

Nelson Masonic Times



Meeting Upon the Level

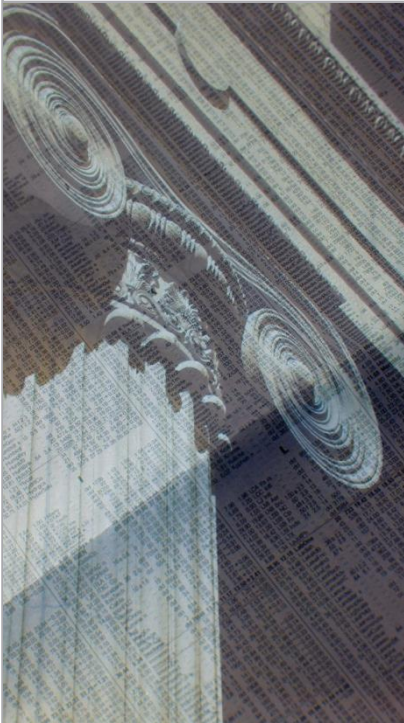
By Brother Shannon Krecklau, Senior Warden

For a moment I sat there looking across the lodge, witnessing that activity that many a Tuesday, Wednesday or perhaps a Thursday night, that buzz of brotherly love and preparation for the communications to begin. Across America many a brother or fellow may be witnessing this as well.... Brother Junior Deacon... is sounded throughout the land as Lodges prepare to open. Sitting to my left that night was an unknown in the south...but was he...how he seemed familiar as if I had known him or should recognize him...Brother Senior & Junior Deacon, proceed to Was announced by the Senior Warden...who was this oddly familiar man in the column of the South...Brother Senior Deacon announces, there is an unknown in the south, yet he has the pass...We proceeded to open.

Then as announcements of visiting Brothers is listed we meet... Brother L.J. Williams of Harvard, New York a Brother Master Mason from Downsville Lodge #464 was visiting; and he has a dandy of a story to share. Brother Williams proceed to tell us an incredible story from back in a time when things were simpler, but Brotherly Love was as strong as it gets. Brother Williams was enlisted in the Union Army a member of the 114th New York Volunteers, during the time of the Civil War, he was deployed into action shortly after being initiated as an Entered Apprentice and passed to the degree of a Fellowcraft. Oh how he missed his lodge and the opportunity to become a Master Mason. How he would have to wait until the Civil War was over and he could return home. Duty called to defend the north and serve as many a brother had done. Sometime after engaging those Southern Rebels, the soldiers of the Confederate Army, Brother Williams was taken prisoner. Being captured and imprisoned near Savannah Georgia, he found a way to communicate with his friends in the North. His Lodge in New York through the proper officials got in touch with Zerubbabel Lodge #15 in Savannah and stated that they would consider it a favor if the lodge in Savannah would confer the Third Degree on the Fellowcraft Brother Williams.

One night Brother Williams was taken from the prison and conducted to the lodge room in Savannah. He only had his blue tattered uniform to wear, a token of his sympathy with the cause he believed in. The officers of the lodge were all in Confederate gray. Although on opposite sides in the struggle going on, on the battlefields of the South, they were all Brethren. He was then raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason and acclaimed a Brother and friend to those who wore gray.

Later that night Brother Williams escaped, when asked about his escape he would "smile peculiarly". "You might put it down as an escape, but it wasn't an escape strictly speaking. They put me in a boat and carried me off some distance. Then they deposited me on some neutral soil between the battle lines. From there I was able to find some Yankee friends. Now I never knew who exactly helped me to escape that night. I have also considered it a secret and will never be disclosed who, but I do know exactly to whom I attribute my escape, HIS name is Hiram!



