

News of the Grand Lodge of Alaska

*The North Star*



Volume 4.

February, 1994

No. 1

**"GRAND LODGE VISITORS  
WELCOME TO SITKA!"**

W. Anthony L. Johnson

Brothers,

Time marches on and Grand Lodge is approaching. It won't be long now and we will be with our friends and brothers that we have not seen in almost a year.

Like the Fur Rondy to the trapper, to the Iditarod of the great musher, from the land of ice and snow and sea, to the cedars and the salmon, we will all come together for a few days of pleasure and fraternal friendship. We will see those old friends, reminisce with old stories, make new stories and new friends.

I'm sure that with wisdom and honesty we will be forever grateful to our fraternal brothers whenever our trails seem to cross one another. It could be in the city of Anchorage, a ferry in Southwest, a coffee shop in Barrow or a nice little village in the bush country of our beautiful state.

We will look forward to seeing you here. We have many things planned and I know that your brother Sitkans will do their utmost to make your attendance pleasurable to you and all those who journey with you.

**TONGASS LODGE, U. D.  
PLANS CONSTITUTION**

Excitement reigns in Ketchikan as Charter Members of Alaska's newest lodge prepare to be Constituted and become a full fledged member of the Alaska Grand Lodge.

Tongass Lodge, U. D. will become Alaska's 19th lodge. Constitution of Tongass Lodge and the installation of their officers will follow a joint cornerstone laying by the Grand Lodge of Washington and the Grand Lodge of Alaska, starting at 2 pm, April 9 in Ketchikan. The ceremonies are open to the public. An evening banquet will be at Cape Fox Lodge.

Alaska's newest Lodge -- the first to be organized in Southeast Alaska -- is proud of their progress in gaining full status with their Alaska brothers. The new lodge boasts of 32 charter members including 10 past masters and four past deputies. New members joining before the lodge is constituted will be charter members.

The officers of Tongass Lodge look forward to seeing you on April 9 and sharing this once in a life time event with their Masonic brothers. Hotel reservations can be made by calling W. Marty Parsons: 247-5647 or Cape Fox Lodge.

News of the Grand Lodge of Alaska

## *The North Star*

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To schedule an ad contact Editor

## Editorial . . .

The editors plan three more quarterly issues with a publishing date of May 15, August 15 and November 15.

**Next Copy Deadline!**  
**April 25, 1994**

Advertising revenue has diminished considerably after display advertising was dropped. After careful consideration it has been decided to continue with display ads. This will cover extra costs for printing and allow for continued growth of the paper. The editorial staff feels *The North Star* is now under firm financial footing for future issues.

The editorial staff wishes to acknowledge and express appreciation to V.W. Peter Nilles for his dedicated work in publishing the North Star last year.

This is a difficult job at best. Long hours have been contributed by Brother Nilles in preparing the paper for publication.

### Tongass Lodge, U.D.

Ketchikan



### Mt. Verstovia #18

Sitka



### W. David W. De Long

Fairbanks 12

## GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE

This will be my last opportunity to address you through *The North Star* as Grand Master. I want to thank each of you who have assisted me during this exciting and most interesting year of my life.

Your confidence in electing me as your grand Master for 1994 is the highest compliment and honor that can be paid a Mason. I hope that the actions taken by me this year will be remembered as those of a Grand Master with deep concern for our craft.

#### Visitations:

Outside visits were made to the Grand Lodges of Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, New Mexico and New York.

I thoroughly enjoyed my visits to the lodges in Alaska. The visitations were the highlight of my year and the reception much appreciated by myself and Frances.

The Grand Lodge Line Officers have acted as a team this year. I have been ably assisted and have benefited from our joint discussions.

Thank you all Grand Lodge Officers, Deputies, and Committeemen who have traveled extensively with me, sharing your time unselfishly, for the good of Masonry.

And again this year we continue to honor our commitment of no deficit spending.

Our appreciation also goes to those brothers who attend and support small Alaska lodges in order that they may be active and continue as a part of our Grand Lodge. -- Continued to page 14

## Help With Two of Your Toughest Problems



Discover 101+ ways you can increase interest and attendance in your lodge!

