



THE PRINCIPAL SOJOURNER

NEWS FOR THE ROYAL ARCH CHAPTERS IN INDIANA JULY, 2013

MAKING YOUR MARK IN MASONRY

Jim Coleman, R.E. Grand King

Much can be said about making your own personal mark in Masonry, it is after all a mark unique to you and you alone. In ancient times the mark had a different significance to the bearer and to his brethren. It was unique to each craftsman and was presented at that time in a peculiar manner to receive any wages due him.

Research seems to support the precept that the marks often had more than one reason to be placed on individual stones that comprised an edifice. That being the notion, the marks were also utilized as a form of communication among the craftsmen. This allowed them to fit stones into place that were often hewed in another country, by a craftsman who likely spoke a different language. These marks not only provided a means of tracing the work to a particular craftsman or quarry. They also provided a means of instructing those erecting the building about its intended use or purpose; despite the fact a lot of these brethren might be illiterate in terms of the various languages of that region.

Thus we seemed to have developed both the means of tracing work to its origin, and allowing a means of quality control. They also included some assembly instructions, which transcended multiple languages and varied abilities to read written words. Were our operative brethren much more perceptive than we imagined them to be? It would appear they had the notion of accountability for one's thoughts and work foremost, by having your mark hewed upon all work submitted for inspection.

We can state without a doubt the Mark Master degree is the foundation upon which Capitular Masonry is erected. This solid foundation is the reason today's men are still seeking the lessons we offer them in Royal Arch Masonry!



THE MISSION OF INDIANA ROYAL ARCH MASONRY IS:

TO FULFILL THE PROMISE OF KING SOLOMON THAT FUTURE AGES WOULD FIND OUT THE RIGHT.

TO PRESERVE THE COMPLETE TRADITION OF THE CRAFT.

TO FURTHER THE INTIMATE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE BLUE LODGE AND THE ROYAL ARCH.

TO SPREAD MASONIC ENLIGHTENMENT AND FELLOWSHIP AMONG ALL BRETHREN.

Indiana Royal Arch Masonry promotes these Essential Standards as keys to a complete understanding of the Masonic tradition and the perfection of the Royal Arch system.

- Extraordinary Masonic education and enlightenment of our craft in sublime and practical ways.
- Fellowship at its finest; in the chapters and in furthering our intimate connection with the Blue Lodge.
- Exceptional ritual development and delivery... always!... Thus preserving the time honored Masonic traditions of "the royal art."
- Effectiveness and value in Royal Arch organizational processes, communications and finances.
- Continuous advancement of our charitable endeavors.

These Standards are the measuring sticks of our Mission's progress!

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE MARK MASTER DEGREE

Companion Matt Backus, Hammond No. 117

The Mark Master is similar to the Fellowcraft Degree in that it reflects the early operative basis of Masonry. The major symbolism that you have learned about is found in the raw materials of our ancient, operative Brethren. The most important is the Keystone. Tonight marks your first step toward further and further Light, which is a part of the York Rite system as a whole. Tonight you have witnessed the first Degree of the Chapter of Royal Arch Masons. This Degree along with the Past Master (virtual) and Most Excellent Master are the prerequisites of obtaining your Royal Arch Degree. In England, Ireland, Scotland and maybe also in Wales, you are not yet considered a Master Mason in full until you find what was lost in the death of Hiram Abif; the True Master's Word – which is found in the Royal Arch.

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FROM THE GRAND HIGH PRIEST

Hail Companions..., For those of you who have watched me progress through the Grand line over the last few years; you are aware that I have, in at least three Grand Chapter Convocations, advocated "stand alone" Chapters that meet year around. These comments have raised concerns that the Grand Chapter is "trying to break up the York Rite." Although I still stand by my comments; the break-up of York Rite cooperation is the furthest thing from my mind or, I believe, any other Companion involved in the Grand Chapter. It is NOT our goal.

My arguments for stand alone Chapters that meet year around is based on two fundamental ideas: FOCUS and MOMENTUM. These ideas are the result of my personal experience working in our Masonic bodies.

For example, the Commandery in which I am active (yes... I said Commandery), meets as a stand alone group. Because of this, we are nearly proficient in all aspects of a 10 Man opening and closing, and we are one officer shy of being able to confer the Order of the Temple entirely by ourselves; because we meet ten times a year and have FOCUS for the tasks at hand. If my (I apologize for making it possessive, but I love those guys!) Commandery were to meet as part of a York Rite Body, we would only have three, possibly four meetings per year to get to our current level of proficiency; or the other two bodies would suffer because Commandery is taking up all the time. Similarly, we have evidence that Chapters meeting by themselves do better work and exalt more candidates.

