



A Publication for Prince Hall Masons Who Seek More Light & Have Light To Impart

The Phylaxis

VOL. XXXIX NO. 1

FIRST QUARTER 2012



BROTHERLY INFLUENCE

Prince Hall Freemasonry's Lasting
Impression on African-American
Fraternal Orders

Reclaiming Our Prince Hall Identity

Martin Luther King, Prince Hall Mason?

United States Naval Ship Medgar Evers

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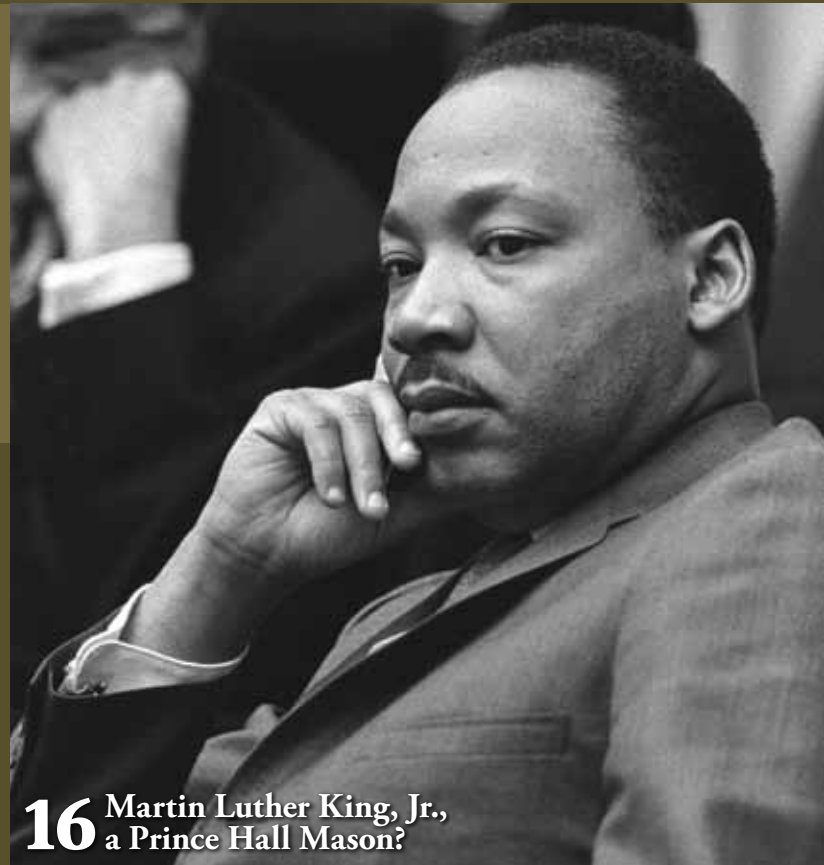
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11 Convention Registration

Due to our recent venue change to the Hilton Garden Inn at Jackson, MS, we needed to update our convention registration form.

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13 Transportation Request Form

The Jackson Airport is remote, so take advantage of this special offer provided by Stringer Grand Lodge of Mississippi.



On the Cover: Prince Hall Masons and Odd Fellows come together at the laying of the cornerstone for Wesley Union AME Zion Church in Harrisburg, PA on October 18, 1914. Turn to page 20 for more on their connection.

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*A Society for Prince Hall
Freemasons who seek more light,
and who have light to impart*

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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Please address membership inquiries to the Financial Secretary at the address below. The membership fee is \$35.00 per year, which amount includes a subscription to *The Phylaxis* magazine for one year. Any regular Mason may become a member of The Phylaxis Society. Individuals and organizations who do not qualify as members may become subscribers.

Subscription and Membership: \$35 per year

MAIL RENEWALS AND NEW MEMBERSHIP TO:

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A NEW YEAR, A NEW LOOK, AND A RENEWED VISION

There is no need to mention the change in the format of our magazine: the change is not a subtle one. We owe this new design concept to a very special brother, Brother Brian Sanchez, MPS, out of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Indiana. We welcome Brother Sanchez. We have been so delighted with his work that he is now the Associate Editor of *The Phylaxis* magazine. Let's thank him and wish him well in his Masonic travels.

Our 2012 convention will be hosted in Jackson, Mississippi in March by Most Worshipful Grand Master Maurice Lucas and the members of Most Worshipful Stringer Grand Lodge of Mississippi, PHA. By the time you receive this magazine, the deadlines will all be upon us, so there will be little time to procrastinate. If you can come, we will be happy to see you. All first time attendees to the Phylaxis convention, please seek me out when you arrive and introduce yourself. Also, show your support of the Society by taking out an ad in the souvenir journal.

We are working hard to get word out that we have changed the venue for the convention. We will talk about the reasons in more detail at the convention. The registration forms are included once again in this edition of the magazine and they include contact information for the new hotel. The convention dates remain the same.

For a few weeks, I have been working almost exclusively as the Society's webmaster and database administrator. I have been redesigning the interface for our Masonic Sites Database so that it is more fun and more useful to navigate. The Masonic sites database has been on our web site for a couple of years now, but the interface has been cumbersome and awkward. I have structured the new interface in two parts: one for visitors so that they can view sites in the database, and one for the director to enter and update the data. We discuss the database on page 5 of this issue showing a couple of the screen shots and giving the FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) page of the site.

I believe that such a database has the potential to become a major research resource for Masonic historians and for the public in general when they seek to learn about the Order of Freemasonry. You will notice when you visit the page that some pages have a MORE link. This link takes you to another web site, if we know of one, that contains additional information about the site. Eventually, the links on this page will allow us to do away with our MASONIC LINKS page.

If the Masonic sites database is ever to live up to its potential, we need your help in identifying meeting halls and other sites in your area. Do it early and you will be given credit on the web page for making the submission. Here's what we need you to do:

read the article in this magazine, take your camera to your lodge, make a photograph, and send it to us. If you are able to get the GPS coordinates, send them to us also, and give us a little information about your site and who meets there. If you are missing something, you can add it later, so send us what you have as you get it. If you don't have the GPS coordinates, give us the mailing address and we can get the coordinates from a mapping program. It would help if you could do that for us, though. To view Masonic Sites, start on the Phylaxis Society's home page, click the link for the GO TO PHYLAXIS SITE, then click OUR PROGRAMS, and you will find a link to the Masonic sites database, which is <http://thephylaxis.org/phylaxis/siteDisplay.php>. Report any website problems if you find any to webmaster@thephylaxis.org. Report any new Masonic sites data to sites@thephylaxis.org.

We will feature letters to the editor when we get them. We have a dedicated email address you can use to contact us with your comments: letters@thephylaxis.org. Let us hear from you. There are some good ideas out there that can be shared with our membership.

Due to the urging of one of our newer members, I have signed up on Facebook and the Phylaxis Society has a Facebook presence as well. If you are on Facebook, please FRIEND the Society's page at <http://www.facebook.com/thephylaxis.org>.

HELP WANTED

The Board of Directors of the Phylaxis Society has voted to create the position of Comptroller and we will be looking to fill this position as soon as we find a good candidate. The duties have yet to be defined, but the idea is that this person will oversee the inspection and control of the financial affairs and the fiscal policy of the Society. He will operate somewhat independently in that he will have no particular allegiance to the president of the Society or to any particular board member; his allegiance will be to the constitution, bylaws and Articles of Incorporation of the society. The candidate must have a good working knowledge of the Society's purpose and goals, he must be thoroughly versed in the laws of the Society, and must have a reasonable mastery of sound business practices. He must attend the Phylaxis conventions regularly. Resumés must be emailed to help@thephylaxis.org.

Yours fraternally,

MASONIC SITES FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the purpose of the program?

The focus of the Masonic Sites Program is to develop a national database of sites containing GPS locations, digital photographs, and descriptive data for each piece of real estate that is of interest to Prince Hall Masons. This database will eventually contain entries for every meeting place used by Prince Hall Masons (present and past), the grave sites of notable Prince Hall Masons, and all other sites or monuments applicable to the history of Prince Hall Masonry. This database is intended to be an important source of historical data about Prince Hall Masonry.

Why is my lodge not showing in this database?

We have only just begun to populate the database. We have to rely on people such as yourself to make the photos, get the GPS coordinates, and send them to us. If you want to help, read on to find out how to do it.

I tried to go to one of the sites and my GPS took me to the wrong place. What happened?