How many times have you wanted suggestions on increasing attendance and interest in your lodge or Masonic organization?

Now you can get the help you need with this easy-to-use workbook written by Masons for Masonic lodges. Suggestions offer specific help with fellowship, planning a perfect evening, communication, using time more effectively and getting the ladies on your side. There's also help with planning better meals, putting the phones to work and creating involvement and "followship".

At only \$10 per copy, the lodge can afford a copy for each of the important committee chairman. A Personal Workshop section and special planning tools help those using the book put the ideas to good use today and for the future.

You can obtain your own copy by sending your check or money order for

\$14 (\$10.00 + \$4.00 shipping and handling) to

The Masonic Renewal Committee of North America  
2108 North Charles Street  
Baltimore, MD 21218

*Deputies of the Grand Master*  
*This section is devoted to our District*  
*Deputies*



**NEWS - District #1**

By **V.W. Mitchell R. Miller**

Greetings from far North, District #1.

Tanana Lodge #3 has started off the new Masonic year with a nice back log of candidates.

I am starting my official visits.

The Three Lodge Breakfast Club continues to have the breakfast on the third Sunday of each month. This will continue at least through May. If you are in the area plan to attend and enjoy the fellowship.

The Masters and Wardens continue to meet on the Saturday prior to the breakfast at the Regency Hotel at 9:00 a.m.. Visitors are welcome.

North Pole Lodge is starting to plan for the outdoor degree this summer.

I have been contacted by a degree team in Kentucky that is interested in coming up to Alaska and conferring or exemplifying a degree this summer.

I attended the Grand Lodge of Illinois and they are experiencing the membership problem also. Their Grand Master serves a two year term and this was the off year. The session is more of a business session where they vote on whether to bring the resolutions up to the general session for consideration next year. This allows one full year to study the resolution prior to voting on it. I will list some of the resolutions in the next issue.

Petitions have started coming in for

Fairbanks Lodge #12, so there will be degree work going on most of the time. The three Lodges will have had a friendship night on February 26th, by the time you read this news North Pole Lodge had one last fall and it was a great success. Nome will have had one also in conjunction with my official visit February 17th. I will give a report on it also in the next newsletter.

Start thinking about going to Eastern Russia on the first Grand Lodge tour the last part of July.

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**Art Rindahl**  
Sponsor,  
The North Star

---

**Dragoljub Nedic**

Tanana Lodge #3

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**MW Frank W. Erie,**  
**PGM 1991**

410 Noyes St., Fairbanks AK  
99701-2931  
907/456-4790

---

**Ralph Kavorkian**

Grand Master 1988 Alaska  
907/456-5919  
Box 72782, Fairbanks, AK 99707

*From the Jr. Grand Warden*  
*R. W. Lloyd W. Triggs*

This year I have been very busy furthering my education in Freemasonry. Having served two terms as master of a lodge I had the idea of having learned a great deal about what our gentle craft was about. How wrong I was. I believe our Fraternity is a never ending source of learning of the past present, and the future. What an experience! And I thank you all for that.

Our Grand Master has asked me to research something on exclusive jurisdiction of Grand Lodges. My research has taken me through many pages of manuscripts both old and new. Very few have gone into any great detail. The best explanation I have found was in a 1906 publication of "The History of Freemasonry" by Mackey pp 1650.

The American Doctrine of Freemasonry briefly stated is this: Three regularly chartered lodges existing in any state or territory have the right to establish a Grand Lodge. When lawfully organized such Grand Lodge has sole absolute, and exclusive jurisdiction over the three degrees of craft Masonry over the lodges and their members, and over all Masons unaffiliated or affiliated in such state or territory.

No other Grand Lodge whatever can lawfully interfere with this jurisdiction, and can neither establish lodges in such state, nor continue any authority over bodies which it might properly have exercised prior to the organization of such Grand Lodge.