As for meeting year around, taking two months (July and August) out of the middle of our Masonic year appears to be counter-productive. We spend large amounts of energy in the first half of the year, trying to get up to speed; go dark for two months; and then have to start all over for a big finish to the year. If we are trying to create MOMENTUM in our Chapters, it would make more sense to go dark in January (when the weather is bad), than break up the year. Or at least, have called meetings in the dark months. Again there is evidence that Chapters who meet year around are stronger.

For the record, The Grand Chapter has no plans to legislate any of these ideas; what you do with your Chapter is up to you. I would strongly encourage you, however; to consider the ideas of FOCUS and MOMENTUM as you plan the future growth of your Chapter. As always, the Grand Chapter is available to help you in realizing your goals.

Dave Wood
Grand High Priest

IN THE QUARRY...

Prayers and Distress: Ex. Comp. R. Dan Gaby, of Mishawaka No. 83, is experiencing serious health problems with his heart.

M.E. Comp. Dwayne Evensen, PGHP, has had work done on his throat; however his voice is taking much time to return. Dwayne has also been diagnosed with A-Fib and they are having trouble getting his heart in rhythm.

Update: M.E. Companion Evensen recently suffered another stroke. He is recovering, in and doing well in rehab; although it tires him out.

M.E. Comp. Don Friend is residing at Miller's Merry Manor Retirement Community, due to failing health. His spouse, Leann, recently had hip surgery and is at home recuperating.

Dr. Richard Lochner, PGHP and Grand Secretary, underwent total knee replacement surgery during the first week in July. He is doing well and will begin rehab on July 8th.

This section of our newsletter will be reserved for the activities of our Companions and local Chapters. It will feature brief items concerning our Companions and Chapters... Activities, Broken Columns, Sickness and Distress, Birthdays, Anniversaries, Mileposts, Honors... and more. Please e-mail any items of interest... and pictures... to dwood52281@aol.com. We will make sure they are posted.

!! ATTENTION !!

The Grand Chapter's data base program is now up and running! It is currently being tested by a handful of Chapter Secretaries on a limited basis; and will be available for general use after August 1st. This should simplify the record keeping efforts of all Chapter Secretaries. This program can be accessed through the Grand Chapter Website: Indianaroyalarchmasons.com and will require a User ID. And Password.

!! YOUR EVENT HERE !!

IF YOUR CHAPTER IS PLANNING A DEGREE OR SPECIAL EVENT... LET US KNOW AND WE WILL SPECIALLY PROMOTE IT IN THE PRINCIPAL SOJOURNER!

OUTSIDE THE TABERNACLE



ABOVE LEFT: Father and Son, Dennis and Doug Tudor receive their Lewis Jewel and Pin on June 14th at Noblesville.

ABOVE: Our newest Mark Masters share a picture with the Companions of Noblesville No. 130 and others.

LEFT: Most Excellent Companion Jeffrey Jordan, PGHP, receives a custom walking stick created by Excellent Companion Michael Gillard, HP of Noblesville.

Fourteen Blue Lodge Brothers were Advanced to the Degree of Mark Master at Noblesville No. 130, on June 14th. It was an excellent night!

Companion Robert Brown
Columbus No 10
Exalted: 1963



MIDDLETOWN NO. 143

On June 22nd, Middletown Chapter celebrated 100 years of Royal Arch Masonry with a Keystone Re-Dedication and Luncheon.

ABOVE: 5 Companions; Charles Batty, Tim Brinkmeyer, Jim Fairchild, HP, Rod Gardner, PGHP, and Gerry McRoberts, Sec. each received the Grand Chapter's Distinguished Companion Award.

RIGHT: Rod Gardner, PGHP, and Jim Fairchild, HP, both received the General Grand Chapter's Ritualist Award from PGHP Larry Gray.

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE MARK MASTER DEGREE

Companion Matt Backus, Hammond No. 117

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The use of Mason's Marks, as a means of identification, are still found on stone today. They have been found on many buildings of the ancient world. Tonight you learned why having your own Mark and never using someone else's is important. You are now able to establish a better connection when the WM of a Craft Lodge asks the SW why he became a Master Mason; you know now how the Craft was paid and by what method.