Calendar

July

- 14th – Stated Communication
- 17th – Fellowship Friday
- 28th – Stated Communication

August

- 11th – Stated Communication
- 22nd – Fellowship Friday
- 25th – Stated Communication

September

- 8th – Stated Communication
- 18th – Fellowship Friday
- 22th – Stated Communication

<http://www.nelson135.org/calendar>

From the Old Records

By Brother Clint LaFave

As a greenhorn to Nelson Lodge, I recently tasked myself with researching our long and proud history to gain a better understanding of our past. As I begin the painstaking and delightfully rewarding process of reading though the Minutes of our past Stated Communications and various newspaper articles, one of my goals is to create a visual timeline of our history. My hope is that this timeline will benefit all, from our current brothers to our future brothers of 2115 and beyond. I would like to fill in any gaps that I discover and will be asking for the help from our more senior members. As I learn more, I plan on sharing some interesting details here in our quarterly newsletter – look for “From the Old Records” in future publications. For this installment:

Our First President

-- December, 1899 – a committee was formed to arrange for the observance of the 100 year anniversary of Worshipful Brother George Washington’s death (1732-1799). “The secretary was on motion authorized to pay \$5 for the expenses accrued for the observance.” The minutes are silent on what the ‘observance’ involved.

The Delayed Master Mason

-- February 26, 1900 – Lodge was opened, Nelson Brother H.E Washburn was examined and declared proficient in his 2nd degree. Lodge was called from labor to refreshment and then opened on the 3rd degree. At that time, it was voted to defer work on the 3rd degree, and the WM called for a special meeting for March 10th 1900. The reason: Apparently, the lodge had recently been painted and the odor was too “Disagreeable” to continue the work.

Fifty Percent Increase in Dues

-- 1924 – For the first time since 1879, yearly dues increased from \$2 to \$3

Do you have a piece of Nelson History that should be included in the timeline or From the Old Records column?

Please contact me with any information regarding our past that you have to share, perhaps it’s about your time in the East or something interesting that the lodge did in the past. I can be reached at 612-702-0886 or by email at clint.lafave@gmail.com.

The LEO’s Corner

Last Issue’s Question: Where did Freemasonry begin?

The answer to this question is greatly debated by many masonry scholars. Some views place the beginning at the building of Solomon’s Temple, or in 1717 in a pub in England. Page 87 of Mackey’s Revised Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, Volume 1, covers many of the various view points of the beginning of Freemasonry and would be a good starting point for someone who wants to research the topic deeper.

Q: What was the Morgan affair?

Please send your answers to newsletter@nelson135.org

The answer will be published in the next issue.

Fishing Klinc for Kids Event

By Brother Jim Wedell



Fishing Clinic for Kids was very busy on May 2nd. Some members were in Albertville and others were at the Ron Shara kids Crappie contest at Lord Fletchers in Spring Park.

With many agencies involved, the kids received tips on how to catch the "big one" before heading out onto the water. FKFK was involved in this with others. Then the kids were "teamed up" with an adult to fish with. The main items of importance were: know what a crappie looks like, having a life preserver and a GOOD snack along. A lot of the kids just fished off the docks at Lord Fletchers too.

If they didn't want to fish, there were many "land" games the kids played too and had fun with. FKFK also passed out brochures about their June 20th event at Sturges Park in Buffalo as well.

The biggest crappie does not win. It's the one closest to the "secret weight" preselected, that only Ron Shara and his staff know. This was .82 pounds with that exact weight being weighed first thing in the morning. About 1,800 crappies were caught and released they figure.

On that beautiful weather day, it is estimated a crowd of about 2,000 people over-all were there with about 300 kids. FKFK did have their booth set up, fished it, went on the lake, helped with children's games on shore, and passed out information.

Wayfaring Man Travels

By Brother Clint LaFave

Worshipful Brother Jason and I traveled to Monticello Lodge #16 on Tuesday, May 19th for their Stated Communication. It was a pleasure for me to visit one of the older lodges in MN. It also has the added nostalgia of being one of the lodges that our founding brothers would travel to, to attend lodge, before we received our dispensation.