By the erection of a Grand Lodge in such state all Masonic Powers over what is popularly called Blue Masonry are merged in it, and henceforth it exists in supreme and sovereign jurisdiction which it can neither divide nor share with other Masonic Grand bodies.

Now to relate some of my activities. I have just returned from the Conference of Grand Masters in Arlington, Virginia. where we submitted a bid to have the conference in Anchorage in 1997. I regret to say the conference went to Tulsa, Oklahoma.

While there we had a meeting with three of the elected officers and the secretary of the Grand Lodge of Washington. The four elected officers plus the secretary of the Grand Lodge of Alaska were present. The two Grand Masters, two Deputy Grand Masters, two Senior Wardens, and one Junior Warden and two Secretaries. The discussion centered mainly around laying a cornerstone in Ketchikan, Alaska.

After some discussion it was agreed by all present that the Grand Master of Washington would submit a letter to the Grand Lodge of Alaska requesting permission for the Grand Lodge of Washington to lay the Cornerstone. The Grand Master of Alaska would then submit return correspondence concurring with the request. This then would be a joint activity of both Grand Lodges.

## SITKA LODGE #18 OFF TO AUSPICIOUS START FOR 1994

On Saturday, December 18, 1993 the new officers of Sitka Lodge, Mt. Verstovia No. 18 were installed.

The installing officer was immediate Past W. M. "Tony" Johnson assisted by an impressive team of Past Masters. The Installation came off real well with good attendance. Refreshments and fellowship closed the affair.

At the first regular stated meeting of 1994, Thursday, January 6, the lodge was highly honored by a visitation of Very Worshipful Brother Cleo Hathaway, Deputy to the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Washington.

Brother Hathaway journeyed to Sitka for the express purpose of bestowing a distinct and unique honor on our W. M. Richard Brookman, who was born in Sitka in 1934, attended schools here, and entered the Armed Services for five years. Upon his discharge he joined the Seattle Fire department where he stayed for 25 years. He retired in 1982 as a fire boat captain and returned to Sitka with his wife, Jan. They purchased a sport fishing charter boat, the "8 Stars of Gold" and became active in local Masonic activities.

V. W. Brother Hathaway also spent his working years with the Seattle Fire Department and retired as Deputy Chief. during this period, Brookman and Hathaway had many personal contacts while fighting conflagrations and during training drills.

Both are members of the Maltese Cross Lodge of Seattle, thereby hangs the tale. For many years that Lodge has carried on the tradition of a "traveling gavel" which is presented to any member who, becoming Worshipful Master of a Lodge, to have his name engraved on the plaque within the lid of the beautiful wooden

case it travels in and is to be used by that brother with pride during his year as Master, and then to be passed on.

After presenting the gavel to W.M. Brookman, V.W. Brother Hathaway then extended greetings from the M.W. Grand Master of Washington and, in reply to questions from the floor, gave a history of the Knights of Malta and their relationship to Masonry and how their emblem, the Maltese Cross, had been adopted as the International Badge for Fire Fighters.

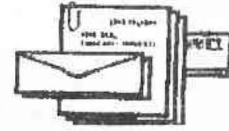
The presentation and speech were greatly appreciated by the local brethren .

Sitka is somewhat isolated and interesting Masonic lore of this nature does not come this way very often.

A banquet was served in honor V. W. Brother Hathaway's visit and prime rib as prepared by our newly installed Junior Warden and Four Star Chef, Michael LaGoss, was the succulent entree. It was so delectable that several brothers, on cutting a portion with their forks and tasting same were inspired to shout loud and clear, "Eureka"!

W. B. Brookman and his committee is working diligently on the details of the 1994 M.W. Grand Lodge of Alaska Session to be held in Sitka, April 6-9, 1994. The committee extends the hand of Friendship and Brotherly Love to all Brethren and urges them to attend. Every effort is being taken to make it a memorable session.

A packet of information has been sent to all members. If, however, additional information is needed please contact W. Anthony L. Johnson, Chm. of Sessions and Arrangements, at 747-6147; W. B. Brookman at 747-5393, Box 34, Sitka, AK 99835; or Secretary, Robert Mayo 747-4717 - Box 991, Sitka, AK 99835.



