

The Virginia MASONIC HERALD



VOL. 101

July 2008 Web Supplement

One-Day Conferral Class

As our Grand Master, Most Worshipful Edmund Cohen, has stated, "there are many good men who will make good Masons, whose circumstances do not allow them to spend the time required by the normal degree process." It is for this reason he established the One-Day Conferral Class to be held statewide on August 16, 2008. These One-Day Conferrals will be conducted at nine locations, geographically located to accommodate all candidates, the degree teams, and their individual Mentors. Unique this year is the fact that the Mentor will sit beside the candidate during the degree conferrals. This is being done to reinforce and strengthen the bond between the Candidate and the Mentor, because it is not so much what happens during the degree conferral; rather, what happens during Mentor/Master Mason interactions after receiving the degrees which will determine the ultimate success of this One-Day Conferral.

When asked why he allowed the One-Day Conferrals, our Grand Master replied, "First, you should know that I do not believe that a One-Day Conferral should be an everyday occurrence because there is great value in going through the degrees one at a time in the Lodge. In addition, conferral of the degrees in and by the Lodge is essential to maintaining our ritual.

Nevertheless, there are many good men who will make good Masons, whose circumstances do not allow them to spend the time required by the normal degree process. These include men in certain professions, men with heavy current family responsibilities, and military and other personnel subject to deployment around the world. Thus, a One-Day Conferral every few years can accommodate these good men, without supplanting the traditional conferral of degrees in the Lodge."

The following, edited from the *Washington State Grand Lodge Proceedings for 2001* (pages 50-52, Grand Secretary's report), might be of interest:

"You may regard one-day conferrals with unabashed horror, but I have to tell you that One-Day Conferrals succeed where our Lodges fail, for several reasons:

1. The quality of the work is uniformly good.
2. The candidates are placed in an environment where they are assured of success and generally free from criticism.
3. The instruction offered candidates between degrees is generally to the point, well delivered, and does not give the candidate any opportunity to slide off into the distant world.

". . . The One-Day Conferral is a lot like going through basic training with a rather kindly Senior Drill Instructor and that is why it works. Most Lodges virtually ignore candidates between Degrees. As a generality we put emphasis on the presentation of the material. That is, we focus all of our attention on the ability of the guy conferring the Degree, giving the lecture . . . Many of them do a flawless job but the real purpose of the exercise is to communicate to and with the candidate what Masonry is all about and how he - the candidate - fits in the Lodge. In the One-Day Conferral the candidate is surrounded by people, made to feel important, and humanely indoctrinated in the tenets of Masonry. . . . the rate at which One-Day Conferral degree recipients proved up exceeded the rate at which Lodge conferrals proved up. . . "

Grand Master's Address



Virginia Masonic Herald Supplement

Posted monthly for the Brethren of Virginia

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Brethren:

In my travels throughout the Commonwealth I have heard so many heart-warming stories about how Masons have stepped up to the plate to help their Brethren and widows – and really made a difference. Their actions were in the finest tradition of the Fraternity and they clearly understood and lived up to the obligations we take when we become Master Masons. I heard about these examples of Freemasonry in action, not from the Brethren who helped, but most often from those who had received the help.

I was also made aware of other times when a Brother had lost a spouse, a job, or his health and no one from the Lodge called, wrote, or stopped by to visit. These stories also had an impact on me – for they were examples where we failed our Brethren – and I think we failed ourselves.

So the question is: Which column are we in? Do we help our Brethren as we should, or are we too busy and hope someone else will step into the breach? Of course, it's not about the other guy, and it's not about the Lodge. It is all about you and me.

Sometimes we are called upon to be heroes in the traditional sense of the word, but more often it is our little deeds that define who we are. Visiting a Brother who is in the hospital or in a rehabilitation center, or visiting someone convalescing at home really makes a difference. Sometimes all the help that is really needed is a kind word, a sympathetic ear, or a shoulder to lean upon.

This is what defines us as Masons. It is what we should expect from our Brethren and what we should expect from ourselves.

