



# Light from the Great Land

Volume 3, Issue 3

September 1, 2011

## Grand Master's Message

Greetings My Brothers,



Ah, summer in Alaska, it just doesn't get any better than this! I can't believe my year as Grand Master is nearly half over. I have met so many brothers from all over the country both on my travels and as they visit Skagway. We truly

belong to a rich and wonderful organization. I am sending a little nudge to all of the lodge secretaries out there; I know some Lodges are dark in the summer but please do not forget to send in the monthly reports, even if you only say, "Lodge dark, No meeting." R.W. Brother Jim Grubbs has been working on our non-profit status and I am sorry to say, but without the cooperation of the Lodges this status is in jeopardy. Many Lodges have not filed the necessary paperwork with the IRS or sent copies to Grand Lodge. Please, I urge you to get with Grand Lodge and do whatever is needed to help us keep our non-profit status.

### Inside this issue:

Editor's Note	2
From the Desk of the Grand Secretary	2
Calendar of Events (June–Sep)	3
Deputy Grand Master's Message	3
Senior Grand Warden's Message	4
District News	5
What is The Masonic Society?	10
Widows Sons Memorial Day Ride	12

I have been traveling most of the summer. June was busy with attendance at the Grand Lodges of Oregon, Washington and BC and Yukon. I was able to see, and catch up with, many of the Grand Masters I met in Denver at the Conference of Grand Masters. In July I was back in Denver for the International Shriners and what a difference from February! It was 101° on July 4<sup>th</sup> and let me tell you this Alaskan melted.

After three weeks at home with Debbie for a little rest and relaxation (and wood splitting) I will take off again for points South, North, East and West. First, I am going to California, to be inducted into the Royal Order of Scotland, then up to Anchorage for my Official Visit to Sterling 22, Seward 6, and Kenai 11 on August 17. August 20 – 23 I am in Washington DC at the Scottish Rite Leadership Conference. All totaled this spate of travel will net 9,900 air miles for Grand Lodge, and myself (and get Debbie a little closer to England). EZBiz really works! I will be home just in time to help White Pass Lodge #1 host an International Friendship visit from MWGM Bill Cave of BC & Yukon Grand Lodge on the 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> of August. We will have pictures for the next newsletter.

If your Lodge is doing degree work, tell the rest of us about it in the newsletter. It is always good to hear that our brotherhood is growing. Also, consider this your quarterly reminder to find something to donate for the Silent Auction to help our Library and Museum. Items can be sent to our curator, Joan Morgan. It can be something hand-crafted or indicative of your community.

Don't forget, once you start meeting again, to bring a brother especially one who has stopped coming to Lodge for one reason or another. Let us never forget that our brotherhood was built by helping one another.

Fraternally,  
Debbie & Ron Ackerman, MWGM

*THE MAN WHO DOESN'T READ GOOD BOOKS HAS NO ADVANTAGE OVER THE MAN WHO CAN'T READ THEM.*

MARK TWAIN



# Light from the Great Land

## Editor's Note

Greetings and welcome to the Fall edition of Light from the Great Land. It is a pleasure to share with you news of Alaskan Masons, who have been traveling throughout our great state and spreading the Light of Masonry.

**In this edition** you will find a brief note from the Grand Secretary regarding the Grand Lodge Membership Management System (GLMMS). As with the June edition of this newsletter, we are continuing to provide a calendar of known upcoming Masonic events. Our Deputy Grand Master sends his greetings and thanks for all the courtesies extended to him during his travels with the Grand Master. The Senior Grand Warden provides a caution regarding travel safety, especially during the upcoming winter months. And, news from around the jurisdiction is provided by some of our District Deputies and other correspondents.

I have received some inquiries about my use of the titles MMS and FMS appended to the bylines of articles in the last edition of this newsletter. MMS stands for Member of The Masonic Society and FMS stands for Fellow of The Masonic Society. An article titled "What is The Masonic Society?" by Chris Hodapp is included in this edition.

Finally, a report on the Alaska Grand Chapter of the Widows Sons motorcycle club Memorial Day ride is provided by WB Dan McCrummen.

MW Bo Cline, FMS  
Editor ([clineboak@gmail.com](mailto:clineboak@gmail.com))

**Please send along news of your events and planned activities for the December edition of this newsletter to the email address above. Of particular interest would be the scheduled time, date, and location of your Lodge's installation of officers.**

## From the Desk of the Grand Secretary

### GLMMS

Brethren the Grand Lodge Membership Management system is here!! It is not ready for the Lodge secretary to input data or use yet. VW Schram and I are working very diligently to get it to that point. There are 6205 names in the database and sometimes I think I have opened each one and made corrections. There are a lot of data missing and the Lodge secretary is going to have to provide most of the missing data. So many dates are missing, and systems like this have to have a date to start counting from and to consider a member as active otherwise he will stay in a non-member status. I can enter a bogus date but that will make the data useless for any real accounting.

