



THE GAVEL

MONTEZUMA LODGE NO. 1 AF & AM

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Volume 23 Issue 3

"The Oldest Masonic Lodge in the Rockies" Organized May 8, 1851

March 2023

From the East...



From the East:

Brethren:

March was another busy month with the Grand Lodge 146th Annual Communication, and a very engaging discussion for Brotherhood Night. In fact it was a conversation at Grand Lodge that RW Brother Scott Jaquith had with our new Grand Master that sparked the topic for Brotherhood Night.

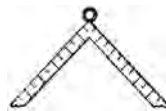
Our third brotherhood night was a well attended and very interesting event. RWB Scott Jaquith started the evening off with a question: What is different now than when membership soared after WW1 and again after WW2? What is it that we think we provide, and what do we think the younger generation is looking for that Masonry could provide? And how do we reach out and communicate with the men of the younger generation? The discussion that followed was quite varied with comparisons about the available activities during those times, the search for something meaningful in post war times, and the current trend to find quick fixes due to the constant bombardment of information via social media. It was interesting to consider that the men returning home from WW1 did not yet have radio as a means of entertainment in their homes, which wasn't commonplace until after 1920, with TV following around 1927! Fast forward to present day, and the phones we carry in our pockets allow us to listen to any music we want, stream movies and TV shows any time we want, and look up information on google or Wikipedia to find answers to our questions as soon as we come up with the questions! This same phone also provides us with connections to people and information on social media, not all of which is accurate or even positive. This leaves us with many things to consider as it relates to reaching a younger generation that is inundated with information. The discussion lasted 2 solid hours and by the end we could have gone on for several more hours I'm sure. I think these topics provide a richer context for our present Masonic landscape, and can help us develop a clearer picture of what it is that we each want from Masonry. I want to thank all of the brethren that showed up, some we haven't seen in awhile and were very happy to see, and even some new faces that we hope to see again soon. This time everyone heard my request to bring smaller amounts of food, but somehow everyone (including myself) brought either cookies or cake, which we all enjoyed. Our next brotherhood night will be on Tuesday April 18 at 6pm. We will have a presentation by Brother Greg Pringle, which we will discuss at our upcoming Stated Meeting on Monday April 3 at 7pm (with dinner at 6pm).

I look forward to seeing you all on Monday for our Stated Meeting!

Fraternally,

Christopher J. Williams

Worshipful Master



Regular Meetings

RECURRENCE

First Monday
 Fourth Wednesday
 Second Tuesday
 Third Tuesday
 Second Wednesday

EVENT

Regular Communication at 7:00 PM, Dinner at 6:00 PM
 Property Management Board at 6:00 PM
 Regular Communication at 7:30 PM
 Regular Communication at 5:30 PM
 Regular Communication at 7:30 PM, Dinner at 6:30 PM

ORGANIZATION

Montezuma Lodge No. 1
 Montezuma Lodge No. 1
 York Rite Bodies
 Santa Fez Shrine Club
 Cerrillos Lodge No. 19

We have been holding our Quest meetings every Saturday morning at 10:00 AM. Quest Club is a forum for everyone. Mason and non-Mason alike can voice ideas and discuss any topic.

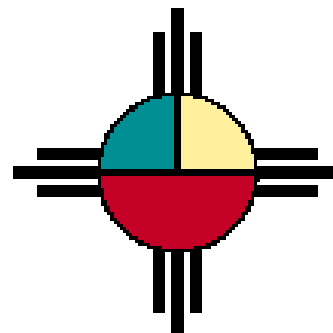
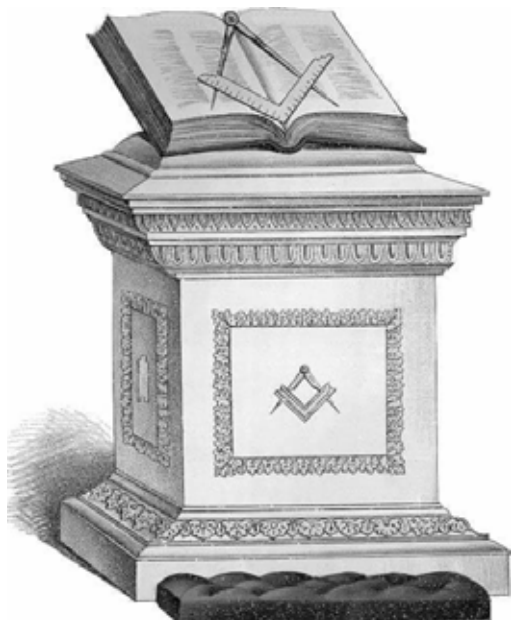


Special Notices And Events

Property Management Board

The next monthly meeting of the Property Management Board will be held on **Wednesday, April 26th** at 6:00 PM in the library.