Next let me again remind you about :

- Helping our Masonic Home by supporting our Charity Ball on Friday, July 18 at Almas Shrine Temple in D.C. – great food and entertainment – at \$100 a ticket with most of the ticket price being a tax-deductible contribution. **SEND YOUR CHECKS FOR TICKETS PAYABLE TO THE MASONIC HOME OF VIRGINIA – CHARITY BALL, TO MAHOVA CHARITY BALL, P.O. BOX 1139, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22313-1139.** Please be a part of this wonderful event and help our Masonic Home.
- Treating yourself to an impressive program of Masonic Education at the Alexandria Scottish Rite Temple on July 19 or at the Roanoke Scottish Rite Temple on August 23. From 8 AM – Noon you will be able to hear world-renowned Masonic speakers and authors - S. Brent Morris, W. Kirk MacNulty, Mark A. Tabbert, and Christopher Hodapp. Admission is free, the education is priceless.
- Growing your Lodge by participating in the one-day conferral class on August 16. The Committee on Work and the Committee on Masonic Education have joined together with the District Deputies and the Grand Line to ensure this will be a first-class presentation of the Degrees.

Finally, I want to make sure you are aware of two additional actions I have taken.

(Continued on Page 3)

Grand Master's Calendar

July 2008

- 15 Official Visit, Tiled - District 45, Richlands Lodge No. 318
- 17 Official Visit, Dinner - District 38
- 18 Charity Ball to benefit the Masonic Home of Virginia and the DC Charitable Foundation
- 19 Masonic Educational Seminar, Alexandria
Annual Conclave, DeMolay, Radford University
- 21 Official Visit, Tiled - District 18, Widow's Sons' Lodge No. 60
- 25 Official Visit, Dinner—District 22
- 27-30 Reid James Simmons Academy of Masonic Leadership
- 31 Official Visit, Dinner—District 21

August 2008

- 1 Official Visit, Dinner - District 3
- 2 James S. "Stan" Johnson Memorial Golf Tournament
- 6 Official Visit, Dinner - Districts 12 & 13
- 7 Official Visit, Tiled - District 15-B, Chesterfield Lodge No. 161
- 8 Official Visit, Dinner - District 56
- 9 Official Visit, Dinner - District 57
- 11 Official Visit, Tiled - District 24, Liberty Lodge No. 95
- 12 Official Visit, Tiled - District 35-A, Ruth Lodge No. 89
- 13 MAHOVA Board Meeting
Strategic Planning Committee
- 14 Sharon Lodge No. 327
- 15 Official Visit, Dinner - District 8
- 16 Statewide One-Day Conferral Class
- 18 Official Visit, Tiled - District 31, Smithfield Union Lodge No. 18

Grand Master's Address (Continued)

I issued a Decision (see page 8) to require a voice vote rather than a ballot to ascertain the will of the Lodge on the Masonic proficiency of the candidate to advance from Entered Apprentice to Fellowcraft, and from Fellowcraft to Master Master.

This was in response to suggestions from Brethren who pointed out that: a coach will not have his candidate stand proficiency until he is ready; only a majority of those voting is necessary to advance the candidate; a candidate is rarely rejected for advancement; the catechism examination is often followed by a degree conferral, and the ballot is an inefficient way to ascertain the will of the Lodge with respect to Masonic proficiency.

I also issued an Edict (see page 9) to make explicit the traditional prohibition on bringing firearms and other weapons into Lodge.

Most of the Brethren have been clear that nothing offensive or defensive was to be brought into the Lodge, but some have been concerned that other Brethren are coming to Lodge armed. Although it is traditional not to bring weapons into Lodge, there is no clear prohibition in the Methodical Digest. This edict establishes a uniform policy with respect to the issue. There is an exception for law enforcement officers who are required to carry their weapon, and for re-enactors, if their weapons are disabled. Should there be other similar circumstances, the Grand Master can issue a dispensation if appropriate.

I look forward to seeing you at the Dinner visits, the special visits, and especially at the District Tiled Town Hall meetings. As always, I encourage you to send me your suggestions, ideas, and comments, and let me know if there is any way I can be of help. My phone number is 703-725-1824, and my email is edmundcohen@verizon.net.