Lodge secretaries please be patient and provide the data as best you can when asked. I am sure this will require digging into the files for the information. Future entries will not be accepted if dates are missing.

Jerry Wasson  
Grand Secretary

### IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Alaska Freemason license plates are currently available through the State of Alaska Department of Motor Vehicles. (Click on the image of the license plate below to order yours today.)



**Light from the Great Land** is the official publication of the Grand Lodge of Alaska F.&A.M. It is published quarterly on the Grand Lodge's WEB page. Individuals who desire a hard copy of this newsletter should send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: the Grand Lodge of Alaska, P. O. Box 190668, Anchorage, AK 99519. The opinions expressed in this publication are the opinions of the individual authors of the various articles only. They do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of this Grand Lodge or of any Grand Masonic jurisdiction or any other Masonic related body. All articles, letters and photographs should be submitted via email to the editor at [clineboak@gmail.com](mailto:clineboak@gmail.com). We reserve the right to edit submitted articles and columns.



# Light from the Great Land

## Calendar of Events (Sep - Mar)

### ◆ [Alaska State Fair](#)

August 25 – September 5, 2011

Masonic Information Booth

Palmer, AK

Contact: WB Dennis Oakland, MMS

([dennis86@mtaonline.net](mailto:dennis86@mtaonline.net))

### ◆ **Grand Master's Official Visit to District # 1 Lodges in Fairbanks**

September 1, 2011

Hosted by North Pole Lodge No. 16

North Pole, AK

Contact: WB Dave Arnold, (907) 490-7344

### ◆ **Grand Lodge Finance Committee**

September 3, 2011

Anchorage, AK

Contact: RW Jim Grubbs ([jimgrubbs@hotmail.com](mailto:jimgrubbs@hotmail.com))

### ◆ **Grand Master's Official Visit to Valdez Lodge # 4**

September 6, 2011

Valdez, AK

Contact: WB Bryan Vincent, MMS

([bvincent.ak@gmail.com](mailto:bvincent.ak@gmail.com))

### ◆ **Masonic Friendship Night/Open House**

September 10, 2011

Matanuska Lodge No. 7

Palmer, AK

Contact: WB Dennis Oakland, MMS

([dennis86@mtaonline.net](mailto:dennis86@mtaonline.net))

### ◆ **Grand Master's Official Visit to Mt. McKinley Lodge No. 5**

September 15, 2011

Cordova, AK

Contact: WB Robert Cunningham, (907) 424-3488

### ◆ **Past Masters/Honored Ladies Night**

September 24, 2011

Matanuska Lodge No. 7

Palmer, AK

Contact: WB Dennis Oakland, MMS

([dennis86@mtaonline.net](mailto:dennis86@mtaonline.net))

### ◆ **Grand Master's Official Visit to Kodiak Lodge # 9**

October 5, 2011

Kodiak, AK

Contact: WB Fred Lentz ([ksci@worldnet.att.net](mailto:ksci@worldnet.att.net))

### ◆ **Grand Lodge Long Range Planning Committee Meeting**

November 19, 2011

Anchorage, AK

Contact: RW James Herrington

([akhunter1213@hotmail.com](mailto:akhunter1213@hotmail.com))

### ◆ **St. John the Evangelist's Masonic Feast Day**

No know activities scheduled

### ◆ **[Robert Burns Night Celebration](#)**

January 25, 2012

Matanuska Lodge No. 7

Palmer, AK

Contact: Bro. Mitch Coulthard, MMS

([dasd@mtaonline.net](mailto:dasd@mtaonline.net))

### ◆ **MW Grand Lodge of the F&AM of Alaska, Inc. (and other GL Corps and Committees) Annual Meetings**

January 31, 2012

Sheraton Anchorage Hotel, Anchorage, AK

Contact: RW Jerry Wasson ([grandlodge@alaska.com](mailto:grandlodge@alaska.com))

### ◆ **31st Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Alaska**

February 1—3, 2012

Sheraton Anchorage Hotel, Anchorage, AK

Contact: RW Jerry Wasson ([grandlodge@alaska.com](mailto:grandlodge@alaska.com))

## Deputy Grand Master



**Brethren,**

I hope that everyone has had a wonderful summer catching lots of fish or doing chores around the house. I retired May 1, 2011 from the Department of Transportation, State of Alaska, and immediately started working around my house,

enhancing its appearance which has been overdue for some time.

Since my last article for the Light from the Great Land was devoted to Raising Master Masons in Kodiak, I have not properly thanked the Lodges in Southeast Alaska for their warm welcome, great friendship, and delicious meals we shared together. My sincere appreciation is extended to the brothers of Mt. Juneau-Gastineaux; Mt. Verstovia; Ketchikan; Petersburg; and White Pass Lodges for your kindness and brotherly love.



