was also punched into a paper tape so that it could be read and mistakes wouldn't be made. The trucks would then take off toward that neighborhood box to find the fire. Our next door neighbor was a fireman and worked at the neighborhood fire station which was only 4 blocks away from home. It was catty cornered, across from old Lubbock Elementary School where I went to school and across the street from Hall's Grocery where I worked one summer. This was long before air conditioning and windows and doors were always open except in the winter, so I heard that old fire bell go off more times than I want to remember.

Speaking about hearing bells. In 1934 when I started to Lubbock School electric streetcars were still in use and a popular means of transportation. Not only did the Harrisburg streetcar line run right by the school pretty often, but those tracks were also the main line to and from the car barns and just about every streetcar on all the other lines leaving or returning to the car barns also passed by the school. In the summer with the windows open, it was a very noisy place.

Then there were the little blue boxes mounted on posts every couple of blocks in the downtown area that contained a direct telephone line to the police station. In the good ol' days before personal 2 way radios, the traffic policeman on the corners downtown during the day and the beat officers walking the streets at night always had a blue phone box near by so they could call in for assistance when it was needed. I remember when my dad went to work as a Houston policeman in 1933. His first assignment was walking up and down Congress Avenue in the downtown area from 11:00 o'clock at night to 7:00 o'clock in the morning 6 nights a week. In those days, and some say it still is, Congress Avenue was called skid row with many beer joints and very cheap hotels used by transients and ladies of the evening. It was the least desirable beat in the city and the newest police officer usually got stuck with it. That was one area where the police call boxes were an officers best friend. I guess they figured, if a new man could make it there, he could work anywhere. When they arrested a drunk they would walk him to the nearest blue box and call for the wagon. Speaking of drunks I remember dad saying that the worst fight he ever suffered as a beat officer was late one night when he found a drunk beating up on his wife on Congress Avenue. When dad jerked the drunk off of her and started to subdue him, she jumped on my dad and



Corky Back Then

tried to beat the stuffing out of him for trying to arrest her husband. Oh yes, before I forget, there was a small light on top of the call boxes that would flash if the station needed to contact the officer.

Those Disclosures

By Carl Claudy

"I have just visited the Masonic library," began the New Brother, excitedly, "and I am much distressed."

"It is a shame," answered the Old Tiler, sympathetically. "It is the best we can do, as we can only afford just so much and so we haven't all the books we want. Even so there is a lot of good reading there and..."

"That isn't the trouble!" cried the New Brother. "What worries me is the apathetic attitude of the authorities of Masonry who permit so many books to be written about our secrets! I skimmed through some and all a man not a member of the lodge need do is read a few and he will know more Masonry than I do!"

"That is probably true!" smiled the Old Tiler. "But what of it? He will then be a well-informed man. You will remain ill-informed. Surely it is better to have well-informed profanes and ill-informed Masons than have both profane and Mason badly informed!"

"But the profane will learn our secrets! Where will we be when we have no secrets? How can Grand Lodge authorities allow brethren to publish what they have sworn never to reveal?"

"Oh! what makes you think these books contain secrets?"

"Why, I read them! There was one book which had an account of the great lights, and another which talked about Jachin and Boaz, and another which referred to the drama of Hiram Abif, and another which quoted old obligations at length to show the genesis of Masonic obligations and..."

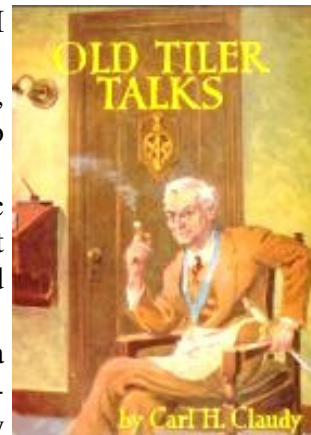
"You are somewhat in the dark regarding the secrets of Freemasonry," observed the Old Tiler. "You can read of Jachin and Boaz, and Hiram in the Bible and the old obligations were printed long before they were incorporated in Freemasonry. The secrets of Freemasonry are not disclosed in the printed works of Masonic students. You are not to reveal anything not proper to be made known. You are not to describe the Masonic initiation. You are not to divulge the modes of recognition. But nowhere in any obligation of any degree in Freemasonry will you find any prohibition against teaching the principles of Masonry, or explaining the symbolism by which Masonry reveals her gentle teachings.