Fraternally,

Ed Cohen
Grand Master



Mission and Vision Statements of The Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia

The **mission** of the Grand Lodge of Virginia is to teach and perpetuate a way of life that promotes the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God and to assist its Lodges to grow and prosper.

The **vision** of the Grand Lodge of Virginia is to be the premier organization composed of men of integrity and character, who are honest, true to their word, believe in God, are devoted to family, charitable in their community, and courteous and helpful to each other.

James Stanley Johnson Memorial Golf Tournament In Western Virginia

While the Shipley Memorial golf tournament is well established - just finishing its eleventh year - charity golf tournaments elsewhere in the state have been more of a rarity. This year, however, marks the inaugural "James Stanley Johnson Memorial Tournament." Named for our recently departed Deputy Grand Master, this tournament will be held on August 5, 2008 at the Vista Links Course in Buena Vista. A resident of Waynesboro, a mere 40 miles from Vista Links, Right Worshipful Johnson was himself a Virginian by adoption and naming the tournament in his memory seemed an appropriate tribute. Brother Stan was also a generous man, proud of Masonic tradition and heritage. In that vein, it is equally appropriate that the net proceeds benefit the Masonic Home of Virginia, a 501(c)(3) charity.

Vista Links is a new and visually striking course with challenging terrain and mountain views in all directions. It is also remarkably convenient; just East of I-81 at exit 188. Certainly a strong showing from Masonic golfers in the Western Virginia area will constitute an appropriate honor for the memory of Brother Stan and provide valuable support for a worthwhile cause.

The entry fee is \$65 per person, \$260 per team and the format is "captain's choice." Sponsorships are needed at levels ranging from \$100 to \$1000 with the top level of sponsorship including the fees for a team of golfers. Additional information and registration forms may be obtained from Right Worshipful Louis K. "Kerry" Campbell, 540-473-3004 or LKC24090@aol.com.

Reynolds J. Matthews Charity Golf Tournament In Northern Virginia

The inaugural "Reynolds J. Matthews Charity Golf Tournament" will be held on September 25, 2008 at the Virginia Oaks Golf Course in Gainesville, VA. This tournament is named after Right Worshipful Reynolds J. Matthews, who was Grand Junior Deacon in 1994 when he passed away. Brother Matthews was from the Northern Virginia area and a well-beloved Mason.

The tournament will have an 8:00 AM shotgun start playing under the Captain's Choice rules. The cost is \$100 per person which will include a golf cart and lunch after the tournament is over. Hole sponsorship is also available.

The proceeds from this tournament will benefit the Grand Lodge's Scholarship Fund, a 501(c)(3) charity.

Surely a strong showing from the Brethren and their friends in the Northern Virginia area will provide an fitting honor for the memory of Brother Reynolds and provide important support for providing a future for the adult leadership in our future.

Additional information and registration forms may be obtained from Worshipful Wayne Golden at 757.286.3586.

Grand Secretary Comments

Annual Report Summary

The 2007 Annual Report, excluding consolidated Lodges, revealed total gains of 1,542; total losses of 2,031; for a net loss of 489. A total of all members is 40,055, with 849 of those members belonging to Research Lodges. A breakdown of membership by type is as follows:

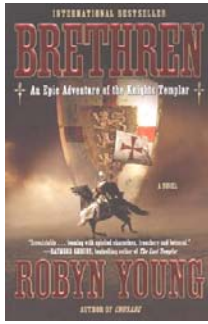
LMIP 5,461 — Masonic Veteran 5,243 — Regular 28,502.

Age of Membership

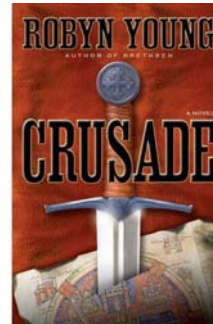
As of June 24, of the 39,051 active members on the membership rolls, 1,255 do not have a valid date of birth. Excluding those without a valid date of birth, the average age of the membership is 53.33 years and the average year of raising is 33.02.