# Light from the Great Land

(Continued from Page 3)

The Grand Lodge activities are beginning to pick up as we approach the fall season. We will visit the Kenai Lodges (District Number 2) in August. During September we will visit the Fairbanks, Valdez, and Cordova Lodges (District 1), and Kodiak Lodge during October. Please check the Grand Lodge website calendar for the date and time for our visitation to your lodge.

The Grand Lodge Communication of February 2012 is rapidly approaching. Now is the time to prepare any Resolutions you want to submit to the Grand Lodge to change our Masonic Code. If you start the submission process now, the Jurisprudence Committee will have time to review and if changes need to be made, you will have time to make the necessary changes so the Proposed Resolution will be correct.

I do hope you will take time to attend the Grand Communication on January 31 - February 3, 2012 at the

Sheraton Hotel in Anchorage. Start making plans now so that when the Registration Packet arrives at your Lodge Secretary's Desk, you will be prepared to submit your Registration. The Grand Lodge Secretary, RW Jerry Wasson and his administrative staff, VW Tom Schram will ensure you are registered and your desires for Luncheon and Dinners will be available. Please don't wait until the last day to register or complete your meal request. The Grand Master must give a guaranteed meal count to the Sheraton Hotel several days before the Grand Lodge Communication ever begins. If you try to make reservation to attend after this guaranteed date, you may not be served. So, please make plans now.

I hope to see you during the Grand Master's Official Visit or at the Grand Lodge Communication.

"May the God of Love and Peace delight to dwell with you and bless you."

RW Jerry W. Pinion,  
Deputy Grand Master

## Senior Grand Warden

### SAFETY



Greetings to all the Brothers in Alaska. The summer is nearing the end and winter is fast approaching. I still haven't completed the "honey do" list I started out with in early April. It is and was a long list.

The Grand Masters visits are gearing up again and I'm looking forward to visiting the other lodges. We still have Fairbanks, Valdez, Seward, Kenai, Sterling, Kodiak and Cordova. I have enjoyed the entire visits thus far and I'm sure the others are going to be great.

My subject today is short but important. I was stuck on the Sterling highway several weeks ago due to two different accidents. Unfortunately there were fatalities in each. I honestly believe some people value a few fish more than their life, the life of their families and others. As the summer starts

to wind down and winter is approaching we will once again start getting ready for that last fishing trip. Then, we will start getting ready for the fall hunt. While both are important to all of us, I strongly encourage each and every one of you to first consider safety. Don't forget the first aid kit and take all the safety items you can carry. Please don't forget to let someone know where you are going. If you should break down way out there in the bush and cannot call for help, and you are not where you told your wife/husband/friend you would be, the search party will go where you said you would be and not where you are located now. Give yourself enough time to get there and back. If you get sleepy, pull off the road and take an hour or two nap, it might save a life and it could be yours or the life of those with you.

Please, as you all go about your busy schedule and planning those trips, don't forget safety.

Fraternally  
James Herrington  
Senior Grand Warden



# Light from the Great Land

## District NEWS



### **DISTRICT No. 1:**

Reported by  
VW Mike Starkey  
Deputy District No. 1

Brethren,

Tanana 3 had a busy spring. They conferred 4 Master Mason degrees during April and May. On May 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> they hosted the Brothers from Canada for International Days. Saturday started off with lunch, and then there was a special communication highlighted by the presentation of 50 year credentials to Brother Robert Baker. That was followed by an almost flawless Master Mason Degree conferred on Brother Ryan Bandy. That evening everyone went to the Pump House for dinner and fellowship. On Sunday we all went to the Shriners cabin at Harding Lake for a cookout. Steaks were the order of the day. The weather cooperated and we had a magnificent time. Eight petitions have been accepted and balloted on this summer, so it should be a very busy Fall at Tanana.

Valdez 4 hosted the District Deputy for his official visit on June 14<sup>th</sup>. It was wonderful to see so many ladies and children at the dinner. The sound of kids in the Lodge is something I would love to hear more of. I think involving the family is key to attracting young members and keeping them active. On June 18<sup>th</sup> two Brothers were raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason. Visiting Brothers from around the state traveled to Valdez to assist in the raising. On August 6<sup>th</sup> Valdez hosted the District Meeting for District 1. We had a delicious dinner of pulled pork sandwiches and grilled salmon. The meeting was well attended with Brothers from all over the state. On Sunday we all participated as Shriners in the Gold Rush Days parade. It was a very enjoyable weekend of Masonry and Fraternal Fellowship. Valdez will host the Grand Master for his Official Visitation on Tuesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>.

Fairbanks 12 has been very busy and active this spring and summer. They conferred third degrees on May 5<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, June 6<sup>th</sup> and July 14<sup>th</sup>. On May 19<sup>th</sup>, at the Stated Meeting, the Sojourners presented their flag tribute ceremony, and the Stated Meeting and dinner on June 16<sup>th</sup> was themed as a tribute to St. John the Baptist, in recognition of St. John the Baptist Day, which is June 24<sup>th</sup>. On June 30<sup>th</sup> they held a Masonic Education night that was open to all Masons. Their summer picnic was July 16 at the Chena Lakes swim beach pavilion. Good food and good fun was the order of the day.

