



Chapter Notes

Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas



Winter 2023

Wayne H. Rolf, MEGHP 2022-2023



Holiday Message

As the Holiday Season approached, I begin thinking about what I would say to each of my Brothers, Companions, and Sir Knights about the holidays. Then I realized that you would not get this until the holidays have passed, but that is OK. What do you remember about your holiday experiences?

First, I would like to reflect on Thanksgiving. Too many times it is only thought is food or maybe the family getting together. This is nice, but there is more to Thanksgiving. The Good Lord has given each of us more things than we can count for which to be thankful. Too often we take our freedoms for granted. What if we could not worship as we please or met in our many Masonic organizations? What if we could not leave our homes as we please or travel as we please? Yes, let us be thankful.

This past year and maybe I should say two years, I have lost too many friends and Masonic friends. Yet I thank God for the time I had with them. I only regret that I did not use the time I had with them to let them know how thankful I was to have them for a friend. Take time to thank your friends for their friendship before it is too late. Then thank God for their friendship!

When I was a child, I remember my father saying more than once, "I thank God for my friends, being able to help them, to be able to provide for my family with shelter, food, and clothing. What more could I ask for from God?" How true it was then and how true it should be now. As time advanced, it seems as everyone wanted more and got more. How sad. The lessons my father taught me by his silent example have become more valuable to me each day and teaching me how I should live.

This next year take time to be thankful each day and with that Thanksgiving Day comes, take that extra time to reflect on the past and praise God for what he has given you.

My next thoughts turn to Christmas and what it means to me and what I hope it means to you. Each year I see the commercial side of Christmas extend earlier and earlier. Why? Is this what Christmas means? I hope not. Is it greed? I am afraid it may be so. So many have lost the true meaning of Christmas.

Christmas is a time for Joy and Hope. A time to celebrate. A time to rejoice. A time to share. Yes, it is a time to be with family do all the



Holiday Message (cont.)

above. If we cannot be with family in person, we will be with time in spirit. It is a tradition to give gifts at Christmas, because it is more blessed to give than to receive. It is not the cost of the gift make it valuable, but the thought behind the gift. Today many spend hundreds and thousands of dollars on gifts at Christmas. Why? Are they trying to make an impression or to show off? I think those have lost the true value of Christmas.

Christmas is a celebration of birthday for Jesus. It is a time to sing carols about shepherds keeping watch in the field, angels appearing and declaring the glory of God. We even talk about the value of the Wise Men bring gifts to the Christ Child. Everywhere we look we see trees decorated, home decorated, streets decorated, and even parks decorated. I know these are a tradition, but is it for the profit of a business or a competition to see who can outdo another? Have you and I lost the real reason for Christmas? I sincerely hope not! Just remember don't take Christ out of Christmas.

Every time I hear any Masonic ritual, I am reminded that it always connected to a passage in the Bible. Therefore, how could the ritual not reinforce your religious beliefs. Likewise, regardless of which Christmas passage you read or like from the Bible, it will remind you of the importance of humility and to exalt Christ's Holy Name.

No matter how you celebrate Thanksgiving and Christmas this year (maybe I should say how you celebrated) it is a joyous season. I wish each of you and your families a Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas. Oh yes, and Happy New Year. Make your New Year's resolutions if nothing more than to make the coming year better than the last. To slow down and listen to your Masonic Brother, and to listen to your friends and family. Remember to let God speed thee on thy way and assure thee of success.

Fraternally,
Wayne H. Rollf, Grand High Priest 2022-2023

Chapter Degrees Scheduled for Junction City

On Saturday, January 7, 2023, companions from across the Grand Jurisdiction of Kansas will meet in Junction City to work the degrees of Capitular Masonry. It takes a village to raise a child and it takes an entire jurisdiction to be sure all of the degrees are conferred in a form which conveys their beauty and wisdom. Thank you to the companions from across the state who continue to unselfishly gave of their time without the hope of fee or reward who make the long trip to Junction City to assist in this great and glorious work. Congratulations to the new members of Capitular Masonry in Kansas! Pictures will be included in the next issue of this publication.