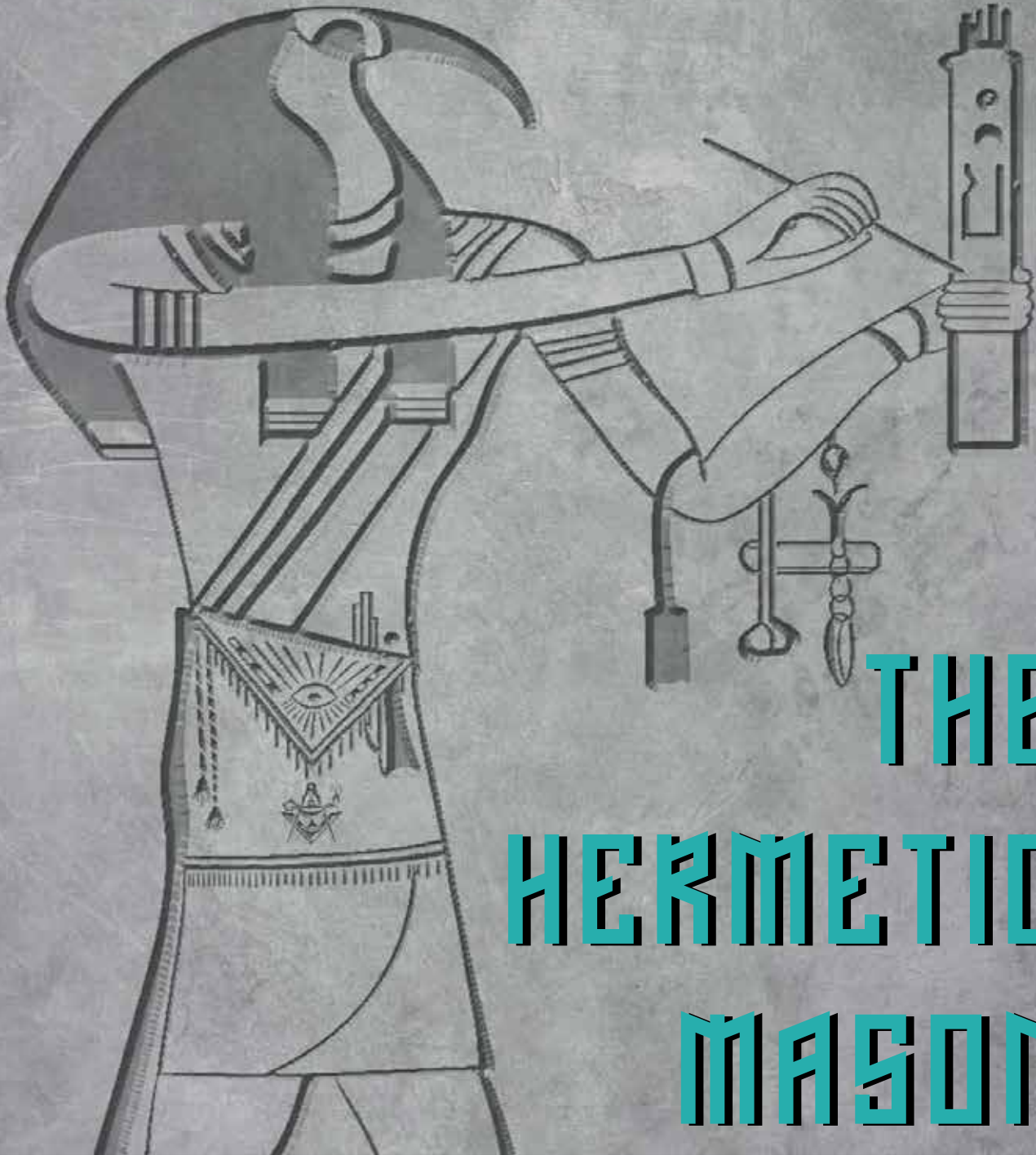
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Southern California Research Lodge

Fraternal Review

December 2022



THE HERMETIC MASON

HOW HAS THIS ANCIENT PRACTICE INFLUENCED OUR CRAFT?