## Letters to the Editor & Letters of Special Interest

### LODGE BUILDING - The Matanuska Plan

W. Ronald Briggs, P.G.M. of Nevada  
Member of Matanuska Lodge #7, F.& A.M., Palmer

The following report is not intended to suggest a conclusive answer to the serious problem of declining Masonic membership. However, it does indicate what can be accomplished when a body of Masons develops public awareness and gains civic respect and good will by putting Masonic principles to practical use.

My Alaska lodge in the City of Palmer, is thriving! In the past two years they have conferred over 60 degrees and have raised 21 new members to Master Mason. What are they doing to make Masonry so attractive? The answer is simple; active community involvement and appealing, family oriented, lodge programs.

It began with a new Worshipful Master who believed they could reverse the loss of more brothers to death and NPD than they were gaining through new members. This master was convinced that Masonry should be exciting and rewarding for all the members and a visible, effective and useful influence in the community.

He began by forming a "Cornerstone Club" with the aim of providing needed services to deserving individuals and public institutions in his lodge's jurisdiction. His plan was initiated by only a few members of the lodge, and participation in the club's activities is always on a strictly volunteer basis. They have performed home repairs and other chores for the elderly, disabled and needy who could not afford professional help. They have made improvements at the Palmer Senior Center, and in parks, playgrounds and other public areas in their dis-tract. They have completely renovated their own Masonic Temple and made it something which the entire community can take pride in.

With the approval and cooperation of local school authorities, this lodge has established an awards program to recognize honor students at all Matanuska-Susitna High Schools. Developed with the help and input of the students, it has been enthusiastically received by the recipients, parents and faculty alike. The students are proud of their award, the parents are proud of their children and the school staff believes it encourages better study habits. Furthermore, this program provides another excellent opportunity to display the good work of Freemasonry before the public.

-- Continued to page eight

## LODGE BUILDING -- Continued from page seven

In addition to forming the Cornerstone Club and establishing the awards program, this Master also sought to foster closer family ties with the lodge, thereby affording the member's wives and children a true sense of belonging. To accomplish this the master began planning social events aimed at just having fun! Members, their families, friends and

neighbors are invited on a regular basis to enjoy an evening of good food, fellowship and entertainment. The entertainment is carefully selected for both high quality and popularity. Not only are these fun nights a big success, they have also boosted regular lodge attendance. This lodge is now meeting not only on each Tuesday night of the month, but also on many Saturdays, in order to accomplish the immense volume of degree work and to plan and execute their various programs and activities.

Why is this lodge such a magnet to the men in Palmer that they want to become Masons? It certainly appears to be the high public regard the lodge enjoys, justly earned through their charitable and humanitarian work. They are often seen working side by side in the spirit of compassion and good natured camaraderie assisting others where needed and making improvements in their community.

Those who have benefited from their kind benevolence tell others how much they appreciate what the Masons have done for them. People learn that this work is done not for favor or reward, but for its' own sake in the true spirit of charity and service to others.

This indicates what can be accomplished when a body of Masons develops public awareness and gains civic respect and good will by putting Masonic principles to practical use. Although it has required a great deal of planning, dedication and hard work, the members of Matanuska Lodge No. 7 in Palmer, Alaska have demonstrated what can be done to stimulate public interest and Masonic growth. At least in their community it has paid very handsome dividends!

**FOOTNOTE:** This article has been reprinted and distributed to 61 Grand Masters at the 1994 Conference of Grand Masters in North America as part of a program to share successful Masonic programs.

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## MAGADAN CHARTER TOUR TAKES SHAPE

ANCHORAGE, AK, February 15, 1994: An exciting, different and unusual eight day tour to Magadan in Eastern Russia is planned by a Masonic Russian Committee. The tour will start from Anchorage Thursday, July 21 and return Saturday, July 30 (arriving Anchorage Friday, July 29th).