"In books learned Masons have expounded for you and me something of the meaning of Freemasonry; what it is all about, what it teaches, why it exists, what it can accomplish. It is not necessary to make a secret out of knowledge. It is not necessary that Masonry keep to herself the philosophy of conduct, morality, upright living, brotherhood, she has developed. That is for the world to read if it will. The pity of it is that so few will; that so many rob themselves of their Masonic birthright and refuse to read what has been written for them.

"Masonry is a far greater subject than most members of the fraternity know. The majority of us take the three degrees and stop. Not for us is there symbolism. Not for us is there an intimate intertwining between our order and the wise men, the knowledge of the past. Not for us is Masonry a welding together of the underlying principles which animate all religion, with the dogma left out. Not for us is there a literature, a tradition, a history. We let it all go by the board, content to wear a pin and pay dues and vote for a new Master...and call ourselves Masons.

"But a few of us in every lodge are not satisfied merely to be members; we want to be Masons in our minds as well as the records of the lodge. So we read and study. And once in a blue moon is born a Pike or a Pound, a Haywood or a Newton, a Mackey or a McBride, who interprets through the greatness of his vision that you and I may catch at least a glimpse of the vastness which is Freemasonry.

"They do that in books, but none tells what he has sworn never to reveal... why should he? But he explains the meaning of that which is hidden, so that we who have the key may understand. The trouble with our Ma-



sonic books is not that they tell which should not be told, but that we are not rich enough in our lodge to buy enough of the expositions of Freemasonry to educate all our brethren.

"Go back to that library. Take one or two books home with you. Read and reflect. When you find the Masonic author who has violated his obligation, show it to me, because I am an old, old man and I have heard of this forsworn author all my life, but I have never found him!"

"I'm going," answered the New Brother, "I wish I had more sense!"

"I don't!" came the smiling answer. "If you knew much there'd be no point in talking to you, and think of the fun we'd both lose!"

Freemasons Remove Shroud Of Secrecy

CHENNAI: "No, we don't drink blood from skulls, chop heads, summon evil spirits or gyrate around fire sporting masks and hoods," says Balamram Biswakumar, 'Grand Master' of Freemasons India. After remaining shrouded in mystery for centuries, the sect is going all out to "demystify" itself.

"There have been various rumours surrounding our society. We've been given a demon-like image, some even identify us as 'thalaivetti sangam'. We want to break this misconception and spread awareness on the precepts of our society," says Biswakumar, a Chennai-based neurologist.

Chennai, which has nearly 1,800 Freemason members, will host the XII World Conference of Masonic Grand Lodges on November 22 and 23, the second time international event is being held in the country after the 2001 event in Delhi. There are more than 18,000 members in the country.

"This time, to coincide with the completion of 50 years of its existence, the Grand Lodge of India will host Grand Masters from more than 35 Grand Lodges (masonic communities) across the world. The theme of the conference is "The Role of Freemasonry in Universal Peacekeeping," said Biswakumar.

Freemasonry, which originated in England, is concerned with propagating moral and spiritual values. Its members are taught its precepts by a series of rituals which follow ancient forms and customs and tools and allegorical guides. "It basically seeks to make good men better, thereby making the world a better place," said B Kamakoti, Grand Secretary.

On November 24, Mumbai-based chartered accountant Vasudev J Masurekar will be installed as the new Grand Master. "We want the world to know we are normal people. Doctors, lawyers, bureaucrats and even political figures are part of the society," said Biswakumar. Freemasons made their advent in India under the British in 1729. The society is still averse to 'initiating' members indiscriminately. A Mason has to nominate another and the name is cleared after a vote. Prerequisites for a membership include an abiding belief in the Supreme Being and having brotherly love.



"Hiram Abif"

by George H. T. French

Three Masons spent a morning round a dining room table. One was Brother Harry Carr, the great Masonic scholar, on his recent visit to Houston, Texas. The conversation, almost a monologue, dealt with the Hebraic origin of some Masonic words. Herewith some enlightening information gleaned concerning the word Abif.

It is difficult for many Master Masons to understand that the Legend of Hiram Abif is not a historical event. Jesus taught lessons using parables in which the action wove round fictional or created characters. Aesop did his teaching with animals that spoke and acted. Freemasonry teaches its lessons by making historical characters, such as Hiram Abif, a real person, participate in activities that have no historical basis. Hiram Abif was a real person, and is mentioned several times in the Old Testament.