This is the danger we face with such a database. If any part of the GPS coordinate is in error or a digit is transposed, the GPS navigator will be send you to the wrong location, and the location can be off considerably depending on where error is. An error in one of the leftmost digits can send you to the wrong city or even the wrong state. An error in the algebraic sign of a coordinate can put you in the wrong hemisphere. You should check on a mapping program to validate any coordinates you plan to use for a road trip. We will exercise due diligence in entering data we receive into the database correctly, but we cannot place a warranty of any kind on its accuracy.

What sites can go into the database?

Each building used as a Masonic meeting place should be recorded in this database on the premise that it could eventually be of historic significance and is likely of historic significance now.



Grave site of Joseph A. Walkes, Jr., is of special importance to The Phylaxis Society because he was the Society's founder and first president. Associated with the site are images taken when the Society visited the grave in 2009 to lay a wreath. Thanks to the Global Positioning System (GPS), future generations will be able to travel to this site and all other sites that are documented in this database.



Castle Island in Boston Harbor is the site where Prince Hall and fourteen other men of color were made Masons. It is a goal of our Masonic sites program to seek out and document all such sites in this national database.

Who can submit entries for the database?

This will be a collaborative project so anyone who has the ability to get GPS coordinates and make photos can submit data. You can start by submitting the data on your lodge building and on any grave sites you know about.

How can I get GPS coordinates?

You can use a mapping program such as those from Google and Google Earth to get the coordinates for buildings. Find the building in Google Earth, for example, and when you place the mouse pointer on it, Google Earth will display the latitude and longitude. Those are the coordinates we need. For a gravesite or monument that might not show up on a mapping program, you will need a portable or automobile GPS device. Follow the instructions for your device to find the coordinates of your current location. Some phones and cameras now have GPS devices built into them. Those will do just fine.

What information do I need to provide?

- A short title of the site (no more than 128 characters).
- A brief description of the site (no more than 512 characters).
- Masonic jurisdiction where the site is located.
- Name of person submitting the data for this site.
- Longitude.
- Latitude.
- Digital photo.
- Caption for the photo.
- Name of photographer or copyright holder.
- Year photograph was taken.

How big can the photos be?

Quality matters! But we cannot use photos that are too large. Photos larger 500 pixels in either direction will be scaled back when they are uploaded to the database. Image files larger than allowed by the server cannot uploaded at all, so we will have to resize them manually.

How do I submit data for a site?

Email your data to Director of Masonic Sites at masonic_sites@thephylaxis.org. We might some day allow Phylaxis members the capability to enter data directly, but only after we have added additional security measures.

RECLAIMING OUR PRINCE HALL MASONIC IDENTITY

By Brian C. Sanchez, MPS

THE YEAR IS 2012, and we as Free & Accepted Prince Hall Masons have arrived at a crossroads. Since the day Prince Hall took his solemn obligation of Master Mason in March of 1775, the fraternity known the world over as Prince Hall Masonry has faced many challenges, has risen above countless obstacles, and has overcome much adversity. It has taken 228 years for us to get the universal recognition we have rightly earned in the face of Freemasonry at large, and yet there are still a handful of states that have yet to break off the rough corners of their ashlar, meet us on the level, and embrace us as the brothers we inherently are. But that is not of our concern, for we know what is true in our hearts, and we know what is true in the hearts of the overwhelming majority who do properly recognize us as brothers and as equals. While the struggle for recognition was the resounding theme for the 20th Century, a new set of challenges face us as we shake off the dust and debris of old struggles from our suits and aprons and continue to traverse into the new millennium.

As we usher into the 21st century, Prince Hall Masonry has now entered a critical stage in its existence. From our rightfully-earned recognition came a certain pride, and out of that pride came complacency. From this complacency, a void has appeared over the horizon. For with every inch of Masonic recognition we gained, an inch was lost in identity. For as long as we have strived to walk and act as Freemasons before God and man, we have forgotten to value and nurture what is exclusively ours—our identity as Prince Hall Masons.

Our non-Prince-Hall-affiliated contemporaries have spent centuries cultivating their identity as we followed one step behind and gleaned from what remained of their harvest. This was no fault of ours, however, for the birth of our institution was but a product of circumstances beyond our control. Yet, if it were not for the sins of our nation's past, we would not be present at this very moment as upright men and Masons. It is from these lessons of our past that we can begin to rediscover an identity that is truly ours, one that all men of virtue and determination—regardless of race, creed, or color—can relate to, and one that we as Prince Hall Masons can be proud of.

The age of recognition has passed, and today we are invited to embrace this new age for Prince Hall Masonry—the age of identity. An identity rediscovered, rekindled, and renewed. An identity forged from what began when 15 African-American men believed

that Light in Masonry was as much theirs to seek and rightfully attain as any other man. An identity affirmed in 1784 with the issuing of a warrant for a charter. An identity intertwined with a tradition dating back farther than what recorded history can even tell us, yet unique and extraordinary in the experiences, hardships, lessons, and achievements that we all share with our forebears, and seemingly have in common with each other.

And so the question I pose to you all is this: Why should a man want to become a Prince Hall Mason? Why should any man want to be a Prince Hall Mason if it is so much easier to seek out the more commonly accepted, so-called “mainstream” brand of Freemasonry? What can I gain from Prince Hall Masonry that I cannot gain from our non-Prince Hall Affiliated institutions? Brothers, we have the answer. We are the answer. From our successful food drives to our Christmas toy drives, we are the answer. From our street cleanings to our caring for the less fortunate, we are the answer. From the brotherly love and relief that we eagerly offer to those who

may not even recognize us as brothers, to our renowned practice and strict observance of Masonic tradition and ritual that put our other brothers to shame, we are the answer. We exemplify a Masonic tradition and culture so rich, so pure, and so unadulterated that it would make even Brother George Washington stand up and take notice. But it is Prince Hall whom we call our patron and founder, and it is from him that our identity as Prince Hall Masons originates.

What sets us apart is a narrative that is exclusively ours, yet it is one that can resonate with all men who aspire to greatness. Ours is a story of Prince Hall; a story only we can share, for it is our story to tell. Ours is more than a tradition passed down from the stone masons of China and Ancient Egypt; more than what was passed down from the Dionysian Artificers to the Comacine Masters of old. We are more than the tradition passed down from free to accepted, from operative to speculative in the Old World, across the Atlantic and into the New World. We are all this and much more, for interwoven within these age old traditions is an unbreakable and unyielding thread—a history, a narrative, a spirit, and a soul—that has endured and achieved on its own. This is what Prince Hall Masonry is. This is what it means to be a Prince Hall Mason. This is why one chooses to become a Prince Hall Mason over any other. This is why I chose to become a Prince Hall Mason. Let this be our legacy. Let this be our identity. Let this be



Brian C. Sanchez, MPS

our message. And let no one take this away from us.

Indeed, this is the age of our reclaimed identity; however, this realization has come at a point where we have reached a crossroads in our evolution. Certain challenges over the horizon must be faced in order to cross over and partake in the fruits of our endeavors. Challenges that, if not duly acknowledged and seriously dealt with, will certainly lead to our breakdown and ultimate demise.

While the decades have allowed our established brethren to grow in wisdom, refining one's self ever so closer to becoming a Perfect Ashlar, the world outside of our well-guarded Lodge doors have fared less than favorably. What we have gained as Free & Accepted Prince Hall Masons from within, the outside world has all but lost. To say that the breakdown of modern society has no profound impact on the future of our fraternity's existence is to be blind and out of touch with reality. What's worse is that Freemasonry as an institution that exists to make good men better has failed not only to address this, but has failed to properly address itself as a solution to society's ills. Children today are lost with no real role-models other than what the media manufactures for them to aspire to, and what their environment forces them to accept. Fatherless homes. Gang violence. Delinquency. Apathy. Loss of direction. Overall membership into Freemasonry has already been in steady decline, and it has fared far worse for Prince Hall Masonry. If these children are to become the future Prince Hall Masons of tomorrow, then all hope is lost for our humble craft. And yet within the walls of our lodges are responsible fathers, dutiful brothers, dedicated leaders, and inspirational men who already are role-models by the very fact that they are Masons. So what are we waiting for? One brother alone can only do so much. Imagine 100 brothers. Now imagine every single Prince Hall Mason.