Common History – Freemasonry & Hermeticism

By Daniel Rivera

Freemasonry and Hermeticism share much in common. Both are popularly referred to as the Royal Art. Practitioners of Hermeticism and Freemasonry refer to their labors as the Great Work. Hermes Trismegistus, the legendary Thrice Great master of alchemy, astrology, and theurgy, is patron to centuries of Hermetic practitioners, and according to the Old Charges, a legendary founder of Freemasonry as well.¹

While the precise origins of Freemasonry are lost to the mists of time, we are aware of the many centuries' influences upon its storied history and development. Then as now, the fraternity saw much of its philosophy, symbolism, and mythical narratives shaped by popular interests as well as the deepest knowledge of the age. The earliest extant Masonic documents are concurrent with the beginnings of the Renaissance in the fifteenth century, when many classical documents sparked a renewed appreciation for antiquity's wisdom, seen in the art, architecture, and philosophy of the age.

The Renaissance was deeply shaped by Hermeticism, the recently rediscovered Late Antique philosophies which were then interpreted as a purer theology and spiritual practice. These spiritual practices included such arts as alchemy, astrology, and theurgic invocation. Alchemical, astrological, and theurgic pursuits reached the peak of their popularity in the decades before and after 1600; Hermeticism has been described as the greatest passion of that age in Europe. The abuses that such popularity can bring have informed and persisted in the popular notions of the Hermetic pursuits of alchemy and astrology as crude chemistry or star gazing in the service of greed, ambition, and other

materialistic pursuits. In like manner, we see in our own age a popular misconception of the Masonic Order as an instrument of illicit self-gain.

This was not, and is not, however, the objective of the Great Work such as it was and is pursued by sincere Hermeticists and virtuous Masons of every age. The search for the Summum Bonum, the greatest good, the philosophers' stone, was not, in the hands of its sincere laborers, merely a materialistic search for ways of turning base metals into gold, or idle forecasting; rather, it was an attempt to achieve "the moral and spiritual rebirth of mankind."²

The objectives of a moral and spiritual transformation, conveyed and concealed in symbols and metaphoric language, as found in Hermetic traditions, caught the imagination of our Masonic forebears:

"When a system of lodges emerges in Scotland with secret rituals and identification signs, just as the great esoteric Hermetic movement was sweeping across Europe, there surely must be a link between them. This is all the more the case as the masons had long possessed a tradition, enshrined in the Old Charges, that Hermes had played a major part in preserving knowledge of the masonic craft and transmitting it to mankind after the flood, and that a key development in craft history, the teaching of masonry by Euclid to the sons of the nobility, had taken place in Egypt. Any educated man of the day would have some knowledge of Hermetic lore, and would pick up the reference to Hermes in the Old Charges and thus be likely to see masonry as a Hermetic art bound up with one of the great intellectual movements of the day [...]"

"Any assessment of the extent of Hermetic

“The objectives of a moral and spiritual transformation, conveyed and concealed in symbols and metaphoric language, as found in Hermetic traditions...”

influences in Scotland must await further research, but the evidence given above of interest in the Hermetic arts of memory and alchemy at least indicates that such influences were present in the general intellectual climate there, as in the rest of Europe. Suggesting a connection between the Scottish Masonic craft and Hermeticism is not seeking to link Masonry with some disreputable and obscure fringe phenomenon, but rather demonstrating the strong circumstantial evidence for relating it to one of the greatest intellectual movements of the Renaissance.”³

Hermeticism’s Royal Art, being the philosophy and practice of transformation of the self and cosmos through prayer, study, and experimental labor, was transmitted via symbolism and ritual, shaping of the Craft degrees and subsequent High Degrees; and while the Fraternity was influencing and being influenced by the Enlightenment, the symbols and practice of alchemy endured.