Lodge Minutes

An inquiry was made at a recent Division Education and Leadership Conference concerning the minimum amount of information to be included in the Lodge minutes for a petition. Section 2.94 of the Methodical Digest stipulates the following shall be preserved as part of the Lodge's minutes: name in full, place and date of birth, name of father and mother's maiden name, residence, occupation, employer and place of employment, and names of the recommenders. As a reminder the Petition for Degrees and the Application for Membership are permanent documents of the Lodge, and thus need to be preserved accordingly.



Brethren
(Dutton, 2006)



Crusade
(Dutton, 2007)

Both by Robyn Young
Reviewed by Rt. Wor. William A. Parks, Jr.

It can now be said with absolute certainty: the Templar Treasure has been found! It now resides in the publishing houses and movie studios of England, France, and the United States. Two precious gems of the treasure are contained within these two novels. Brethren and Crusade are the first two volumes of Robyn Young's Templar Trilogy. The third and final installment, to be entitled Requiem, is due in January of 2009. Along the way, as the reader will learn in this review, Young confers upon her readers the true meaning of the Grail, the real mission of the Knights Templar, and what all this stuff about the Crusades and the Templars has to do with today's events.

Brethren introduces our hero, Will Campbell of Scotland, a Templar Sergeant, whose inception into the Order of Knights Templar as a full-fledged knight is delayed by the old priest, Everard, who exploits Will's intelligence and literacy to help translate ancient texts. Will's impatience at the delay and the treacherous beheading of his own father, James, at the hands of the slashing Sultan Baybars shape his character early. Once received by the Order as a Knight, Will predictably shreds his vows of chastity and obedience. Nevertheless, Will's displays of courage and dedication earn him a place in Anima Templi ("Soul of the Temple"), a fictional secret brotherhood limited to twelve Templars whose struggle for peace and conciliation among all men collides with the sworn bellicosity of the Templars and too many of their Grand Masters.

The McGuffin in all this is the Book of the Grail, an old ritual composed by Everard. In the wrong hands, the "Book" could expose the Templars as a heretical sect and indeed it falls into several sets of hands, including those of the rival Knights Hospitaller. Attempts to recover this book of ritual lead Will into a series of adventures with the Crusades as the historical background. The "Book's" travels create constant suspense which keeps the reader turning pages. Along the way, Will is bedeviled by his old friend and fellow Sergeant, the evil Garin, whose betrayals further complicate Will's life.

Brethren spans the years 1260-1272, the period during which the former slave Baybars rises to become Sultan of Egypt and Syria, defeats the Mongols with his Mamluks, and engages Prince Edward of England in a new Crusade.

The character of the old priest allows the author to flash back to previous Templar engagements, including the Crusaders' catastrophic defeat at the Horns of Hattin in 1287. There the Crusaders chose to rest six miles shy of an intended engagement with Saladin at Tiberias. Already short of water, the army awoke between the two hills choking with the smoke created by fires set by the Saracens, who attacked the parched and coughing Crusaders whose defense was further hampered by the smoke's rendering them nearly sightless. Hardly a masterpiece of advance planning and intelligence for the Templars, Saladin's forces occupied the heights and at dawn slaughtered the dehydrated and blinded Crusaders.

Crusade covers 1274 - 1291. Prince Edward is now King and much of the novel belies its name as the Italian Maritime Republics of Genoa, Venice, and Pisa lobby, lie, deceive, and betray their way towards stirring yet another Crusade that never quite happens. The Crusader spirit disintegrates, Garin gets worse, Will marries his expectant mistress, Everard dies, Edward, now the King of England, blackmails the Templars to secure funds to pacify Wales and Scotland, more battles are fought and eventually, as all fans of the Templars know, Acre falls, thus ending the West's disastrous attempts to permanently occupy the Holy Land.

Young sprinkles her novels with gripping battle scenes, amazing tales of double-cross and betrayal, and, in a really nice touch, enhances her scenes, whether of romance or slaughter, with vivid descriptions of the odors experienced by her characters. As a former creative writing teacher, Young obeys the lesson to appeal to the senses.