Biblical scripture is a part of this Degree as well. Although long since omitted, the point is still there, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner." (Psalm 118:22) Here we learn to shape and polish our mind so that our stone is properly prepared for it's appropriate place in the eternal Temple. In the Most Excellent Master Degree, you will once again learn about the Keystone and it's proper place, along with what it symbolically represents. The cornerstone, which you learned about in the Entered Apprentice Degree is considered the Alpha of Masonry while the Keystone is the Omega of Masonry for it stands for the ending, or as before mentioned, the stone that completed the temple. This stone is the last stone, which is inserted into the principal arch, thereby completing its structure – or symbolically completing one's spiritual temple.

The Young Fellowcraft senses the importance of the Keystone yet because of his level of advancement in his journey, he is unaware of its real purpose. He has yet to develop a higher sense of spirituality in his personal development. This is often the case of much of the Craft because those who are unable to dig deeply enough to know, or better said to find, the True Master's Word in their hearts, needs to apply this circumstance to their own personal journey. This becomes quite clear in the fact that none of the workmen knew of its importance or purpose either. Therefore we must learn to be ever aware of the presence of God in life and to create enough space in our world to hear Him as He speaks to us or gives us certain signs that we should adhere to.

When we think of a Master, we think of someone who has accomplished quite a feat! Think of a Master in Martial Arts, he has learned so much to apply to his art that he has earned the title of Master. When applied to the allegory of this Degree, even the Master Overseer of Stone did not comprehend the importance of this work...and between his fellow overseers; they all decided that they belonged in the rubbish – with the rest of the junk. We as builders must then decide for ourselves the importance of the work that we apply to our spiritual temple. We should not rely on others for their recognition of certain important aspects but know that some things should be decided upon by us.

Through the application of the chisel, we learn discipline and education. These traits will allow us to discover that which lay deep within our minds. The mallet offers us the ability to correct irregularity in our lives. It with the application of the chisel allows us to use the wisdom and steadfastness in curbing ambition, living righteously, moderating anger and overall adjusting our dispositions to have a more positive outlook.

While the Keystone represents the lost word, it also represents Christ, or the Christos (or an enlightened state of mind); a beauty found through spiritual development. Know deep in your heart and mind that the lost word is never truly lost, but without the ability to understand what you are really searching for, what appears lost can never be found. Freemasonry is designed to unfold an entire system of instruction to you. Spirituality is a component of that system and is of such high importance that to really understand it, will lead you to find that which you seek...LIGHT & TRUTH!

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

July 11th – 13th – Indiana Grand Rainbow Assembly
Columbus, Indiana

July 18th & 19th – Illinois Grand Chapter Convocation
Normal, Illinois

July 19th & 20th – Indiana DeMolay State Conclave
DePauw University, Greencastle, Indiana

July 20th – Grand Council Crypt Re-Dedication
New Albany, Indiana
9:00 AM

July 22nd – Past Master Degree
Hammond No. 117, 2234 Martha St., Highland, IN. 7 PM (cst)

August 13th – Royal Arch Degree
Middletown No. 143, Middletown, IN. 7 PM.

August 14th – Michigan Grand Chapter Convocation
Lansing, Michigan

August 19th – Most Excellent Master Degree
Hammond No. 117, 2234 Martha St., Highland, IN. 7 PM (cst)

August 19th – 20th – Supreme Council, A.A.S.R.
Washington, D.C.

Saturday, August 24th – Chapter and Council All Degree Day
New Albany No. 17... 9:00 AM

Saturday, September 24th – Chapter and Council All Degree Day
Ft. Wayne No. 19... 9:00 AM

CHAPTERS OF INSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

Saturday, June 29th – District G at Columbus... 9:30 AM. RA°
Friday, July 26th – District E at Mooresville... 7:00 PM. RA°
Saturday, July 27th – District I at Vincennes... 9:30 AM. PM°
Wednesday, July 31st – District D at Noblesville... 7:00 PM.
MEM°

Thursday, August 8th – District F at Greenfield... 7:00 PM. PM°
Companions, our Chapters of Instruction are of great value and importance to Royal Arch Masonry and our plans for the future! Please make every effort to attend the one in your District.

PLEASE LET US KNOW DATES OF YOUR UPCOMING EVENTS AND WE WILL POST THEM HERE!

**IF YOU HAVE E-MAIL ADDRESSES OF OFFICERS AND COMPANIONS WHO SHOULD BE GETTING THIS E-LETTER..
PLEASE SEND THEM TO US! dwood52281@aol.com**