A Biblical Character

In II Chronicles 2:13 Hiram Abif is mentioned in a letter from Hiram King of Tyre to King Solomon: "I have sent a cunning man, endued with understanding, of Hiram my father's." In a list of tools described in II Chron. 4:16 it states "The pots also, and the shovels, and the fleshhooks, and all their instruments, did Hiram his father make to King Solomon for the house of the Lord." He is also mentioned in I Kings 7:13, 14 and 40.

Although written in a more outdated language, it is perhaps easier to understand the English Bible of Wycliffe, published in 1388, than the corresponding passages in the King James Authorized version. John Wycliffe put it this way: "I sente to you a prudent man and most Kunnyng Hiram my fader" II Chron. 2:13, and "Hiram the fader of Salomon made to hym alle vessels in ye hous of ye Lord" II Chron. 4:16.

Hiram's Parents

These Biblical passages seem to say that Hiram was the father of Hiram King of Tyre and of King Solomon. Can that be so?

The Bible clearly tells us who were Hiram's parents. His mother was a widow of the tribe of Naphtali, I Kings 7:14, also described as a woman of the daughters of Dan, II Chron. 2:14. His father was a man of Tyre, I Kings 7:14; II Chron. 2:14. Therefore, he really could not have been the father of Hiram King of Tyre nor of King Solomon.

If such is the case, then "my father's" and "his father" must mean something other than carnal paternity. Yes, and such is the case.

"Ab"

Myles Coverdale, one of the leaders of the English Reformation, published, with William Tyndale, a Bible in English in the middle 1530's. In it Hiram appears as Hiram, followed by Abif. This seems to be the only place, outside of the Masonic ritual, where the name appears printed in this way in English.

Going back to the original Hebrew, the name appears as "Hiram Abi" and Hiram Abif." Light begins to be shed on the mystery upon learning that "Ab" in Hebrew means father, "Abi" means my father, and "Abif" means his father.

Another relevant fact is that the Talmud uses "fathers" to mean distinguished teachers of the Law, and this in turn means that "father" was a title of honor and respect. It is used as such in the Old Testament in the following passages:

Genesis 45:8 says "He (the Lord) hath made me (Joseph) a father to Pharaoh." And Isaiah 22:21 says "I (the Lord) will call my servant Eliakim ... and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah." R. Tydeman, A.Q.C., 84, 192.

The Bible in Today's English uses the word "master" instead of the word "father," for some translators believe that the Hebrew word "Ab" could possibly mean "author," or "originator," or "master." Hence, in II Chron. 2:13 Hiram King of Tyre writes to King Solomon saying "I am sending you a wise and skillful master craftsman named Hiram." And in II Chron. 4:16 it is stated that "Hiram the master craftsman made all these objects."

It would appear from all this that although the word "Abif" literally means "his father," it is used to convey a feeling of respect toward a leader or master.

Ritualistic Legend

From all this confusing mass of material, it appears that the name Hiram Abif appeared only once in an English Bible, and that was in a 1535 version that attained very limited popularity.

What is of still more importance is that the story of Hiram Abif's death and its consequences does not appear in the Bible.

Furthermore, there is no written evidence that we know of today that tells us of the Hiramic Legend before the eighteenth century. Neither in the Bible, nor in any Masonic document, nor anywhere else.

The intriguing point is that this notwithstanding, Anderson introduced Hiram Abif in his Constitutions of 1723, and, of even more importance still, the Freemasons of 1723 seemed to have been so acquainted with the name that Anderson did not feel the need to explain it in any way. Anderson mentions in his 1723 Constitutions that "Hiram, or Hiram, was the most accomplished Mason on earth," and in the 1738 edition we are informed of the "sudden death of our dear Master Hiram Abif whom they decently interred in the lodge near the Temple according to ancient usage." But there is no hint of a tragedy.

One would be justified in believing that the name Hiram Abif was in regular use among Masons in the early 1700's, and had been received by attentive ears from the instructive tongues over the years, without benefit of the written word.

Finally, one could understand how Hiram Abif was incorporated into the Masonic ritual which was undergoing such important growth in the early 1700's. And how the tragedy appears printed in Samuel Prichard's 1730 exposure called "Masonry Dissected."

I Am Not A Gun Nut, But . . .

By Corky

I want to make myself perfectly clear, I am not some kind of a gun nut. I own two pistols, one my father (a Houston Policeman) gave me to wear when I was a special commissioned officer, working in the City Of Houston Parking Meter Division about 55 years ago. The other is one, my wife had inherited from her mother when her mother passed away 12 years ago.