Book Review (Continued from Page 6)

In Crusade, one McGuffin is the Black Stone housed in the Ka'ba, the temple believed by the Muslims to have been constructed by Abraham. The goal of the Hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca was, and is, to plant a devout kiss on the Black Stone. According to Everard, "Some say the Stone was once as white as snow, but has turned black with the sins of mankind and that on the Day of Judgment it will testify before Allah in favor of the faithful who have kissed it." The characters, plots, machinations and motivations of the group that seeks to steal the Black Stone drives much of the suspense of Crusade. (A replica of the Black Stone lies upon the altar during the Shrine ceremonial.)

Throughout both novels, Young maintains the focus on the genuine history of the Crusades, while freely exercising the novelist's license to dramatize the lives of her characters both fictional and historical. Novels like these can nourish the reader with more feel of historical events than intensive study of dozens of professional histories of the same subjects.

The reader of these two novels should be alert to the tension between the Templar Rule and the Crusading spirit on the one hand, and the goals of the Anima Templi on the other. Between wars, Muslims, Jews, and Christians mix freely in the Medieval cities of Outremer, sites of the Crusades. As Everard describes Perceval's search for the Grail as used in the ritual of the Anima Templi:

"His Salvation! Perceval's search is his search for salvation. The Grail, the object of his quest, isn't something that can be held in the hand. It cannot be bought or sold and it will not be found by looking, but only by opening the heart to its essence. That is where it exists... in the vessel of the heart.

....

"At the end of the initiation ritual, the postulant, playing the part of Perceval, is guided by one of the Brethren to a cauldron filled with burning oil, symbolized in the story by the lake of fire. Here he is given three treasures: the three Grails. He is told that the Cross contains the soul of Christianity, the crescent the spirit of Islam, and the Menorah the essence of the Jewish faith. He is then told to throw the treasures into the cauldron where they will melt and become one. Thus, in order for Perceval to achieve salvation, or, in the case of the postulant, initiation, he must bring about a ritual reconciliation of the three faiths. And, in reality, that is what we, as an order, must do."

Finally, following the death of the Grand Master at Acre, Will is charged by the Seneschal: "It will be your task...to preserve the balance and to safeguard those of all races and faiths who would be destroyed by the greed and ignorance of others." Throughout both novels, Everard repeatedly reminds Will that it was the West who attacked the Muslims, that it was the West which sought, with the bloodiest of means, to expel the "Saracens" from the Holy Land. Young in her own voice warns us that "the echoes of this bloody period in the world's history would resonate on both sides of the sea for centuries to come. We are still feeling those echoes today" While those who most need the lessons of those echoes remain deaf to their meaning.

Are You Interested in Getting a Book Reviewed?

Is there a Masonic publication/book you would like to know more about and/or would like to read a review about it, please let us know. We are always looking for more books to review. We would like to review books you are interested in. Also in the upcoming Fall Issue of the Virginia Masonic Herald, we are going to provide a recommendation to you for starting up your own Masonic library. The current idea for the article is what three books would you recommend for Entered Apprentice to read after he has been initiated, which five books for a Fellowcraft, and which seven books for a Master Mason. The Williamsburg Lodge's Book Club has been working on compiling this list and I believe it should be an interesting article.

So please send your suggestions for book reviews or for the Masonic library to the Editor, c/o Grand Lodge or e-mail me at vmheditor@cox.net

Grand Master's 2008 Masonic Education Seminars

The number "3" stands for many things, the "3" Degrees in Freemasonry for instance, but now it stands for an exciting, once in a lifetime opportunity.

No Brother Should Miss This Amazing Opportunity!!!