Yes, this can be possible. This can be achieved. But not in the current state that Prince Hall Masonry is today. We are a foundation without a stable, reliable infrastructure. Our Lodges may be well intact, but the means through which one can find out about our Lodges are far from what they can be. Do a Google search on "Freemasonry" and we'll be lucky if a Prince Hall Lodge website shows up on the first page of results, if at all! This has to change. If a man is interested in Prince Hall Masonry, he is introduced to a website that looks inadequately-designed, unrefined, incomplete, or abandoned—and that's if the website is working at all! If our web presence in this technological age is intended to be a reflection of our proud, stable fraternity, then to say that we are doing ourselves a major disservice is an understatement. This has to change. If a man interested in Prince Hall Masonry can't even find a working telephone number or e-mail address to express his interest in becoming a Mason, then how are we to expect any new members to come knocking on our doors? This has to change. If the information men are receiving about Prince Hall Masonry is not coming from Free & Accepted Prince Hall Affiliated Masons, then it is no wonder why we are to this day misjudged, mislabeled, and misrepresented. This has to change. And sadly, if a man knows nothing about Prince Hall or Prince Hall Masonry, chances are he will never. This certainly has to change.

Change begins with a belief that Prince Hall Masonry is indeed

relevant in these most desperate times. From there, we must be ready to offer something only we can give. But this cannot be done without a healthy, vibrant fraternity. The vitality of Prince Hall Masonry depends on, among other things, its ability to access services and resources necessary to sustain it. Without these services and resources, our fraternity will cease to function optimally, and eventually cease to be relevant. While we may not have access to unlimited funds to pay for such services from outside our Lodge doors, we do have these services and resources at our disposal from within. All it takes is for some talented, dedicated, creative, and proactive brothers to stand up, make themselves known, and take on the role of better serving Prince Hall Masonry, so that Prince Hall Masonry may be better able to serve society at large. The time is now to stop talking about change and to actually be the change Prince Hall Masonry needs. The future of our organization depends on it.

Honorable brethren and fellows, we as enlightened members of The Phylaxis Society are invited to heed this clarion call to action. If we truly are a society of Prince Hall Masons who wish to better serve Prince Hall Masonry with the light of knowledge,

"Certain challenges over the horizon must be faced in order to cross over and partake in the fruits of our endeavors. Challenges that, if not duly acknowledged and seriously dealt with, will certainly lead to our breakdown and ultimate demise."

then we must accept the fact that we have not done enough to utilize what modern tools the Information Age has given us to further share our light. If we are to see ourselves as the premier intellectual, historical, and philosophical voice of Prince Hall Masonry, then we must have a presence so profound and a light so bright, that most—if not all—of the verifiable information found online and in print should have its source from The Phylaxis Society. We as members of Prince Hall Masonry's most renowned historical research society are encouraged not only to shine your light of knowledge locally, but virally online through bulletin boards, forums, and social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter. The Phylaxis Society is doing its part in keeping current by creating its own official Facebook account (<http://www.facebook.com/thephylaxis.org>), so that we finally have a centralized hub within the growing realm of social media. We have our official Yahoo Group (<http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/phylaxisociety>), which since 2007 has served to bring Society members together to discuss and share our perspectives, insight, and knowledge. And finally, we have our official website (<http://www.thephylaxis.org>) that serves as our virtual home base. The Society has met us all half-way by providing us with these tools to help better spread our blazing light. Now it is our turn to return the favor. This is our challenge. This is our vision: a vision that not only serves to better represent the Society as a whole, but all of Prince Hall Affiliated Freemasonry.

Brian C. Sanchez is the Phylaxis Council Representative for Indiana and Associate Editor for *The Phylaxis*. He is also the president and co-founder of Prince Hall United Services Association (PHUSA.org).

MEDGAR EVERS HONORED WITH U.S. NAVAL SHIP

By Stephen Hill, Sr., FPS

ON A RAINY SATURDAY MORNING, over 1,000 people filled the folding chairs in the large white tents on the dock of the General Dynamics NASSCO shipyard in San Diego. It is November 12, 2011 and the crowd is there to witness the christening of the navy's newest supply ship, the *United States Naval Ship Medgar Evers*. Ceremony attendees included California Governor Jerry Brown, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus, and Medgar Evers' brother Charles Evers, sister Elizabeth Evers-Jordan, and daughter Reena Evers-Everette.

When Medgar Evers' widow Myrlie Evers-Williams took the podium she told the crowd "In the raindrops that fall, I can envision the raindrops being the tears of all of those people in this country who have fought so long and so hard to see where we are today. But those were not tears of sorrow, but they were tears of joy. So I adopted the feeling let the rain come down, it's alright..." The ceremony ended with Myrlie Evers-Williams saying "I christen you the USNS Medgar Evers" as she broke a bottle of champagne against the bow of the ship, and the crowd cheering as the newly christened USNS Medgar Evers slowly pulled away from the dock.

Two years earlier, during an October 9, 2009 naming ceremony at Jackson State University Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus announced his decision to name the 689-foot T-AKE class ship after slain Civil Rights leader Medgar Evers. Construction of the ship began in April 2010, and the ship will be delivered to the Navy in the second quarter of 2012, where its mission will be to deliver more than 10,000 tons of food, ammunition, and fuel to combat ships at sea.

After graduating from Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College (now Alcorn State University) with a degree in business Evers and his wife moved to the all African America town of Mound Bayou, Mississippi where he sold insurance for the African American owned Magnolia Mutual Life insurance company. In 1954 he moved to Jackson, Mississippi and began working full time as the NAACP's first field secretary for the state of Mississippi. Shortly after the 1954 dedication of the M.W. Stringer Grand Lodge Temple, Evers rented an office on the second floor. Evers was a Master of the Royal Secret (32nd degree) of the United Supreme Council, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Prince Hall Affiliation, Southern Jurisdiction.



Evers' work as the NAACP field secretary for Mississippi made him one of the most despised Negroes in the state. According to a June 2, 1963 *Jet* magazine article: "By 1955 he was the youngest man on the nine-man 'Death List,' which had been freely circulated in the state." And: "By 1963, Evers had moved up to No. 1." In fact someone firebombed his home a month before he unsuspectingly stepped out of his car and into an assassin's crosshairs.

Four days after he was assassinated thousands of mourners crammed into the auditorium of the M.W. Stringer Grand Lodge to attend Evers' memorial service. Even more stood on the sidewalks and in the streets outside the temple. Eulogies were given by Roy Wilkins, Executive Secretary for the NAACP, and Medgar Evers' mentor T.R.M. Howard, owner of the Magnolia Mutual Life insurance company and founder of the Regional Council of Negro Leadership. After the service the mourners marched four abreast in the 102-degree Mississippi Delta heat behind the casket as it traveled from the Grand Lodge to the funeral home where it was on view before being interred at Arlington National Cemetery.

Naming this navy ship after Evers is one of many tributes that have been made to this Prince Hall Mason and celebrated Civil Rights leader. In 1970 The City University of New York established the Medgar Evers College. Medgar Evers is one of the 12 people honored on the six-stamp Civil Rights Pioneers sheet that the United States Postal Service issued for the NAACP's 100th anniversary in 2009. Evers and fellow Mississippian Fannie Lou Hamer are featured on the same 42-cent First-Class commemorative stamp. And there is Medgar Evers Boulevard and Medgar Evers Lodge # 697 in Jackson, Mississippi.



Stephen Hill, Sr. is a fellow of The Phylaxis Society and is the Executive Director of its Digital Archives Program. A former director of the Phylaxis Society's Non Prince Hall Commission (renamed the Commission on Bogus Masonic Practices), Hill was recognized in *Ebony* Magazine on their list of 100+ most influential Prince Hall Masons (May 1994).



USNS MEDGAR EVERS (T-AKE 13)



From top: In 2009 Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Ray Mabus, a former governor of Mississippi, announced that the Navy will name a Military Sealift Command dry cargo and ammunition ship after the civil rights leader Medgar Evers. The USNS Medgar Evers (T-AKE 13) is designed to provide replenishment services to U.S. Navy ships at sea, to include collation ships from other nations; Myrlie Evers-Williams, widow Medgar Evers, delivers remarks during the christening ceremony for the USNS Medgar Evers at the General Dynamics National Steel and Shipbuilding Company; The Honorable Ray Mabus (far left) looks on as Myrlie Evers-Williams prepares to break the traditional bottle of champagne across the hull of the USNS Medgar Evers.