On June 18 North Pole held the second annual North Pole Lodge 16 Turkey Shoot at the Chena Hot Springs Road shooting range. The shoot was open to all Masons, their families and friends. WM Dave Arnold of North Pole 16 was the defending champion. He loaned his rifle this year to WM Ed Rogers of Tanana 3 so Ed could compete in the competition. WM Ed won the competition, beating WM Dave with his own rifle. WM Dave will be presenting the trophy to him at Tanana 3's next stated meeting. North Pole 16 will be hosting the Grand Master for his official visit to the interior on Thursday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, at Tanana Lodge. A catered dinner will be served at 6:30, and the meeting will begin at 7:30.



### **DISTRICT No. 2:**

Reported by  
VW Billy Harris  
Deputy District No. 2

On June 25, 2011, Brothers from the Kenai Peninsula Lodges which is Seward #6, Kenai #11, and Sterling #22 came together at the Seward Masonic Lodge #6 cemetery. What is unique about this cemetery is that it is owned and operated by Seward Lodge #6 and is used for the burial of any Brother or Sister of our Fraternities with permission of the members of Seward Lodge #6. The day was spent by the Brothers cleaning up and making the



# Light from the Great Land

(Continued from Page 5)

cemetery just beautiful for the upcoming celebration of Fourth of July in Seward which is attended by thousands of people over that weekend and we wanted it to be a show piece for those people. Just to show our mission was accomplished we had people stopping by and telling us how good it looked even before we left for that day. If you are ever in Seward and want to learn a little about masonry in Alaska drop by the cemetery as there are names that will enlighten you.

### Sterling Lodge Halibut Feed

Reported by  
Bill Roberts, MMS  
W.M. Sterling Masonic Lodge No. 22



**Kitchen Crew from Sterling Lodge No. 22**

Sterling Masonic Lodge # 22 held a Halibut Feed as their fund raiser on Saturday, June 4, 2011 from 4:00 - 6:00 PM in the Senior Center in Sterling, AK.

Menu was: Fried Halibut, French Fried Potatoes, Hush Puppies, Cheese Biscuits, Tossed Salad, Cole Slaw, Baked Beans, Dessert and Soft Drinks.

The Lodge Members wish to thank the Brethren from Kenai # 11, Seward # 6, Anchorage #17 along others who attend the dinner. 105 people were served.



### **DISTRICT No. 4:**

Reported by  
VW Al Brookman, Deputy

This is our summer quarter and most of the lodges are dark July & August in District 4

**White Pass Lodge # 1** meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month, at noon. They had No Report, at this Date.

**Mt. Verstovia Lodge # 18** meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday, except when dark in July and August, at 8 PM. They cook meals for the different groups that meet at their lodge as a fund raiser. The Scottish Rite Club had a breakfast meeting, May 15<sup>th</sup>.

The last Bike Award of the year was given away on May 15<sup>th</sup>. The Lodge gives away 5 bikes each year to 3<sup>rd</sup> graders . A 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree was conferred May 21<sup>st</sup> at 12:30 PM.

At the June meeting the widows pin was passed around, so the brothers could become familiar with it and thereby be able to spot one, when worn by a masonic widow.

The Shrine Club met June 16<sup>th</sup> and a Scottish Rite breakfast meeting was held June 19<sup>th</sup>. The Building Corp had their quarterly meeting at 6 PM, June 2<sup>nd</sup> before the Lodge Meeting. So, the Lodge was busy in May and June.

**Ketchikan Lodge # 19** meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7 PM. They had No Report at this Date..

**Mt Juneau Gastineau # 21** meets the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month, except June, July, August and December, when they only meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday. at 7 PM. At the June meeting, a special presentation was made in lodge by the Juneau Assembly # 3 Rainbow for Girls, promoting a local fund raising activity for philanthropy.

June 15<sup>th</sup> was the opening ceremony for the Grand Assembly of Alaska in Juneau. Mt Juneau Shrine Club hosted a picnic for all who had signed up to attend, the evening before June 14<sup>th</sup>. MW Ron Ackerman (Grand Master of Masons in Alaska) attended the picnic and the opening ceremony on June 15<sup>th</sup>, where he gave the opening address. VW Al Brook-



# Light from the Great Land

(Continued from Page 6)

man (Deputy of the Grand Master for District #4) gave the opening and closing prayers at the picnic. Also in Attendance that Evening was Grand Senior Deacon



**Grand Assembly of Alaska:** from left: Susannah Maher, Jurisdictional Correspondent, Grand Assembly of Washington/Idaho; Most Worshipful Ronald Ackerman, Grand Master of Masons in Alaska; Michelle Baise, Grand Worthy Advisor, Grand Assembly of Virginia

Robert Cartmill and Grand Tyler Steven Stewart.