"4" Masonic "Living Legends"

S. Brent Morris (All sessions)

- Managing Editor of the Scottish Rite Journal
- Author of "The Complete Idiot's Guide to Freemasonry"
- Co-author, "Is it True What They Say about Freemasonry"
- Author of "Cornerstones of Freedom: A Masonic Tradition"
- Co-Author of "Knights & Freemasons: The Birth of Modern Freemasonry"
- Editor, "A Daily Advancement in Masonic Knowledge: The Collected Blue Friars Lectures"
- Editor, "Heredom: The Transactions of the Scottish Rite Research Society"

W. Kirk MacNulty (All sessions)

- Author of "Freemasonry: A Journal Through Ritual and Symbol"
- Author of "Freemasonry: Symbols, Secrets, Significance"
- Author of "The Way of the Craftsman"

Mark A. Tabbert (July 12 and August 23)

- Director of Collections, GW Masonic National Memorial
- Author of "American Freemasons: Three Centuries of Building Communities"

Christopher Hodapp (July 19 only)

- Author of "Freemasons for Dummies"
- Author of "Solomon's Builder's"
- Author of "The Templar Code for Dummies"
- Author of Conspiracy Theories and Secret Societies for Dummies"
- Editor and co-author of "Laudable Pursuit"

"2" Locations Left!!

Alexandria Scottish Rite • **July 19, 2008**
Roanoke Scottish Rite • **August 23, 2008**

Sessions will occur between 8:00AM and Noon.

Please mark your calendar now!

The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge

OF ANCIENT, FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF
THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

Grand Master Decision 2008-3

SUMMARY: This decision is to be summarized at the July 2008 stated communication of the Lodge. It rescinds the requirement in Section 2.110 of the Methodical Digest to ballot on the Masonic proficiency of the candidate to advance from Entered Apprentice to Fellowcraft, and from Fellowcraft to Master Mason, allowing a voice vote instead.

Section 2.110 of the Methodical Digest concerns the advancement of a candidate and how to vote on his Masonic proficiency. At the District Tiled Communications, several inquiries were received about the balloting process for a candidate's proficiency. The following points were made: a coach will not have his candidate stand proficiency until he is ready; the balloting process is time consuming; only a majority of those voting is necessary to advance the candidate; a candidate is rarely rejected for advancement; and the catechism examination is often followed by a degree conferral. Therefore, it is my decision as Grand Master that a voice vote on Masonic proficiency rather than a ballot will be required for advancement from Entered Apprentice to Fellowcraft, and from Fellowcraft to Master Mason after the candidate has been examined in open Lodge.

Accordingly, Sec. 2.110. is changed in pertinent part as follows:

Sec. 2.110. Candidate for Advancement Must be Examined in Open Lodge; A Voice Vote Taken on His Masonic Proficiency. — An Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft, desiring advancement, must be examined in open Lodge in the degree from which he seeks to be advanced, and should prove himself proficient in the catechism of the degree, after which a voice vote shall then be taken upon his Masonic proficiency, and if there be a majority in his favor he is thereby eligible for advancement.

Only Master Masons are entitled to vote.

The Worshipful Master may, if he so desires, have a voice vote on Masonic proficiency collectively on all candidates examined on the same degree at that communication. If a majority voice vote is not favorable, a separate voice vote will be taken on the Masonic proficiency of each candidate.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia at the City of Richmond this 24th day of June, A.L. 6008, A.D. 2008 and in the Two Hundred and Thirtieth year of our Grand Lodge.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edmund Cohen".

Edmund Cohen
Grand Master

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan W. Adkins".

Alan W. Adkins
Grand Secretary

The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge

OF ANCIENT, FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF
THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

An Edict 2008

WHEREAS, it has long been a custom not to bring firearms or other weapons into Lodge;
and

WHEREAS, a number of Brethren have expressed concern that there is no formal Grand
Lodge ruling on this;

NOW, THEREFORE, I have decided that firearms will not be brought into a Lodge or
Lodge building except by law enforcement officers who are required by their departments to have
their weapon on their person.

Reenactors may bring nonfunctional/disabled weapons that cannot be fired into the Lodge
building for a program.

This prohibition does not apply to small pocket knives, the Tiler's sword, or swords carried
by Brethren during the ritual of the Appendant bodies.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted
Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia at the City of Richmond this 24th day of June,
A.L. 6008, A.D. 2008 and in the Two Hundred and Thirtieth year of our Grand Lodge.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edmund Cohen".

Edmund Cohen
Grand Master

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan W. Adkins".

Alan W. Adkins
Grand Secretary