REVIEW OF

1st INTERNATIONAL MASONOLOGY SYMPOSIUM: Freemasonry and Brotherhood

*Published by the Grand Lodge of
Free and Accepted Masons of Turkey*

By Dr. Robert L. Uzzel, FPS

IT IS MY PLEASURE to accept the invitation of Australian Masonic scholar Tony Pope to review this book of proceedings from the *International Masonology Symposium* sponsored by the Grand Lodge of Turkey within the framework of the Centenary Celebrations in Ankara on 23 October 2009.

In his "Foreward," M. Remzi Sanver, president of Istanbul Bilgi University, explained the rationale behind the conference's name:

In the second half of the 20th Century disciplines like philosophy, sociology, law, psychology, and political science have included Freemasonry in their areas of research . . . it has become a field of attraction in many universities where research centers have been established to inspect this discipline all over the world.

As a Freemason who has taught a wide variety of courses in religion, history, and political science over the years, I fully agree with the above statement and see such a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of Freemasonry as quite promising.

Fabio Venzi, Italian scholar of sociology of religion, social psychology, and esotericism, presented a paper on "Freemasonry: Neoplatonic or Enlightened Roots?" in which he declared: "I personally do not believe that Freemasonry expresses the philosophy underlying the Enlightenment movement, but is rather the daughter of the Neoplatonic system, therefore far removed from the empiricism and rationalism of the eighteenth century that are clearly incompatible with the esoteric and metaphysical principles of Freemasonry." He bemoaned the fact that Enlightenment science has brought much progress on the technical plane but little on the spiritual plane. He seemed to imply that Freemasons have much to contribute to the latter type of progress. This should provide a challenge for us all.

The aforementioned Bro. Pope presented a paper entitled "Brothers Under the Skin," with focus on Black Freemasonry. In presenting the historical background, he wrote: "North American Freemasonry today has a serious problem in coming to terms



Dr. Robert L. Uzzel, FPS

with a legacy from the eighteenth-century of sub-Saharan Africans as slaves. Some 'free' Africans became Freemasons and obtained a warrant from England under the mastership of Prince Hall." He explained the differences between state grand lodges of Prince Hall Affiliation (PHA) and the National (Compact) Grand Lodge of Prince Hall Origin (PHO) and described efforts to bring the two groups together. He discussed the historic refusal of mainstream (i.e., predominately White) Grand Lodges to recognize their Black brethren and the movement for recognition that began in 1989. He observed that "In addition to the mainstream, PHA, and PHO Grand Lodges in the United States, there are

close on 200 groups claiming to be Masonic." He mentioned Noble Drew Ali's Moorish Science Temple, the oldest African-American Islamic organization in America, out of which came the Nation of Islam (Black Muslims) and a number of other organizations, some which incorporated elements of Freemasonry. He concluded:

With regard to [recognition of] the brethren of Prince Hall Origin, we could circumvent that by following the Australian precedent.

As for those men who believe and act as Masons ought, but lack the direct and clear descent from African Lodge of Boston, our interaction with PHA and PHO brethren might help to bring them within the fold also.

May brotherly love prevail!

Celil Layikte, editor of the Masonic quarterly *Tesviye (Level)* is joined by Bro. Sanver in presentation of a paper entitled "From Religious Denomination to a Supreme Being: The Unifying and Differentiating Functions of Belief in Freemasonry." They sought to demonstrate the following conclusions:

- a) The schismatic function of Belief in Freemasonry takes its source from the unsound understanding of Esotericism adopted by certain Grand Lodges;
- b) An approach to Belief based on a methodology of Esotericism compatible with the (continued on page 15)

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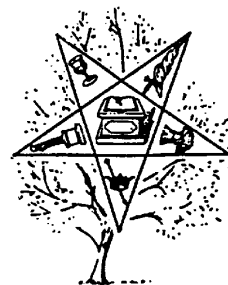
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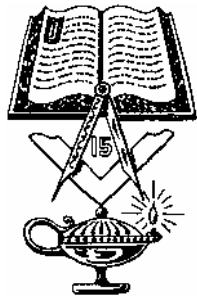
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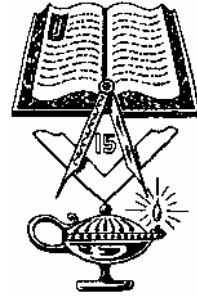


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A SOCIETY FOR PRINCE HALL FREEMASONS WHO SEEK MORE LIGHT AND WHO HAVE LIGHT TO IMPART

Review of 1st International Masonology Symposium (continued from page 10)

accumulation of scientific knowledge of the 21st century will have a positively differentiating function, i.e., will differentiate what is Sacred from what is Profane;

c) An understanding of Freemasonry which can differentiate between “Sacred” and “Profane” can be the vector of intercultural Humanism and international brotherhood, as well as “the centre of union among persons that would otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance.”

They discussed the Christian character of early Masonic lodges and contrast Grand Lodges that have dispensed with the idea of the Grand Architect of the Universe and others that practice Christian rites, barring non-Christians from membership.

They concluded with a call for an end to religious discrimination within the Masonic order so that Freemasonry can better contribute to the creation of a “New international cultural Humanism; one that transcends race, religion, colour, and ethnicity.”

Yazvuz Selim Ağaoğlu, a Turkish engineer who has done extensive research on Freemasonry in the Ottoman archives, presented a paper entitled “Rupture in Brotherhood: 1965.” As background, he discussed the involvement of Freemasons in the Young Turk Movement at the time of the 1908 revolution, attacks on Freemasonry as an “internationalist” organization during the rise of National Socialism and Fascism, and the “sleeping period” for Freemasonry in Turkey which lasted from 1935 to 1948.

In assessing the cause of the 1965 schism, he pointed out the involvement of Freemasons in the election of 1964, conflicts between the Supreme Council’s pyramidal hierarchic system and the Grand Lodge’s elective horizontal system, and problems related to management skills and administrative rulings.

Trevor Stewart, Prestonian Lecturer for the United Grand Lodge of England and Past Master of Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076 in London, presented a paper entitled “The Curious Case of Brother Gustav Petrie,” which is a study of Freemasonry and nationalism at the time of World War I. On 16 August 1914, Provisional Grand Master Henry de Vere Vane wrote a circular letter urging all German, Austrian, Hungarian, Italian, and Turkish members of British lodges—whose loyalty to the British cause could not be guaranteed—to resign and return to their native countries. Gustav Petrie, a native of Austria living in England who was one of the founders of Thornhill Lodge No. 3216, did as he was asked. After discussing the various conflicts faced by British Masonry as a result of the war, Bro. Stewart reported the following interesting sequel:

In the middle of September 1920, when the stricken survivors of World War I were trying, at home and internationally, at the personal and at the political and governmental levels, to get things returned to some form of peaceful normality, Gustav Petrie returned to Sunderland and visited the lodge he had helped to found. . . . Gustav had joined a German lodge which worked the Swedish Rite after he had left England and had

progressed through the system And yet, within a mere two years of the conclusion of the Great War, here he was giving greetings to an English lodge as a German Freemason. And the remarkable thing that happened was that the English brethren greeted him warmly as long-lost brother! And the Secretary recorded his delight in being able to write in the Minutes about the enthusiastic reunion which took place.

John Belton, a British Masonic scholar and scientist who has traveled extensively in Turkey and the Middle East, presented the final paper on “International Brotherhood: To Seek For That Which Was Lost.” In this paper, he discussed issues of Masonic recognition and exclusive jurisdiction in various countries and various historical periods. In conclusion, he wrote:

Politicians have realised that the first half of the twentieth century with two World Wars was a disaster for Europe, and that to repeat that again was not acceptable. Thus today we have the European Union and the European Convention on Human Rights, and the long list of forty seven countries that are signatories to the convention is also a reflection of the number of countries that feel their values of a good society to be. It is now part of the legal framework of many countries and

“In addition to the mainstream, PHA, and PHO Grand Lodges in the United States, there are close on 200 groups claiming to be Masonic.” He mentioned Noble Drew Ali’s Moorish Science Temple, the oldest African-American Islamic organization in America, out of which came the Nation of Islam (Black Muslims) and a number of other organizations, some which incorporated elements of Freemasonry.

some shibboleths have been challenged. . .

There was a time when Freemasonry was at the cutting edge of civil rights and liberties in Europe. We must wait and see how Grand Lodges deal with the rights of the citizens of the signatory countries to the ECHR. . . .