The flight to Magadan will be approximately four hours. Upon arrival a bus will take you to the hotel where you will meet your guest family. You will stay with a Russian host family who share common interest. During the day a bus (with interpreters) will take you to a bevy of activities. These will include special luncheons, banquets, shopping, museums, picnics, etc. Daily tours will start from the hotel.

If you prefer to stay at a modern hotel costs will be an additional \$45 a night which includes breakfast. (There are few elevators to Russian apartments unless apartments are above four stories). It is highly recommended, however, that you stay with a Russian family to experience the most interesting part of your visit.

Total costs for the 8-day trip (based on current air fare) will be approximately \$1,250. This covers round trip fare from Anchorage, bed and breakfast with your Russian host family, most bus tours, and a bushel of rubles (spending money).

Interested parties should send a deposit check of \$100 to Brother Jerry R. Fairley, Secretary, Masonic Russian Committee, Box 101445, Anchorage, AK 99510. (907/274-0277). You will then be sent a complete application and tour package. 50% refunded if reservations are canceled 60 days before time of travel. 100% refunded if a substitute traveler found.

The idea of Alaska Masons meeting with our neighbors in Siberia is a worthy program. The brotherhood of man is a fundamental design of our fraternity. Today we're simply friends. Russian parents want the same thing for their family as we do -- happiness, peace, and a better life.

*Any proceeds from the Russian tour will be go into a special fund to assist in spreading Masonry in Eastern Russia.*

## The Case of the Missing Publicity Release

By **W. David W. DeLong**  
Fairbanks 12

Let's imagine we are sitting at refreshment following a lodge meeting that experienced mediocre attendance.

"Not many here tonight. Anyone put something in the scanner, paper or radio public service announcements?"

"Didn't see anything. We used to send out post cards; somebody said that cost too much money and took time. It died".

"Anybody announce the meeting at the Rite or Shrine?"

"No, it fell through the cracks".

"How about our dedicated telephone number?"

"Fine for those who think to call; doesn't help when they don't remember to call or don't know about the special number".

"Don't we have anybody responsible for publicity?"

"Not really,. It would be a great idea to assign that to somebody that likes it. I, personally can't write. I haven't got time. Maybe George will do it".

It would be intriguing to put the questions to Dame Agatha's super sleuth, the great Belgian detective, Hercule Poirot and to that incredible, deductive mind from the flat at 221 Baker Street, Sherlock Holmes.

"Why is lodge attendance down? Is publicity necessary? Is this a matter of missing publicity?"

You can picture the little gray cells of Hercule churning and analyzing -- and the smoke rising furiously in copious amounts from Sherlock's pipe.

"Elementary my dear Worshipful Master!"

Of course it isn't that simple or elementary. They might tell us the following for starters:

Vital programs, family involvement, sharp ritual, non-tedious business sessions, community service, a dedication towards excellence -- these are the elements that draw the brethren back and make lodges successful.

However many of the members and almost certainly all of the general public will never know about these successes unless --

### YOU PUBLICIZE IT!!!

#### The ten DO's

1. DO publicize meetings, events, accomplishments by word-of-mouth. (high on any body's list).

2. DO send publicity material to all branches of the media.

3. DO use pictures with your stories.

4. DO assign the responsibility for publicity within the lodge.

5. DO encourage submissions to your lodge bulletins and distribute those bulletins to friends who are non-masons.

6. DO prepare your releases neatly and concisely.

7. DO cultivate (or at least become familiar) with key media personnel.

-- Continued to page 11

### E. L. Soldin

Mt. Susitna Lodge #8  
Purchased this space!

### U. S. Postal Service

Contract 10 10:00 a.m. - 5:45 p.m.  
Ray L. Beaver 907/276-2561  
1312 W. Northern Lights,  
Anchorage, AK 99503

### THE CASE OF THE MISSING . . .

-- Continued from page 10

8. DO prepare your releases with strong lead paragraphs so that they can be pared down easily by the editor to fit limited space -- and still make sense.