At the opening ceremony of Grand Assembly, Mt Juneau Gastineaux Lodge # 21 presented a scholarship award to Samantha Alex, a Juneau Rainbow Girl. The award was a four year scholarship of \$1500.00 per year and a new lap top.

Mt. Juneau/Gastineaux Lodge received dispensation from Grand Lodge to hold a special outdoor called communications July 23<sup>rd</sup>, for the purpose of conferring Master Mason Degree on two Fellowcraft Masons, so Juneau has had a busy May, June & July.

**Petersburg Lodge # 23** meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm, except July, August, and September, when they are dark. They had no report at this date.

*(The following is a letter from, W Brother Claude Roberts, a member of Mt Juneau Gastineaux Lodge # 21, in which he reports on a special meeting he attended.)*

Recently while on a Cruise the the Western Caribbean, I was wearing my Masonic Suspenders. I had been approached by several Masons who recognized the suspenders and introduced themselves to me. About the 5th or 6th person to do this was a Past Grand Master from Michigan. We talked for a few minutes and I said to him that there is enough Past Masters on the ship that we could hold a meeting. He said that sounded like a great idea.

I went to the ships person that schedules things like that and talked to him. He informed me that that happens quite often and asked when I would like to have this meeting. He had a room available for such things. It was decided to hold the meeting the next day at 1:00pm. We put out notices and the next day at 1:00pm, 4 days out of Cape Canaveral, we held a Masonic meeting with 31 Masons in attendance. The Past Grand Master was the Master, I was Senior Warden. A Mason from Australia was the Junior Warden. We met for about 1 1/2 hours. Everyone introduced themselves and told of their Lodge. There were also Masons from Texas, North Carolina, Oklahoma, California, Michigan, Arizona, Louisiana, and New Zealand.

It was such a moving experience for me to sit in a Lodge with so many Masons from all over the country and out in the ocean in the Western Caribbean about 100 miles North of the Equator. it is something I will never forget.

---

## **DISTRICT No. 5:**

Reported by the  
Secretary of Matanuska Lodge No. 7

The brethren from the Lodges in District No. 5 have had a busy time communing with nature (read: slaughtering salmon). In the lull between salmon runs, they have enjoyed friendship and fellowship while participating in community and Lodge activities. June and July found the members of Matanuska Lodge No. 7, Eagle River Lodge No. 13, and Iditarod Lodge No. 20 following the parade circuit.



# Light from the Great Land

(Continued from Page 7)



**Sir Knights Jack Newell (MMS) and Lee Seagondollar (MMS) on the Colony Day's Parade float.**

On June 11, brethren from Matanuska Lodge, joined by Masons from Eagle River and Anchorage, Matanuska Chapter No. 14 (OES), and the AlAska Shrine



**Wasilla Independence Day Parade**

mini cars participated in the Colony Days Parade in Palmer.

On Independence Day, brethren from Matanuska Lodge, along with brethren from Eagle River and Iditarod Lodges and OES Chapter #14 were found in Wasilla reprising their parade waving skills during the Wasilla 4th of July parade.

On July 9th, the parade float moved to Eagle River, where District No. 5 Masons participated in the Bear Paw Festival and parade.



**Sir Knight Jimmie McGoldrick and Companions Buck Buxton and Ted Hutchinson (MMS) on the Bear Paw Festival Parade float.**

July 23rd witnessed the resurrection of the District No. 5 Junior Warden's picnic. Hosted by Matanuska Lodge No. 7 and held at the Matanuska River Park, District No. 5 Masons, their families, and friends



**District No. 5 Jr. Warden's Picnic**





# Light from the Great Land

(Continued from Page 8)

enjoyed a sumptuous barbeque and great fellowship.



**WB Craig Boyd (MMS), Iditarod Lodge No. 20 and WB Dennis Oakland (MMS), Matanuska Lodge No. 7 at Matanuska's 60th Anniversary Celebration.**

Matanuska Lodge No. 7 is also currently in the midst of remodeling their Tyler's room. This is the first phase in what is hoped to be a complete revamping of the Matanuska Masonic Temple. The Temple building was built in the 1940s as a carpenter's union hiring hall for the Matanuska Valley Colony project. Although, it has seen some major additions and renovations over the years, most of the previous work has been directed toward practical improvements to make the building more habitable. In addition to addressing structural concerns about the building, current initiatives are aimed at meeting the solemn needs of a Masonic Temple. The Tyler's room is the first impression most visitors get of the Lodge building itself, and current efforts are designed to provide a positive impression. As a first step, everything was removed from the room and the walls given a fresh coat of paint. The utilitarian fluorescent light was removed and replaced with a more appealing fixture. The rear window, which



**Matanuska Masonic Temple Tyler's Room (before)**

looked over the emergency exit stairwell, was removed and covered over. Cabinets and bookshelves, which will eventually house the Lodge's library have been installed.