I served in the United States Army during the Korean "War" to protect my rights and yours to own these guns and any others I may want to buy as guaranteed under the United States Constitution as it has been understood, interpreted, ruled and believed by almost every American for the past 226 years.

The experts agree . . .



Hitler



Castro



Qaddafi



Stalin



Idi Amin



Mao Tse-tung
毛沢東



Pol Pot



Kim Jong-il
金正日

Gun control works!

The History of Waller Lodge

Do you remember when Waller Lodge met upstairs over the German-American Bank? — How did Waller Lodge prove that a petitioner lived closer to Waller Lodge, then to Pleasant Hill, Lodge in 1898? — What did the Waller Lodge have to sell In 1939 in order to pay the rent? — How did Waller Lodge change it's stated meeting nights in July of 1946?

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The Weathered Old Barn

~ Author Unknown ~

A stranger came by the other day with an offer that set me to thinking. He wanted to buy the old barn that sits out by the highway. I told him right off he was crazy. He was a city type, you could tell by his clothes, his car, his hands, and the way he talked. He said he was driving by and saw that beautiful barn sitting out in the tall grass and wanted to know if it was for sale. I told him he had a funny idea of beauty.

Sure, it was a handsome building in its day. But then, there's been a lot of winters pass with their snow and ice and howling wind. The summer sun's beat down on that old barn till all the paint's gone, and the wood has turned silver gray. Now the old building leans a good deal, looking kind of tired. Yet, that fellow called it beautiful.

That set me to thinking. I walked out to the field and just stood there, gazing at that old barn. The stranger said he planned to use the lumber to line the walls of his den in a new country home he's building down the road. He said you couldn't get paint that beautiful. Only years of standing in the weather, bearing the storms and scorching sun, only that can produce beautiful barn wood.

It came to me then. We're a lot like that, you and I. Only it's on the inside that the beauty grows with us. Sure we turn silver gray too... and lean a bit more than we did when we were young and full of sap. But the Good Lord knows what He's doing. And as the years pass He's busy using the hard wealth of our lives, the dry spells and the stormy seasons, to do a job of beautifying our souls that nothing else can produce. And to think how often folks holler because they want life easy!

They took the old barn down today and hauled it away to beautify a rich man's house. And I reckon someday you and I'll be hauled off to Heaven to take on whatever chores the Good Lord has for us on the Great Sky Ranch.

And I suspect we'll be more beautiful then for the seasons we've been through here... and just maybe even add a bit of beauty to our Father's house.

May today, there be peace within you.

May you trust God that you are Exactly where you are meant to be.



A minister parked his car in a no-parking zone in a large city because he was short of time and couldn't find a space with a meter. Then he put a note under the windshield wiper that read: I have circled the block 10 times. If I don't park here, I'll miss my appointment. Forgive us our trespasses."

When he returned, he found a citation from a police officer along with this note I've circled this block for 10 years. If I don't give you a ticket I'll lose my job. Lead us not into temptation."

Buying With Cigarettes Instead Of Money

By Corky

I have been having a lot of trouble the last few years pushing myself to buy things at the current prices and even selling things for what seems to me to be extortionate prices. For instance, many of you know as a hobby I make fancy wooden pens ballpoints, fountain pens and roller ball pens. Well you can only give away so many as presents and then they started backing up and getting a little expensive. So my son David and I have been setting up at the First Saturday Market Day in Bellville to get rid of some of them and get a few dollars to buy more supplies. I have been selling them for \$15 to \$25 each and thinking Dang that's a lot of money. And sure enough, not a single customer has said Dang, that's too expensive. But I still remember bread being 10 or 12 cents a loaf instead of \$2.25.

Anyway, the thing that finally taught me better was when I made a bunch of little (5 or 6 inches long) wooden cars and trucks to add to the sales items. When I talked to David about price, he insisted on \$5.00.



“David,” I said, “No body is going to buy them little old things at that price.”

“Dad,” David said, “That's just pocket change.”

“OK . . . we'll try it.” And sure enough I sold 9 in December and 4 the next time in February and people were happy they found them.

I even heard one mother talking her 5 year old son into buying one with his own money. He pulled some bills from a pocket, picked out a five and handed it to me.

Wow, a five year old with \$5.00 for pocket change, and I thought I was a rich kid when mom gave me 5 pennies for a popsicle from the ice cream man who came down our street.