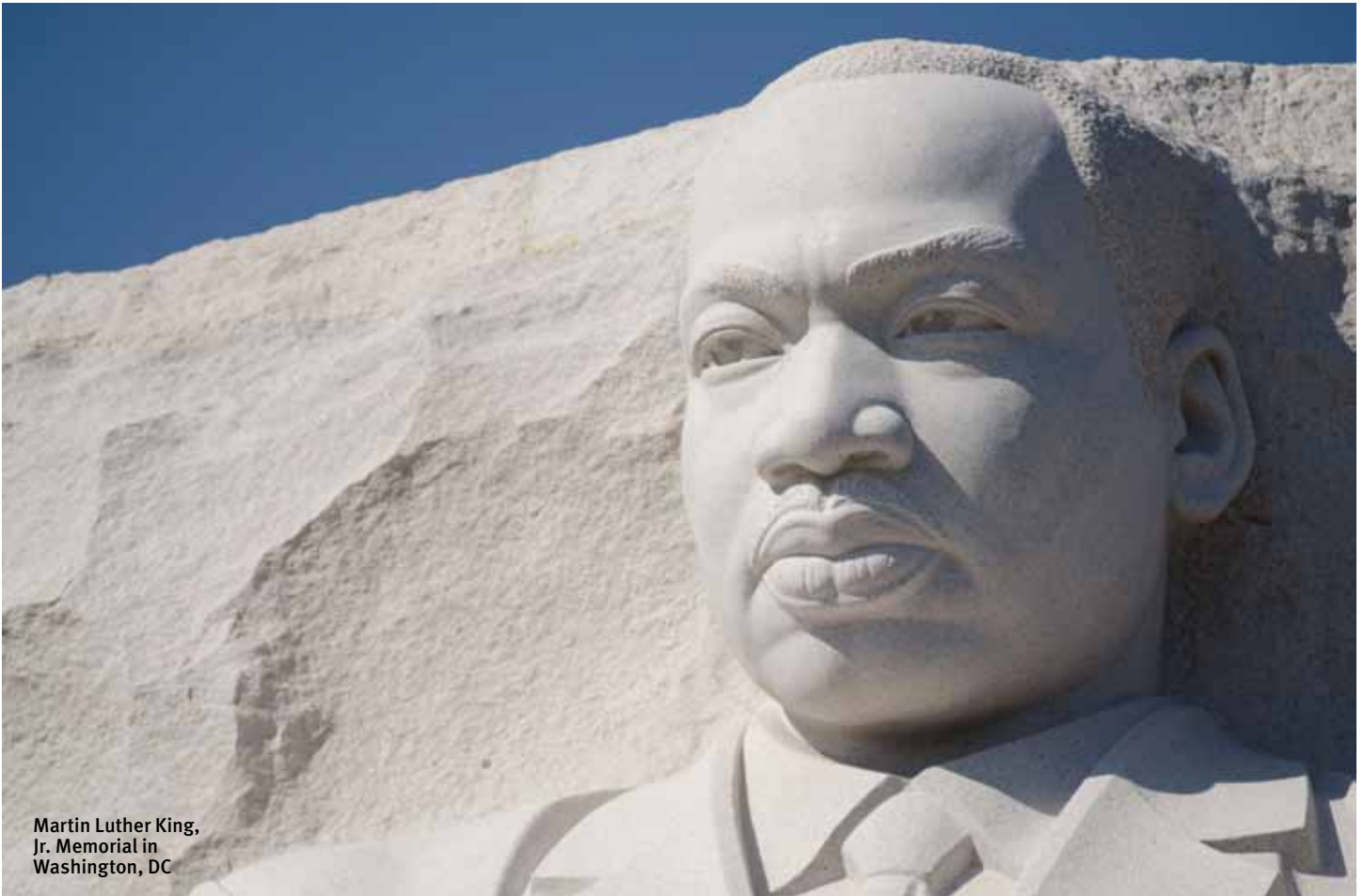
It seems clear to me that we do now live in a post imperialist world, and in a Europe that seeks another alternative to war to deal with such issues. . . . I would suggest that recognition and the accompanying Masonic diplomacy should also reflect the values, aims, and style of outside society. We are exhorted to be good members of society, thus epitomizing the Masonic ideals and values—so let us expect that Grand Lodges too should apply the same principles.

The book, which contains many items of historical trivia, may be seen as a call for Freemasons to promote racial and religious tolerance and, thus, contribute to making the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God a reality.

Dr. Robert L. Uzzel is an author, Pastor of Wayman Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Ennis, TX, and is a fellow of The Phylaxis Society. His books include *Prince Hall Freemasonry in the Lone Star State: From Cuney to Curtis, 1875-2003*, and *Eliphas Levi and the Kabbalah: The Masonic and French Connection of the American Mystery Tradition*.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR., A PRINCE HALL MASON?

By H.P.M. Burrell D. Parmer



Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial in Washington, DC

ACCORDING TO INFORMATION on the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Georgia's website, "There is one local Masonic legend that claims that Dr. King, Jr. was good friends with Grand Master X.L. Neal, both of whom came out of Morehouse College. The legend claims that Grand Master Neal had promised to make Dr. King a Mason when he came back from the Sanitation Strike in Memphis; but as fate would have it, Dr. King never made it back from Memphis. However, in 1999, Grand Master Benjamin Barksdale gave him a posthumous honor by declaring him a member of the Craft and presenting it to his widow, Coretta Scott King, at a Morehouse celebration for our Civil Rights icon."

I first heard of this honor when I was in Columbus, GA last June and visited one of the Lodges. In conversation with the brothers I mentioned that I was a district historian in San Antonio. I was then introduced to a brother who told me about the honor and that he was present during the ceremony.

Very limited information can be found regarding the event; however, one article by Dr. Brock H. Winters was found in *The Masonic Voice Journal* of the Charles H. Wesley Masonic Research Society.

In his 62 years of being a Mason he states:

I haven't been able to find another instance in the history of Freemasonry when a deceased person had been made a Freemason. Indeed, this action was without precedent. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a remarkable individual and we can say with certainty that there would have been few if any Prince Hall Lodges that would have not been proud to have him as a member, and yes there are rumors that Mr. King had planned to become a Freemason before his untimely demise. Yet, recognizing what is done is done and it makes no sense to challenge Past Grand Master Barksdale or somehow try to undo what he did....

He also goes on to say, "I will not participate in the raising of a

“I did not make nor stated I would make Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. a Mason posthumously.”
Past Grand Master Benjamin Barksdale, 13th Grand Master, Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Georgia

dead person is definitely not one of the items we’d find in our obligations concerning the types of people we would not confer degrees on, but there were some vital assents that are missed when you try to make a dead person a Freemason. They do not become Freemasons on their own freewill and accord, they do not state their belief in one Supreme Being, and they are not obligated. Since time immemorial, what has made a Freemason is his obligation.”

He concluded, “The best thing we could ask for in this situation is for the responsible parties to disregard this posthumous raising for us and maybe declare Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. an Honorary Prince Hall Freemason.”

The question is, was Dr. King made a Mason “at Sight” or was he given honorary membership?

Another reference includes a short article from www.masonicinformation.com:

In May 2000—over 32 years after his death and in an act which seems totally unprecedented in Masonic history—a Past Grand Master of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Georgia made King a “Mason at Sight.” Such action runs counter to all of the “Landmarks” and accepted usages of Freemasonry since making a member of the fraternity posthumously violates the premise of the first question normally proposed to a candidate, to wit: “Do you make this request of your own free will and accord?”

Seeking additional information, I turned to Blue-Lite Research Discussion Group, Inc., in which the overwhelming response was that Dr. King was not made a Mason but could be considered (based on the information available) to have been made an Honorary Prince Hall Mason posthumously.

One brother from Georgia said, “Any honorary membership is just giving someone membership in an organization based off of their life works without them having to do the work that comes with it. So in essence, he is a member of the Craft, he just didn’t get Initiated, Passed and Raised or made ‘at Sight.’”

According to a brother from Illinois, Dr. King knew more about black fraternal organizations than most of their members at the time.