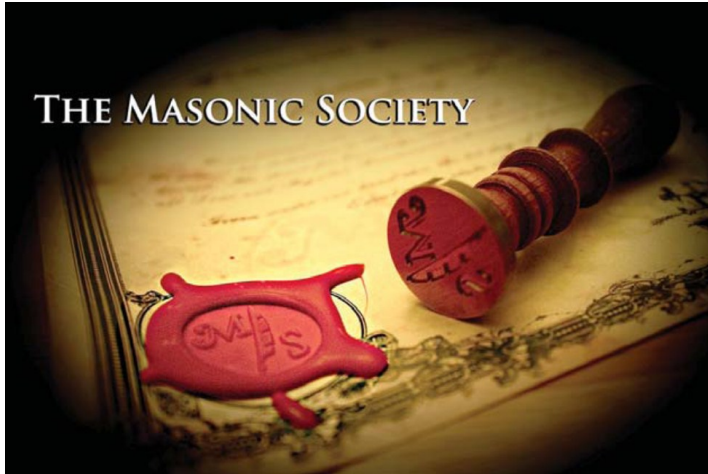
**Tyler's Room (work in progress)**

On September 10, the Lodge will hold a Friendship Night/Open House for Masons and their families and those who have an interest in what Freemasonry can offer. For more information, please contact WB Dennis Oakland, [dennis86@mtaonline.net](mailto:dennis86@mtaonline.net).



# Light from the Great Land

The following was first published in January 2011 edition of "The Connecticut Freemason".



## What Is The Masonic Society?

by Chris Hodapp

*"The ultimate success of Masonry depends on the intelligence of her disciples." – Albert Mackey*

In 2008, a significant group of passionate brethren came together to form The Masonic Society, aiming to create the premier research society in Freemasonry. It has since become the fastest growing Masonic research organization in the world, with members in all 50 states, Canada, and 15 other countries.

The name, The Masonic Society, intentionally alludes to the Royal Society, the innovative organization of visionary men who were at the forefront of the Age of Enlightenment. Many were present at the formation of what became modern Freemasonry. Likewise, the Society is at the forefront of a new age of Freemasonry, and they are a vibrant, active community within the fraternity.

The goal of The Masonic Society is not just to look backward at the history of Freemasonry, but to foster the intellectual, spiritual, and social growth of the modern fraternity.

To that end, The Masonic Society extends the hand of

assistance and cooperation to individual research lodges throughout the Masonic world. It is the desire of The Masonic Society to be a partner with these lodges, to give their members the regular opportunity to publish their papers for an international audience, and to publicize their activities.

The Masonic Society has also forged a special relationship with those bodies that meet annually during Masonic Week, as well as with the Masonic Service Association, the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the US, and the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association. While not designed as a York Rite-specific research group, The Masonic Society especially encourages examination of this branch of Freemasonry.

Membership in The Masonic Society is \$39 per year (\$49 outside of the United States and Canada). Benefits include:

- ◆ The quarterly *Journal of the Masonic Society* features articles by some of the best known authors in Freemasonry, as well as the brethren from the lodges in your neighborhood. There are also works from the non-Masonic academic world that is looking with greater interest than ever at our fraternity and its place in society. Each issue includes Masonic news, beautiful photography, and commentary from around the globe, in full color. The Journal also features advertising from a select group of publishers, regalia manufacturers, and fraternal supply companies that specialize in products specific to Freemasons – the only Masonic magazine of its kind to do so in the United States and Canada. The Journal's editor is Christopher L. Hodapp, author of *Freemasons For Dummies* and *Solomon's Builders*.

- ◆ Members-only access to the Masonic Society online Internet forum, where hundreds of Masons from around the globe interact every day, helping each other learn more about the fraternity.

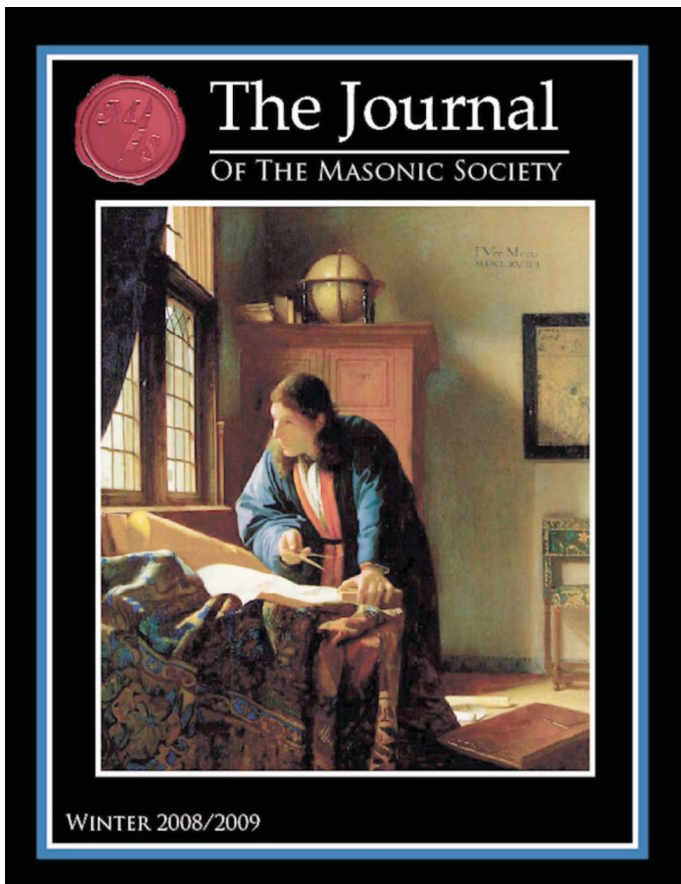
- ◆ Annual First Circle gatherings – each year, The