The visit began with introductions to the Worshipful Master, Joel Petersen and a handful of other brothers, dinner was a potluck. It was most remarkable to speak with WB Dwayne, if I recall correctly he was in his 90's and was raised 'sometime in the 40's'. I asked him about his early days in Masonry and he commented that it was more mysterious back then. He said they didn't participate in as many community related events as we do today and it was more of a social club. Dwayne is still active and participates in degree work. I believe he is the sitting Chaplin. Another very interesting aspect of my visit was looking at several artifacts from the lodge's early years. The items had recently been discovered in their attic. There was a slide projector that appeared to be from the late 1800 to early 1900's. It was complete with glass slides. It was used in degree work. Also, there were a couple bibles that were from the late 1800's. It's interesting to think about the brothers who used these books and equipment. I'm sure it was high-tech at the time.

Besides receiving the Monticello #16 lapel pin and the wonderful story that goes with it from the WM at the west of the alter, the highlight of my visit was listening to Secretary Alex give a talk during lodge on the discovery of one of their Past Master's aprons. This Past Master, Worshipful Brother Henry Kreis, was Raised in 1864, served as Master of the Lodge in 1867 and then from 1872-1883 consecutively, then again in 1885 and 1890. He sat in the east for 15 of the lodges first 40 years. One very interesting realization for me was that this would put him as the sitting Master when Buffalo was seeking its dispensation.

What was also going on in the world at this time? In 1866, dynamite was invented in Britain. In 1876, General Custer and 264 troops killed by the Sioux at Little Big Horn River. In 1876, Alexander Graham Bell patents the telephone and in 1878, Edison invents practical electric light.

As the story regarding the apron goes, Worshipful Brother Michael Lesanko of Acacia Lodge #11 in Edmonton Canada received the Past Master's Apron of Henry Kreis. He received it from the wife of a friend who had died last year. This friend, Bryan Williams, was not a Mason, but apparently his grandfather had been. The grandfather was from either MO of MN as WB Michael recalled from their conversations. Secretary Alex from Monti shared with WB Michael, the history of WB Henry Kreis with Monticello Lodge. WB Michael also sent photos of the apron. He has plans to have the apron restored and will eventually bring it by Monticello Lodge for viewing when he is in the neighborhood.

Have you heard from the MORE committee?

By Brother Clint LaFave

The Member Out Reach (MORE) is an initiative that Nelson Lodge has underway to better keep in touch with our Brethren across all boundaries. Some Brothers are out of state, have scheduling conflicts or are simply less active in their Blue Lodge activities than they were in the past.

The MORE committee is interested in hearing (and updating the lodge at our Stated Communications) how you've been and what you've been up to AND, *you applying to us as such*, whether there is anything your Brothers can do to help out. After all, we Masons enjoy helping others, especially a fellow Mason and his family. So far, the initiative has been well received from all the Brothers we've contacted. I've personally spoken with many whom I have yet to meet in person, but hope to have the opportunity to in the near future.

After we work our way down the list of members and have some initial conversations, we'll be planning other ways to further our interaction and bridge some of the gaps that exist. Perhaps a low-key monthly fellowship breakfast at a local restaurant -- bright and early -- would be in order. Some Brothers have expressed interest in preparing a meal and bringing it out to a Brother's residence, dining with them, and a few Brothers, and having good fellowship and conversation. I personally love this idea as many of our Brethren are very talented at preparing delicious meals.

Haven't heard from the MORE committee yet?

We're still making our way down the list of members and have run into some hurdles. Some of the telephone numbers that we have are out of date or inaccurate. Please don't hesitate to contact me. I'm newer to the lodge and would consider it a rewarding experience and personal favor to have a Brother contact me to update their contact information and have a conversation. I can be reached any time at 612-702-0886 or by email at clint.lafave@gmail.com.

In closing, any action we take together on both sides of this initiative will be beneficial to the unity of our lodge and should be enriching to all our Brethren, no matter what the boundaries.

Committee Members: WB Patrick Smith, Bro Paul Thomas, Bro Jim Wedell and Bro Clint LaFave, Chairman



Nelson Masonic Lodge #135

122 Central Aveune
Buffalo, MN 55313

www.nelson135.org