“He was an Alpha man. How many Greeks are not aware of Freemasonry? The most important man in his life (his father) was a Prince Hall Mason. Many in his inner circle during his civil rights campaign were Prince Hall Masons. Many clandestine meetings



From top: GM X.L. Neal, who went to Morehouse College with Dr. King and would have brought him into the Order according to legend; Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. speaks inside a Masonic Temple in Columbus, GA (Circa 1959–1960). Sitting center is Grand Master John Wesley Dobbs, the 10th Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of GA.

were held in PHA Lodge Halls. Many of those that volunteered for his security details were straight from PHA Lodges.”

He continued.

“I have no doubt that if Dr. King was around long enough to complete his mission, he would have most likely joined a Prince Hall Lodge if for no other reason than to call attention to the need of bright men working together for the greater good.”

The above portion of this article was written from Internet research and from comments from an Internet group. Thanks to Blue-Lite I was advised to continue fact-finding and was given PGM Barksdale and Past Master Douglas Evans, Past Grand Historian of Georgia’s contact information, and a much different story unfolded.

The story is based from a picture which was taken in front of *The Greatest Speech of the 20th Century, “I Have A Dream”* plaque which rests upon the Martin Luther King, Jr. International Chapel at Morehouse College in Atlanta next to the cornerstone laid by the Grand Lodge in 1992. The date on the plaque is Sunday, April 2, 2000.

Additionally, sources of this story are from phone calls and email exchanges with PGM Barksdale and PM Evans.

According to PM Evans, the Grand Lodge’s Official Proceedings of 2000 state that the gathering at Morehouse College was for the unveiling of the “I Have a Dream Speech” plaque on King Chapel on April 2, 2000, and also dated on the Grand Master’s calendar.

An assumption is the unveiling may have coincided with Millennium Sunday, the 40th Anniversary of the Atlanta Civil Rights Movement/Inaugural Celebration of a Season of Nonviolence, as printed on a smaller plaque below the “I Have a Dream” plaque which is partially seen in the picture with PGM Barksdale, Martin Luther King III, and Mrs. Coretta Scott King.

On April 1, 2000, according to Dr. Lawrence Carter, Dean of King Chapel’s webpage, Dr. Carter founded the Gandhi King Ikeda Hassan Institute for Ethics and Reconciliation on Millennium Sunday, unveiling larger than life busts of Mahatma Gandhi and his wife Kasturbai; gifts from the people of India.

“I do remember that there was a portrait and bust of the Gandhi. I know that Dr. Carter (a member of W.C. Thomas Lodge No. 112) wanted to honor both Dr. King and Gandhi and maybe their wives as well. The event was stellar and I recall maybe 1,000 guests and more than 200 Prince Hall Masons in full regalia being in attendance,” said PM Evans, who served as Grand Historian from 2006–2010 and four years prior as an assistant to Past Grand Historian, PM Joe Snow.



From top: The Greatest Speech of the 20th Century “I Have A Dream” plaque, which rests upon the Martin Luther King, Jr. International Chapel at Morehouse College in Atlanta; The Cornerstone laid by the Grand Lodge in 1992; Mrs. Coretta Scott King receives the Masonic Proclamation honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. posthumously; PGM Barksdale, Martin Luther King III, and Mrs. Coretta Scott King stand in front of the “I Have a Dream” plaque placed of MLK International Chapel.



As the event occurred over a decade ago, PGM Barksdale cannot recollect the date or year, but remembers that he did not make Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. a Mason, neither “at Sight” nor provide him with honorary membership posthumously.

“Dr. King is not a Mason; you cannot make a dead person a Freemason,” said PGM Barksdale.

To the reference that GM Dr. X.L. Neal stated that he will make Dr. King a Prince Hall Mason “at Sight” when he returns from Memphis:

“The above is true. I was Grand Senior Warden when GM Neal made the statement which was in the presence of the Grand Lodge membership in Augusta, GA,” said PGM Barksdale. “Again Dr. King was never a Prince Hall Mason; however, with the permission of Mrs. Coretta Scott King, I was given permission to name a Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship to assist a worthy young man to attend Morehouse College.”

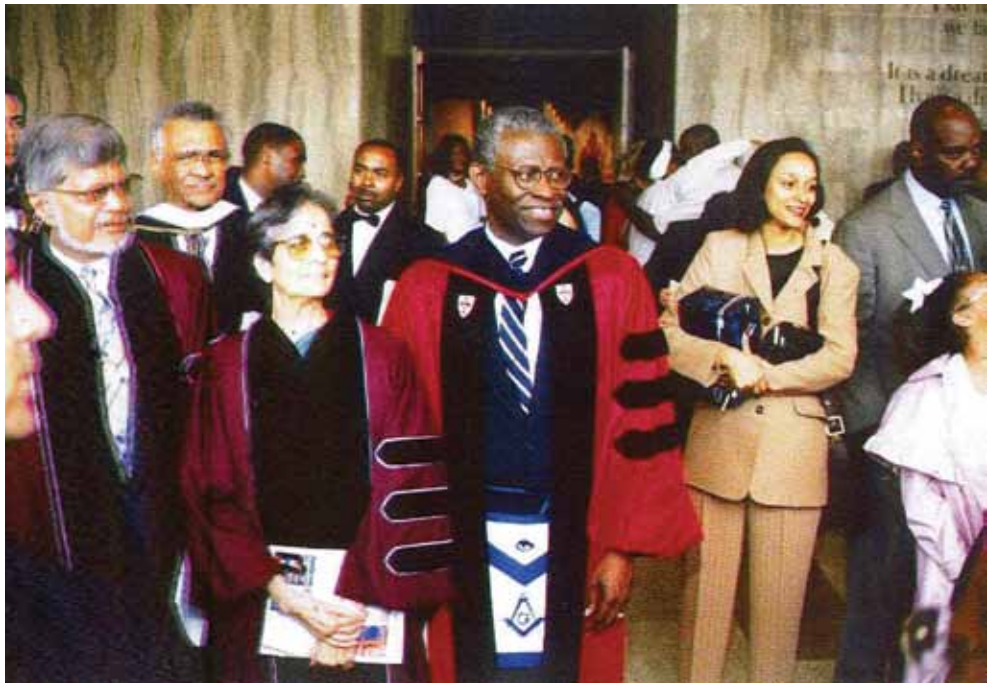
PM Evans remembers some details about that day.

“I was in the audience as a young five-year-old Mason when (an) honor was read by PGM Barksdale in the company of Mrs. King and King III along with other Grand Lodge officers while on stage inside the King Chapel, and I, as many others, thought that they were making Dr. King a ‘Mason at Sight,’” said PM Evans. “I do not think that PGM Barksdale may have made it clear that a dead person could not be made a Mason.”

“I believe that during the ceremony as Mrs. King was on the stage was when PGM Barksdale and the Masons announced that it was “honoring Dr. King’s death posthumously.” None of us really knew what this meant since it wasn’t previously disclosed to us before the event,” said PM Evans. “We heard it all at the same time. I took it as something you might honor the governor or someone with, but the word posthumously made many feel as if Dr. King was being given the honor of being a Mason. I tend to believe that this was not the intent of PGM Barksdale but maybe the wording of the statement was not filtered or edited enough.”

According to PM Evans there was neither a proclamation nor similar communications that would have informed the Craft that such an honor of membership for Dr. King would be bestowed.

“I’ll be the first to echo PGM Barksdale’s statement that he did not make Dr. King a Mason. He couldn’t if he tried; it’s unmasonic,” said PM Evans. “I will offer that the language used at that ceremony may have been misleading.”



From top: Left to right, Mayor Maynard Jackson, first Black Mayor of Atlanta (grandson of GM John Wesley Dobbs), PGM Benjamin Barksdale, Mrs. Coretta Scott King, President of Morehouse College Dr. Walter Massey, and Dean of the Morehouse School of Religion Dr. Lawrence Carter; Dean Carter (center) and family of Gandhi (left) exit King Chapel, April 2, 2000.

“During my historical tours in Atlanta, I offer that Dr. King is NOT a Mason, but an Alpha. If he had lived longer we believe that he would have joined since his father (Daddy King) and grandfather were all preachers and Prince Hall Masons,” said PM Evans. “We think Dr. King would have joined W. C. Thomas Lodge No. 112 since it is thought that this is where Daddy King was Raised, and due to GM Neal belonging to the same Lodge and knowing Dr. King from Morehouse College.”



H.P.M. Burrell D. Parmer is the Grand Editor of Publications for the MWPHGL of Texas and Historian for 19th Masonic District, and proudly hails from San Antonio Lodge No. 1. More of his writings and experiences can be found online at parmermasonictraveler.com.