# Light from the Great Land

(Continued from Page 10)

Masonic Society is an active participant in the Allied Masonic Degrees “Masonic Week,” held in February in Alexandria, Virginia, and which includes our annual First Circle gathering. An additional semi-annual symposium is held elsewhere once a year. Past meetings have taken place in Indianapolis and New Orleans, and in 2011, Salt Lake City. These events are educational, informative, but most of all, fun and memorable to attend.



◆ Second Circles - Masonic Society members are automatically members of state-wide or regional groups called Second Circles. These groups organize more localized seminars, speeches, tours, dinners, and other gatherings, and members are encouraged to meet and work with brethren in their areas. Second Circles also volunteer to help at their local Grand Lodge functions and events.

◆ Programs are negotiated with publishers and other businesses for members-only discounts on books, clothing, jewelry, regalia, and other items.

◆ And of course it wouldn't be a Masonic organization without pins and membership cards, but the Society cranks up the quality of these items, producing elegant symbols of membership that have earned accolades. Each member receives an 11 inch by 14 inch patent, personalized and highly stylized, that you'll want professionally framed. It is a very impressive document on parchment with a hand-stamped wax seal.

Fellows of The Masonic Society are named each year, in recognition of their contribution to the body of knowledge of the fraternity, through their writing, their Internet work, their service to the Society, or other labors for Freemasonry.

Membership in the Society is open to regular Master Masons in good standing of regular, recognized Grand Lodges in good standing with the Conference of Grand Masters of Masons in North America (CGMMNA), or a Grand Lodge in amity with a member Grand Lodge of CGMMNA. Non-Masons, libraries, lodges, and members of other audiences may also subscribe to the Journal at the same annual rate.

Membership rates are:

◆ Domestic Membership (US/Canada):

US\$39.00/yr

◆ Overseas Membership (non-US/Canada):

US\$49.00/yr

Journal Subscription rates are:

◆ Domestic Subscription (US/Canada):

US\$39.00/yr

◆ Overseas Subscription (non-US/ Canada):

US\$49.00/yr

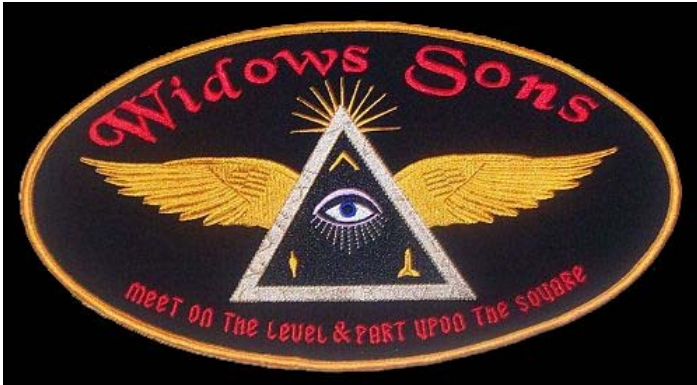
To learn more, visit the Society website at:

<http://www.themasonicsociety.com>



# Light from the Great Land

## Widows Sons Memorial Day Ride



Report from the road...  
By WB Dan McCrummen

The Alaska Grand Chapter of the Widows Sons completed another successful Memorial Day weekend ride. Meeting up in [Beaver Creek, Yukon](#) were three riders, two with passengers, from [Fairbanks](#), one rider from [Delta Jct.](#), two riders from [Ketchikan](#), one rider from [Douglas](#), and seven riders, one with a passenger, from [Juneau](#) for a total of 13 Widows Sons on bikes. Four ladies joined the ride, including the one known as the “Black Widow” riding her own scoot (her second year riding with us).