9. DO remember that news people and particularly editors hold the power in their hands to accept or reject copy for publication. Gain their respect and establish a strong rapport with responsible, accurate releases.

10. DO invite members of the media family to your events whenever possible -- and, even have them on your lodge programs to explain their requirements for publication, showing or airing.

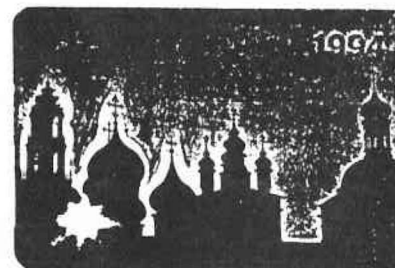
It's a mad scramble out there. competition for space on TV, newspapers and radio is fierce. Don't forget to publicize on bulletin boards, bumper stickers, badges, caps, pins, etc.

EFFECTIVE PUBLICITY IS NEVER  
AN ACCIDENT! WORK AT IT! IT  
DESERVES YOUR BEST!!

SEE PAGE 12

FOR  
DETAILS  
ABOUT  
A TOUR  
TO

EASTERN RUSSIA



## ALASKA MASONIC HISTORY WANTED

A plea is made by the Grand Historian of the Grand Lodge of Alaska for any material having to do with any branch of the Masonic Orders in or about Alaska.

This may consist of lodge histories, Masonic clubs, minutes, correspondence, diaries, articles, news clips, books and pictures of the latter, cornerstone laying and public affairs.

All materials will be credited in a future book and return requests will be honored.

Please send information in care of the Grand Historian, Joe H. Ashby, 1808-B Sawmill Creek Road, Sitka, AK 99845. (907) 747-8537. Material may also be hand-carried to the 1994 Alaska Grand Lodge Session to be held at Sitka, April 6-8, 1994.

### Roy Foss

PGM of Masons in Washington  
509/328-5554  
N. 7141 Winston Dr., Spokane, WA

### David J. Thomas

Grand Master 1990 Alaska  
907/262-4874  
Box 291, Soldotna, AK 99660

### Fred V. Angleton

Grand Master 1987 Alaska  
907/262-4051  
Box 4155, Soldotna, AK 99669

## NEWS BRIEFS

The Grand Master visited Bent Lodge #42 in Taos, New Mexico 40 years after being raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason in the New Mexico Lodge.

Bent Lodge was named after Governor Bent, the first Territorial Governor of New Mexico. Governor Bent was the brother-in-law of Kit Carson who was also a member of the Taos Masonic Lodge. Kit Carson's home and cemetery is maintained by the Taos brothers.

After a pancake feed and attending lodge in Taos our Grand Master proceeded to Albuquerque where he attended the Grand Lodge of New Mexico.



When visiting Magadan, Russia last summer some of our Masonic brothers toured one of Magadan's local schools. The interpreter, former Mayor of Magadan, told of a question asked students in the elementary class.

The question was "what town is the gateway to the United States; the most important town in the U.S.A?" Without hesitation all hands went up. The answer was universal. "Soldotna, Alaska," sister city to Magadan.

Congratulations Soldotna for your excellent work in promoting understanding and friendship with our Eastern neighbors!



W. Bro. L. V. Dees was recently appointed Deputy for District 4. Our Grand Master appointed W. David W. De Long of Fairbanks 12 to fill out the remainder of Bro. Joe's term as Grand Standard Bearer; R.W. Howard Hobbs installed Bro. Dave into his office November 13.

## Donated Items Still Needed For AMRA's Silent Auction

AMRA is sponsoring a Mail-a-Bid program to raise monies for the Alaska Grand Lodge. Grand prize will be a seven-day cruise to the Caribbean for two persons on one of the Princess ships.

"Mail-A-Bid" auction is an opportunity to do some gift shopping from the comfort of your own home. You select your purchases and the Alaska Grand Lodge receives the money. Monies received from the auction will benefit the permanent fund of the Alaska Grand Lodge.