BROTHERLY INFLUENCE: PRINCE HALL FREEMASONRY'S LASTING IMPRESSION ON AFRICAN- AMERICAN FRATERNAL ORDERS

By Dr. Ron Kelley

IT IS VERY CLEAR that Prince Hall Freemasonry is the fraternal order that has had the most influence upon African-American fraternities. After Prince Hall Freemasonry's introduction into the African-American community, various fraternal orders began to gracefully emerge. It is clearly obvious that these fraternal orders were highly influenced by Prince Hall Freemasonry.

The first major fraternal order to emerge in the African-American community after Prince Hall Freemasonry was the Odd Fellows. The first African-American Odd Fellows lodge was established in 1843. This means that it took over 59 years for the second major fraternal Order to appear after the first Prince Hall lodge's emergence. The Odd Fellows organization as a whole rivals Freemasonry in its overall age though. According to the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, the order first emerged between 401-500 AD in Greece, Spain, and parts of Asia. The members were called "Odd Fellows" because of the unique ceremonies of the order. The motto of the order is: "Friendship, Love, and Truth." This is denoted in Odd Fellows regalia with the letters "F.L.T." and a symbol with 3 links. Odd Fellows provide relief for members when sick, assist with the burial of brothers and their family, protect and provide relief to widows, and provide relief to orphans. As you can see, this is very similar to Freemasonry's relief efforts. The ritual of the Odd Fellows is also very similar to Freemasonry, having similar degrees and obligations. The regalia is similar in nature with aprons, gloves, and other items that were first popularized in Freemasonry.

Odd Fellowship reached England by the 8th Century and emerged among Whites in America in 1819. After being denied membership in a white lodge, a group of African-American intellectuals in New York acquired the assistance of Peter Ogden, an African-American sailor who had become an Odd Fellow in England. He applied to England for a charter that was eventually granted for Philomathean Lodge #646 in 1843. This is the first African-American Odd Fellows lodge. Peter Ogden is recognized as the founder of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows in America. As Prince Hall is to Prince Hall Freemasonry, Peter Ogden is revered in the same manner among Black Odd Fellows.

The first major fraternal order to emerge in the African-American community after Prince Hall Freemasonry was the Odd Fellows.

Odd Fellowship in England was divided into two predominant orders. The Grand United Order of Odd Fellows (GUOOF) is the original order of Odd Fellows that the splinter group, the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF), broke away from as an independent order. Today, the GUOOF does not have a fraternal relationship with the IOOF. The IOOF actually now even admits women and uses a completely different ritual. Maintaining the original traditions, The GUOOF does not allow women to be Odd Fellows. Whites in America primarily are members of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows and African-Americans are predominantly members of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows.

Odd Fellowship flourished among African-Americans, growing to be the second largest fraternal order behind Freemasonry. By the turn of the century, the GUOOF in America had over 200,000 members and over 2,000 lodges. Its elite membership consisted of: lawyers, doctors, military officers, ministers, and other Black professionals. Some famous members of the Odd Fellows, both African-American and White are: Harry Truman, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Ulysses S. Grant, Charlie Chaplin, Winston Churchill, Senator Al Franken, Albert Pike, Norris Wright Cuney (1st Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Texas), Booker

T. Alexander (Imperial Potentate of the Prince Hall Shriners, 1955-1962), Edward G. Irvin (one of the founders of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity), and many other prominent Americans.

The Odd Fellows are governed by the Committee of Management, which is headquartered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The head of the national organization is the "Honorable Grand Master." The organization holds a Biennial Moveable Conference (BMC) every two years. The "Noble Grand" is the leader of the local lodge as the Worshipful Master is in a Masonic lodge. The lodges also hold a "lodge of instruction" once a month that focuses on teaching. The degrees in Odd Fellowship are: 1. Initiatory (White), 2. Appointed Officers (Star), 3. Secretary (Emerald), 4. Vice Grand (Blue), 5. Noble Grand (Scarlet), 6. Past Noble Grand (Golden), 7. Noble Father (Excelsior), and 8. Past Noble Father.

The female order for Odd Fellows' wives, daughters, and

widows is called the Household of Ruth. The order was founded in 1858 by Patrick Reason. Odd Fellows can also become members of the Household of Ruth. The First Household was chartered in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania in 1858. The Odd Fellows also have higher degree bodies as in Freemasonry. The second highest body in the Odd Fellows is the Past Grand Masters Council. The Patriarchy is the highest body, and is very similar to the Knights Templar. The Juvenile Branch is for youth ages 3-16 and is under the supervision of the Household of Ruth.

It is clearly obvious that the Odd Fellows' organization is very similar to Freemasonry. Many Prince Hall Masons also became Odd Fellows, seeing the need to belong to both organizations. Due to my own personal interest in fraternal orders, after becoming a Prince Hall Mason, I sought out a way to become a member of the mysterious Odd Fellows. After reviving several of the historic lodges in my state, I eventually became the District Grand Master and now serve as an Area Director over five states. I've discovered personally that the Odd Fellows is yet another avenue for Prince Hall Masons to learn more about fraternal history and also serve the community.

The second major fraternal order to emerge after Prince Hall Freemasonry and the Odd Fellows is the Knights of Pythias. The Knights of Pythias was founded in 1864 in Washington, D.C. with a purpose of "Friendship, Charity, and Benevolence." This is a very similar motto to the Odd Fellows. This motto is indicated by "FCB," just as the Odd Fellows use "FLT." The original Knights of Pythias organization was founded by Justus Henry Rathbone—a teacher, Royal Arch Mason, and Odd Fellow. He was inspired to create the organization after watching a play about the Greek legend of Damon and Pythias. 30 years later, his inspiration had become an organization that had over 500,000 members, the fastest growth of any fraternal organization in 30 years. By the turn of the century, it was the third largest fraternal order in America. Many of the members were also Odd Fellows. As history usually shows us in regard to fraternal orders, the organization rejected the petitions of African-Americans that began to apply. A group of African-Americans, including Dr. Thomas W. Stringer (a prominent state senator, minister, mason, and now namesake of the Most Worshipful Stringer Grand Lodge of Mississippi), sought to change this. These fair-skinned African-American men passed as White and joined a White Knights of Pythias lodge in Mississippi. In 1880, the group



The laying of the cornerstone for Wesley Union AME Zion Church, at South St. and Tanner Ave., Harrisburg, PA. Held on October 18, 1914, the ceremonies included a parade that featured the Masonic band and the Grand Lodge of colored Masons, led by the GM Prof. John P. Scott #43. Also visible in this picture are members of the Grand Chapter of Odd Fellows in their official dress.



From left, Peter Ogden, founder of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows of America; Edward G. Irvin, a co-founder of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity.

subsequently founded an African-American Knights of Pythias order in Vicksburg, Mississippi. The original white order then sued the African-American organization in 1912, but the United States Supreme Court ruled in favor of African-Americans being legitimate members and having their own organization. The African-American order became known as the "Knights of Pythias of North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia." The organization became the third largest fraternal order for African-Americans with over 100,000 members, over 3,000 lodges, and over a million dollars in property. The organization established its own hospital, nursing home, and even offered life insurance, something that almost no other fraternal organization did at that time. Lodges were established worldwide, in countries such as Australia,

Nicaragua, Trinidad, and Cuba. The organization also helped the founders of the African-American Elks order establish their organization.

The mission of the Knights of Pythias is to: help suffering brothers, bury the dead, care for widows, and educate orphans. Once again, very similar to Freemasonry and the Odd Fellows. Some famous members of the Knights of Pythias are: three U.S. Presidents, including Franklin Delano Roosevelt, jazz legend Louis Armstrong, Norris Wright Cuney (1st Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Texas), Benjamin Hooks (NAACP Leader, Past Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Tennessee, Past Supreme Chancellor of the Knights of Pythias), Judge Scovel Richardson (U.S. Customs Court), and Arthur J. Riggs (one of the founders of the African-American Elks order). The Supreme Lodge is the international body, which meets biennially. The Supreme Chancellor is the head of the organization. Grand Lodges are the state bodies which also meet biennially. The Grand Chancellor is the head of a state body. The lodge buildings are called "castle halls" and the Chancellor Commander is the head of a local lodge. Members address each other as "Sir."