Well OK, where do the cigarettes come into the picture? I probably started smoking cigarettes from about the time I was 16 or 17 or from around 1935 until 1980 and was smoking a pack and a half a day when I quite. Well they were only 55 cents a pack when I quit and to me that was just pocket change. So I got to thinking about that the other day. When cigarettes were \$.55 a pack it was just pocket money to me. Cigarettes now costs around \$5.50 a pack, so, if a pack's cost was pocket money in 1980, it's reasonable that the price of a pack of cigarettes is still pocket change.

Now . . . that finally makes sense to me. Now, I don't mind spending 10 cigarettes for a loaf of bread, Or 4 cigarettes for a candy bar or even a whole pack of cigarettes for a toy car or a little less then 4 packs for a beautiful handmade wooden pen with a Masonic clip. And, it doesn't even bother me any more, now that I think those fancy Masonic clips only costs a pack of cigarettes instead of \$5.00.

Now, all you old folks like me can know how to live in a world that has gone crazy and where a pack of cigarettes costs \$5.50. In your mind, just figure the price in cigarettes instead of money and stuff is cheap.



WORDPOWER

Gavel-The gavel is an instrument that in common everyday use denotes authority. In the hands of a Worshipful Master in a Lodge, it signifies his authority to rule and govern his lodge. In Speculative Freemasonry, it has also been adopted as a symbol to admonish the Mason of his duty to divest his mind and conscience of all vices and impurities of life and in this respect, it is presented to the Entered Apprentice as a working tool of the degree.

The gavel takes its name from its shape, being that of a gable or gavel end of a house. This word in turn comes from the German *giffel* meaning a summit or a peak. In lodges in France and Scotland it is sometimes

referred to as a mallet and in some American lodges it is called a Hiram. If you take into account the important role this gentleman played in the building of King Solomon's Temple, you will understand why. The gavel is an emblem of power, for good or for evil, in the hands of every man. If it is wisely used by the RWM, everyone in the lodge will profit; used unkindly it results in hurt feelings and creates in a bad spirit in the lodge; used weakly it leads to failure and possible disharmony in the lodge. Therefore, it should always be used in brotherly love and goodwill. Symbolically, the gavel teaches us several things – that man must work and, metaphorically speaking, live by the sweat of his brow. It also teaches us to curb wrong ambitions and to suppress envy and anger.

Ambition can be a virtue – within limits – but can also compel a man to disregard the feelings and rights of others, or inspire him to seek only his own good and in this respect is a sin that can lead to his downfall. Likewise, envy has no place in the lodge and the gavel teaches us to be true to our brethren and ourselves and also to strive to live at a high and noble level.

Masons have always taken their masonry very seriously and existing lodge minutes record that during the 1700's the masters of certain lodges had hammers and the warden's truncheons. The by-laws of a lodge in Tundragee states "there is to be silence after the first blow of the master's hammer and likewise at the first stroke of each truncheon struck by the Senior and Junior Wardens."



THE LAST WISHES OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

On his death bed, Alexander the Great summoned his generals and told them his three ultimate wishes:

The best doctors should carry his coffin;
The wealth he has accumulated (money, gold, precious stones etc.) should be scattered along the procession to the cemetery; and
His hands should be let loose, hanging outside the coffin for all to see!

One of his generals, who was surprised by these unusual requests, asked Alexander to explain.

Here is what Alexander the Great had to say:

1. I want the best doctors to carry my coffin to demonstrate that, in the face of death, even the best doctors in the world have no power to heal.
2. I want the road to be covered with my treasure so that everybody sees that material wealth acquired on earth, stays on earth.
3. I want my hands to swing in the wind, so that people understand that we come to this world empty handed and we leave this world empty handed after the most precious treasure of all is exhausted, and that is TIME.
4. We do not take to our grave any material wealth, although our good deeds can be our travelers' cheques. TIME is our most precious treasure because it is LIMITED. We can produce more wealth, but we cannot produce more time.
5. When we give someone our time, we actually give a portion of our life that we will never take back. Our time is our life!
6. So my dear, the best present that you can give to your family and friends, is your TIME. May God grant you plenty of TIME and may you have the wisdom to give it away so that you can LIVE, LOVE and DIE in peace.



Photo: Wikipedia, House of the Faun, Pompeii.



A man was telling his neighbor, I just bought a new hearing aid. It cost me four thousand dollars, but it's state of the art. It's perfect.."

Really,"answered the neighbor, What kind is it?"

The man looked at his watch and said "Twelve thirty."