Donations both large and small are needed. Many items will consist of fishing, hunting and weekend excursions for the family. Although the Auction Catalogue will be in the mail by March 1 it is still not too late to make a donation. Auction items received after March 1 will be posted at Grand Lodge in Sitka. Bidding will be closed noon April 8th.

An opportunity to successfully pan gold at a Yukon gold mine is another exciting prize!

It is hoped that as many as possible will participate in the auction. The auction promises to be exciting and rewarding for the bidders.

We hope you will try something new and fun. Do contact your District Deputy or the Grand Master for items to be donated and have FUN on the bidding!

Communications is the single most important function of The North Star.

The success of the fraternity depends on the interest of our members.

## HISTORIC DRAWING COMES TO LIGHT

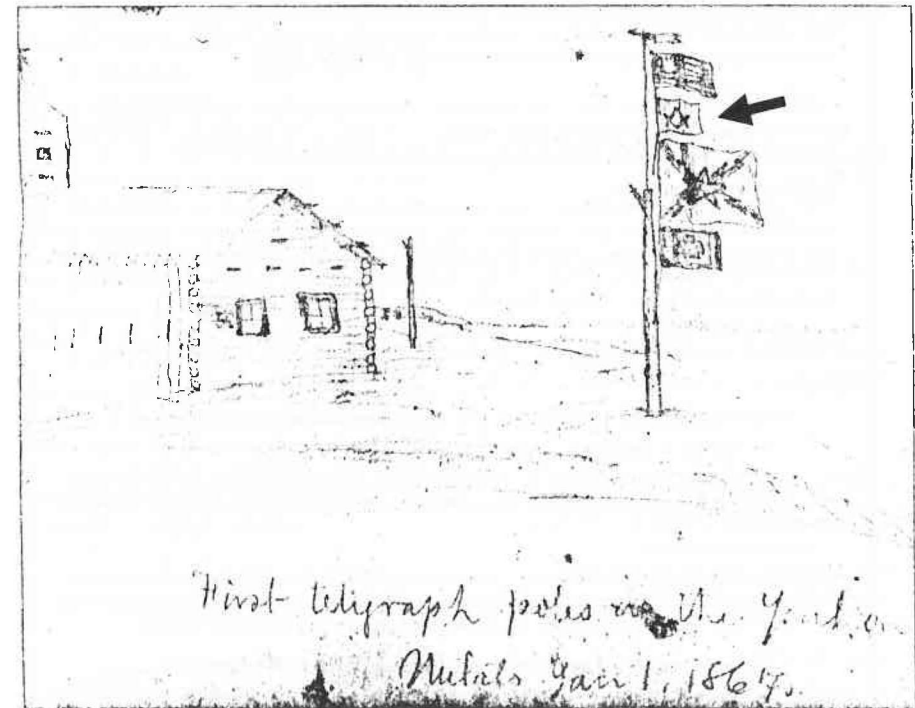
Pictured below is a reproduction of an historic drawing of a Masonic flag erected in 1867 at Fort Derabin (Nulato) in Russia-America territory. This pencil sketch was drawn in 1867 by William Dall, leader of the Smithsonian team with the Western Union expedition

The need for a telegraph cable to Europe/Asia was a major challenge in the 1860s. The Russian America Telegraph & Exploring Expedition was formed to extend the telegraph route to Russia through British Columbia, down the Yukon River to the Nulato bend, across the country to Port Clarence, where a cable was to connect to the Siberian lines.

In 1867 the Atlantic cable was successfully completed. The Western Union Telegraph project was too expensive to complete with the Atlantic cable and was terminated.

The "hoisting" of the Masonic flag in Russian territory before the purchase of Alaska by the United States is also documented in a special print autographed by five of the first six Grand Masters of Alaska. The prints sell for \$100 each as a fund raiser for the Alaska Grand Lodge. The autographed prints can be ordered through the Grand Secretary.

Courtesy of W. Joe H. Ashby, Grand Historian



## G.RAND MASTER'S MESSAGE

-- Continued from page 3

The unsung heroes of Masonry are the worshipful masters of the Constituent Lodges. They quietly, day by day, take the lead in their respective places by example and hard work.