The Court of Calanthe is the ladies organization for the Knights of Pythias, which was established in 1883. The Dramatic Order Knights of Omar (DOKO) is the social body, which was founded in 1909. The DOKO is very similar to the Shriners, even wearing maroon fezzes and is based on Middle Eastern themes. The Uniform Rank is the military body. Members of the Uniform Rank would actually camp out in tents at Supreme Lodge Conventions in the early days of the organization, adhering strongly to their military theme and spirit. The organization is also very similar to the Knights Templar in its military uniform structure and theme.

The Elks are yet another order that is similar to Freemasonry in many ways. The original Elks organization was founded in New York City in 1867. The original name of this group of entertainers was the "Jolly Corks." The name changed to the "Benevolent Protective Order of Elks (BPOE)" in 1868. The Elk was chosen as the symbol of the organization because it is a noble creature that will protect itself when threatened. This organization grew to include famous Americans such as: five Presidents-including John F. Kennedy, Harry Truman, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Clint Eastwood, Vince Lombardi, Mickey Mantle, and many other great Americans. The BPOE now also allows women to be Elks just as the white Odd Fellows changed its laws to include women. The African-American Elk organization, the Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the World (IBPOEW), has no true fraternal relationship with the BPOE. The IBPOEW came about in a similar manner as the other African-American organizations that we have discussed. After being denied membership in the BPOE based

on race, three African-American men, with the help of the Knights of Pythias, founded the "Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the World (IBPOEW)" in 1898 in Cincinnati, Ohio. They eventually even owned the copyright to the original Elks ritual after finding out that it had not been copyrighted. The founders of the IBPOEW are: Arthur J. Riggs (member of the Knights of Pythias), Benjamin F. Howard, and Frank H. Hunter. Showing an early connection to Freemasonry, their first meeting was held on November 17, 1898 at the Masonic Hall in Cincinnati. The organization grew rapidly. An example of their strength in numbers, over 50,000 members attended their Grand Lodge convention in 1927. By the 1950s, the organization had over 500,000 members and over 1500 lodges, making it clearly the largest Black fraternal organization.

The Grand Exalted Ruler is the international leader of the organization. The women's organization is the Daughters of the IBPOEW, which was founded in 1902. This organization is supervised by the Grand Esteemed Leading Knight- the second

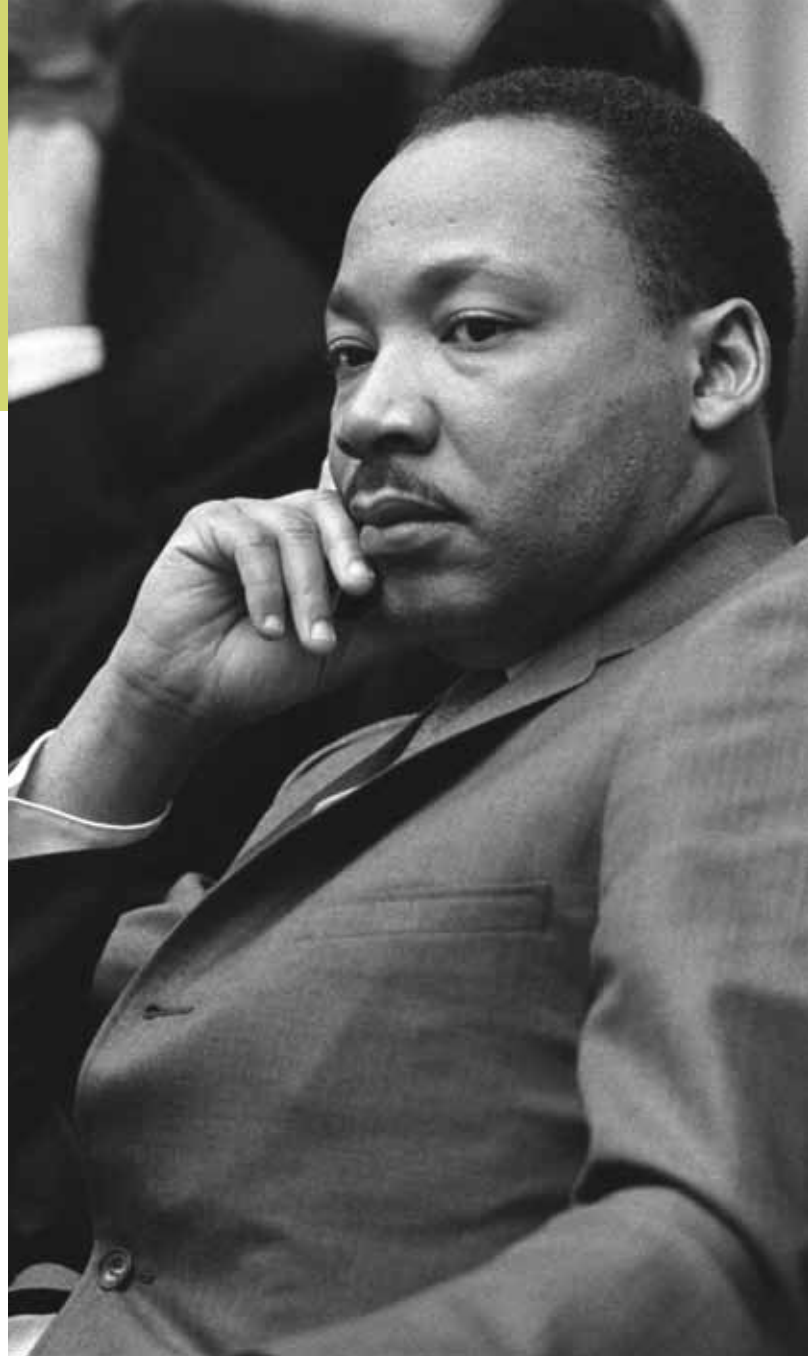


2010 officers of the Grand Lodge Knights Pythias, jurisdiction of Florida (knightsofpythiasfl.com)

in charge of the Elks organization. The Past Exalted Rulers Council (PERC) is the second highest body after becoming an Elk. The Past Grand Exalted Rulers (PGER) are the highest body and this is awarded only at the national Grand Lodge meetings. The Junior Herd is the youth organization of the Elks. Some famous African-American Elks are: Martin Luther King Jr., Medgar Evers, Jesse Jackson, Jesse Owens, Thurgood Marshall, and many other prominent African-Americans.

In conclusion, it is crystal clear that Prince Hall Freemasonry laid a foundation that was so strong that many national organizations easily blossomed in its footsteps. Establishing a trend of not letting racial bias block membership into historic, noble organizations. Each of these organizations have their own distinct purposes, which provide opportunities for Prince Hall Masons to explore other historic orders that can increase their knowledge of fraternalism. Where the Odd Fellows and

Some famous African-American Elks include Martin Luther King, Jr., Medgar Evers, Jesse Jackson, Jesse Owens, Thurgood Marshall, and many other prominent African-Americans.



Clockwise from top-left: Medgar Evers, Jesse Owens, Martin Luther King, Jr., Thurgood Marshall, and Jesse Jackson.

Knights of Pythias expand on the secret society component of Freemasonry, the Elks expand on the social component. Each organization plays a key role in the overall fraternity experience. Overall, it is very impressive how these organizations have all laid their fraternal cornerstone in African-American history and American history as a whole.



Dr. Ron Kelley, a former school Principal and college professor, is the President/CEO of Konfident Enterprises, one of the nation's top educational consulting firms. Based out of San Antonio, Texas, his company produces educational products and works with school districts nationwide on improving test scores and discipline management. He received his Ph.D. from Texas A&M University, a Master's Degree from Texas State University, and a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Texas at Austin. He is a Past Polemarch in Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., a member of the Past State President's Council in the Elks (IBPOEW), the Area 5 Director and

District Grand Master (District Grand Lodge #24) in the Odd Fellows (GUOOF), Grand Vice Chancellor of the Grand Lodge of Texas in the Knights of Pythias, one of the founders of the Talented Tenth Scholars, and a member of the 100 Black Men of America, Inc. In Prince Hall Freemasonry, Dr. Kelley is the Historian for the 19th Masonic District of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Texas and the Lecturer for San Antonio Lodge #1, Shiloh Royal Arch Chapter #16, and Alamo Commandery #7. He is also a Shriner (Moussa Temple #106) and serves as a Grand Inspector General and the Commander-in-Chief of Lone Star Consistory #113 in San Antonio. Dr. Kelley is the author of *The Answers*, a top-selling book for educators.

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