For two of the Southeast brothers the ride started down in Ketchikan, one took the ferry to [Haines](#) and the other flew to Juneau to pick up his bike and join the other SE brothers for the ferry ride to Haines. On Friday morning, May 26<sup>th</sup>, nine Widows Sons and two ladies left Haines for the scenic ride up the Haines highway. After a fuel stop and visit to the package store, we headed up the [ALCAN](#) towards our accommodations for the night. 35 miles from [Haines Jct.](#) we left the highway to travel down a gravel road, through the ghost town of [Silver City](#), and stopping at the Kluane Bed & Breakfast. This out of the way lodging, situated on the southern shore of [Lake Kluane](#), is a true gem. We had exclusive use of the cabins and house, so the not-so-subtle sound of Harleys and Victories, plus an Indian and a Honda or two,

along with the smell of aged cigars, were no bother to other guests. After a scrumptious dinner of crab legs and grilled salmon and pork ribs, we were ready for story-time. As the cigars were lit and the beer, wine, and scotch flowed, much discussion ensued regarding music trivia, with the frequent reminder that many music greats hailed from the Lone Star state. We were again blessed with clear weather, few mosquitoes, and a mid-night sun, so the frivolity continued late into the night.

Saturday morning found us in great spirits, enjoying fresh coffee, and loading up the bikes. In short order we were loaded up and ready to ride into [Destruction Bay](#) for breakfast. The 30 mile scenic ride along Kluane Lake to Destruction Bay is a great way to start the day. Pulling into Talbot Arms Inn we settled in for a hearty breakfast, knowing the next leg of the ride would be the most challenging. With full bellies we pulled out onto the ALCAN and headed for Beaver Creek. The last 50 miles of the road consisted of gravel, pot holes, and frost heaves. Although challenging, we navigated the road without incident and arrived in Beaver Creek dusty, rattled, and thirsty. Shortly after arriving we found our northern brethren who had arrived the evening before.

Brother DeFreest, desiring to add more mileage to his new bike “Bonz,” along with the company of Brother Shivers who wanted to continue to prove his Indian road worthy, continued their ride on to [North-](#)



[way](#), returning later that afternoon.

That afternoon we held a brief meeting and discussed various topics. Brother Barnett read off a list

(Continued on Page 13)



# Light from the Great Land

(Continued from Page 12)

of “road” names for some of our nameless brothers. Widows Sons hats and t-shirts were also discussed. A suggestion was also made that next year we should plan on going to [Whitehorse](#) first and attending the International Days celebration at the Whitehorse lodge. We agreed that depending on the schedule of events, the ferry schedule, etc., that we would try to attend. At the conclusion of the meeting, Donn Heflin, also known as the Black Widow, was presented with a challenge coin. This was Donn’s second year to ride her own scoot and was deserving of such recognition. The Rider of the Year award was also presented. This year, because he can’t seem to get enough time in the saddle, and because of the several new members he has influenced to join, Brother Jeff DeFreest was recognized as the Rider of the Year. Congratulations Brother Jeff!

Saturday night’s entertainment was provided by the hotel staff at the Rendezvous. As in years past, the show was most entertaining. All of the new female staff, as well as most of the returning staff, we promptly and appropriately “pinned” with a Widows Sons pin. All in all it was a fun filled evening for the Widows Sons, the travelling visitors, and the hotel staff.

Sunday morning found some of us moving a little slow, but all of us were ready to ride on to Whitehorse. After a grand late morning breakfast, we said farewell to our northern brothers and ladies and once again headed out for the challenging part of our ride. Once we cleared the rough spots in the road, we picked up speed and had an uneventful, but pleasant, ride to Whitehorse, with fuel stops in Destruction Bay and Haines Jct. Various kinds of wildlife were spotted by some of the more observant brothers, such as moose and bison. Unfortunately many of the Whitehorse brethren were out of town and no social events were planned or held.

Memorial Day morning we awoke to beautiful weather and ready for the trip to [Skagway](#). Back on the ALCAN we headed for Jake’s Corner, where we stopped for gas and said farewell to our Ketchikan brothers. Brothers DeFreest and Alderson were head-

ed on down the road to the [Cassiar Highway](#) and then Prince Rupert. After taking on fuel the seven remaining bikes, six Widows Sons, the Black Widow, and a lady passenger, headed for [Carcross](#) and Skagway. At the top of [White Pass](#), at the “Welcome to Alaska” sign, we stopped and observed a moment of silence for those men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice so we may be free to meet as Masons and ride where we please. In Skagway we were met by the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Alaska, Ron Ackerman and Brother Rick Ackerman who served up lunch – hamburgers and potato salad. With full bellies we moseyed on down the road to the ferry terminal and awaited our ride home.

As in the previous two years, we had beautiful sunny weather, limited traffic, and we met Masonic brethren at nearly every stop. Thanks once again go to John Barnett for his extensive efforts in planning the ride. Terrific job Brother John! Thanks also to the MW GM Ron and Brother Rick in Skagway for their warm hospitality. And of greatest importance, the Supreme Architect deserves a round of thanks for



looking over us and providing great weather. Look for more pictures on our website at [www.widowssonsalaska.org](http://www.widowssonsalaska.org). Until next year, see ya on the road!