The Session and Arrangement Committee is working hard to put together a program

for Grand Lodge in Sitka. It is hoped that there will be a large turnout for the first Alaska Grand Lodge in Southeast Alaska.

In the words of the late Sheldon K. Blank, Grand Master of N. Y. "I encourage each of you to be proud that you are a Mason. Tell your family and your friends about this great institution. Take our Masonic principles into your daily lives."

### The Center for Masonic Information FREEMASONRY AND RELIGION

*Basic Principles.* Freemasonry is not a religion, nor is it a substitute for religion. It requires of its members belief in God as part of the obligation of every responsible adult, but advocates no sectarian faith or practice. Masonic ceremonies include prayers, both traditional and extempore, to reaffirm each individual's dependence on God and to seek divine guidance. Freemasonry is open to men of any faith, but religion may not be discussed at Masonic meetings.

*The Supreme Being.* Masons believe that there is one God and that people employ many different ways to seek, and to express what they know of, God. Masonry primarily uses the appellation, "Grand Architect of the Universe," and other non-sectarian titles, to address Deity. In this way, persons of different faiths may join together in prayer, concentrating on God, rather than differences among themselves. Masonry believes in religious freedom and that the relationship between the individual and God is personal, private and sacred.

*Volume of the Sacred Law.* An open Volume of the Sacred Law, "the rule and guide of life," is an essential part of every Masonic meeting. The Volume of the Sacred Law to a Christian is the Bible; to Freemasons of other faiths it is the book held holy by them.

*The Oaths of Freemasonry.* The obligations taken by Freemasons are sworn on the Volume of the Sacred Law. They are undertakings to follow the principles of Freemasonry and to keep confidential a Freemason's means of recognition. The much discussed "penalties," judicial remnants from an earlier era, are symbolic, not literal. They refer only to the pain any honest man should feel at the thought of violating his word.

*Freemasonry Compared with Religion.* Freemasonry lacks the basic elements of religion:

- (a) It has no dogma or theology, no wish or means to enforce religious orthodoxy
- (b) It offers no sacraments.

(c) It does not claim to lead to salvation by works, by secret knowledge or by any other means. The secrets of Freemasonry are concerned with modes of recognition, not with the means of salvation.

*Freemasonry Supports Religion.* Freemasonry is far from indifferent toward religion. Without interfering in religious practice, it expects each member to follow his own faith and to place his Duty to God above all other duties. Its moral teachings are acceptable to all religions.

Prepared under the direction of the Center For Masonic  
Information by several Masonic and theological scholars.

## Control the Puffin!

V. Cliff Darnell, PM (8 & 13)

I am not against anyone's right to smoke, but I think we have to begin to control the smoking around those brothers with lung problems.

After each grand lodge session, the real camaraderie begins as the brethren gather in groups in hallways, lobby, restaurants, bars, or the Shriners hospitality room where the blue smoke gathers.

I would like to be there as any and all Masonic and Grand Lodge issues are hashed, and rehashed, and debated out; which I think is beneficial for the craft. But I am one of those brothers that can attend no longer than three to five minutes. (Some may say that is good).

I am a brother that has chronic bronchitis and carries an inhaler. Yes, I am only one, but how many other brothers attending may also have bronchitis, asthma, or emphysema and suffer with normal breathing when coming in or remaining in a room with contaminated air. It is not fun. Of course we can go to our room and get the "vendolin" aerosol inhaler to stop wheezing and hopefully to breath normal again.

I recall our good brother M.W. Dave Thomas attending

last year's Grand Lodge pushing his oxygen cart around. While in the Lobby at registration, the smokers were everywhere. I know he was suffering as it bothered me and I could get away from it.

These words are not meant to offend anyone but I am stating reality with those with lung problems.

Air is free, and we each like to enjoy it to the maximum, but some need uncontaminated air to breath normal. This is usually no fault of their own. Breathing is great and the alternative is ?!?!?!?

### James A. Williams

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