“If the strange (to outsiders) rituals of Freemasonry seem out of place in the Age of Enlightenment, [...] this was because, at heart the movement was not an Enlightenment, but a Renaissance phenomenon. That the Age of Enlightenment was nonetheless the great age of Freemasonry is a seeming paradox, indicating that, for all the eighteenth-century’s appeal to reason, many still hankered after elements of mystery, ritual, secrecy, and the quest for a hidden truth.”⁴

Woven through the symbolism and philosophy of Freemasonry, Hermeticism was made all the more apparent in the Écossais degrees, and other degree systems which arose shortly after the formation of the premier Grand Lodge in 1717:

“The appearance of purely Hermetic and alchemical rites appears in Freemasonry during the eighteenth century.

In 1785, the Grand Orient of France first ordered that small vials of salt and sulfur should be placed in the Chamber of Reflection, clearly suggestive of the alchemical milieu in which the candidates lived, and the interpretation they were to extract from their initiations.”⁵

To this day, many Chambers of Reflection from around the world, wherein a candidate for initiation reflects on his own mortality, retain alchemical emblems such as salt and sulfur, along with the alchemical motto: V.I.T.R.I.O.L., the Green Lion, in which sulfuric acid dissolves all metals but purest gold. The alchemical motto also abbreviates the Latin phrase: “Visita Interiora Terrae Rectificando Invenies Occultum Lapidem,”⁶ which translates to “Visit the interior of the earth and rectifying (purifying) you will find the hidden stone.”

This motto refers to the process of internal, spiritual purification from which the unready and unworthy will dissolve and scatter, and by which the pure of heart will be transformed and elevated. Whether this Great Work is carried out by means of operations on plants, minerals, and metals, or by discovering “how planets move in their respective orbits,”⁷ and these movements’ effects on the human condition, or by communing with preterhuman intelligences; or whether this work is conducted solely within the laboratory of the body, mind, and spirit, Hermeticists, as well as speculative Masons, may sincerely labor for the transmutation and elevation of Self and Cosmos.

Works Cited:

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3. David Stevenson, *The Origins of Freemasonry: Scotland’s Century* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1988) p. 85, 86.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 233.
5. Mark Stavish, *Freemasonry: Rituals, Symbols, & History of the Secret Society* (Woodbury: Llewelyn Publications, 2007) p. 155.
6. Basil Valentine, *Azoth of the Philosophers* (Paris: Chex Pierre Moet, 1659), accessed 06/21/18, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Azoth_\(Basil_Valentine\)](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Azoth_(Basil_Valentine)).
7. Anonymous, *Monitor and Officers Manual* (San Francisco: GL of California), 28



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*April Dinner
 Menu*



Join us on April 3rd for dinner at 6:00 PM before the stated meeting. The entire family is invited. Our chefs have planned an excellent menu. If you have any dietary restrictions please contact the secretary so that we may arrange suitable alternatives.

- Chicken and Dumplings
- Garlic Toast
- Vegetables
- Tossed Salad
- Desserts
- Coffee, tea, and sodas



2022-2023 Officers

Worshipful Master: - Christopher J. Williams
 (C): (208) 995-6922

Senior Warden - Jose M. Montano
 (C): (505) 692-9183

Junior Warden - Jee W. Hwang
 (C): (704) 654-1270

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Junior Deacon - Gregory O Pringle
 (C): 505-920-7012

Senior Steward - Timothy R. Gilmore
 (C): (505) 660-5919

Junior Steward - Open

Marshal: - Alfonso J. Rodriguez
 (C): 505-501-0078

Tyler: - Jerry Noedel, PM

What is the purpose of Freemasonry?

“To admit, make and pass Freemasons according to the Constitution and By-Laws of the Grand Lodge. To advance the moral and social interests of its membership; to foster good citizenship, honest industry and upright living; to cultivate the exercise of charity in its best and broadest sense; to assist the widows and orphans of its deceased members; to stimulate friendship, harmony and Brotherly love and generally to promote, in its own way, the happiness of mankind — it is a fraternity of good men, linked together by honorable and indissoluble bonds, to accomplish these noble purposes, eschewing all interests in factional politics and sectarian religion and free from the dictation of both.”

For more information about Masonry:

- Call the Lodge at 982-0971
- Stop by the Lodge
- Visit our website @ www.montezumalodge.org
- Ask any Mason