Wichita Chapter Donates to Charity

Wichita Chapter No. 33 of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas, distributed charity funds to several organizations in November. One of these organizations was Job's Daughters Bethel No. 21 located at the Temple in Newton, Kansas. The check was for \$6,000 and will be used for the girls and their participation in state-wide events. Bethel No. 21 has been active in assisting masonic organizations from around the region to supply them with meals for special events. Thank you to Wichita Chapter No 33 for providing much needed funding to our Masonic Youth Groups.



Traditional Observance Chapter?

Traditional Observance. The words invoke many different feelings and thoughts depending on who you speak with. For some, it means "stuffy" masonry where everyone is dressed in tuxedos and there is little room for anything else. To others, it means a deep and meaningful dive into the rituals and meanings attached to masonry. Whatever you may think, there are traditional lodges across the globe. Did you know there were traditional observance chapters as well?

Veritas Chapter No. 103 in Norman, Oklahoma is one of the first of these chapters. They do ask their members to dress in a dark suit and tie or a tuxedo, however they are far from being stuffy. This chapter spends its labors working the rituals from memory. This provides a better and more meaningful experience for the candidates receiving the capitular degrees. They spend a majority of their time involved in education. These chapters do not open, read the minutes, and close. They spend time discussing the importance of the rituals and their meanings to the membership. I encourage you, if you are able, to contact the Chapter and to arrange a visit. It is an eye opening and wonderful experience.

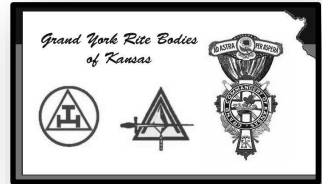
2023 Triennial

It is hard to believe it has already been three years since the last Triennial session. The 2023 Triennial session will be held August 12-15, 2023, in Branson, Missouri. This session will include both the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons International and the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons. Both organizations will meet and conduct their business in Branson. This is the time to elect the new officers who will start the line for each of the bodies. It is a time of fun and fellowship, all while performing the duties of both these bodies. If you can be in attendance, you will have a great time. When we attend these sessions we make new friends and renew old acquaintances. It is a great time to visit and enjoy both the sessions and the area. More information will be posted in the next issue. We look forward to being with you at the 2023 Triennial Sessions in Branson, Missouri!



Grand Chapter Sessions for 2023

The Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas will be hosting their 157th Annual Grand Chapter Communication on Friday, May 5, 2023, at the Bluemont Hotel in Manhattan, Kansas. The Grand Chapter will open promptly at 8:00 AM and all Royal Arch Masons are invited to be in attendance. The Grand York Rite sessions will start on Wednesday, May 3, 2023, at 1:00 PM for the conferral of the Order of the High Priesthood. The Order will be conferred on eligible candidates who have served or are serving as High Priest.



Most Excellent Masters: Take Heed!

The following is an excerpt from the book, *A Handbook for Royal Arch Masons*, which was written by Ray V. Denslow, and published in 1953 by the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons International. It is a good reminder for us, even 50 years later.

Masonic Education: It is the duty of the Most Excellent Master, as taught in the degree, to dispense Masonic Light and Knowledge. If your Chapter is doing nothing more in spreading Light and Knowledge than merely conferring degrees, you are not accomplishing that which you are charged individually, and collectively, to do.

Just what is Masonic Education? How can you spread Masonic Light and Knowledge? Well, you certainly can't spread a thing you do not possess. It therefore resolves itself into the question of acquiring such an amount of education that you will be entitled to the title of Most Excellent Master. A title without deserving it is worthless.

Each Chapter should arrange meetings at which matters of historical and symbolic import might be discussed. Most Companions are anxious to learn more about the institution, but it must be presented to them in an appealing way and by Companions who are qualified to instruct.

Why not discuss the Passwords and their Meanings at some stated convocation? Or why not have talks on the Historical Characters in the Degrees? Devote an evening to King Solomon's Temple and its Symbolism. In fact, there is no limit to the subject which could be discussed.

The matter of Education offers a challenge to every High Priest and to every Chapter. Why not make true Most Excellent Masters. The mere conferring of a degree does not make one a Master.



Council Cliff Notes

Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Kansas



Winter 2023

John T. Staton, MIGM 2022-2023



Thank You!

I would like to start this article by thanking my Deputy Grand Master, Gary Mason, for taking over and completing the Pikes Peak time capsule inspection that I was unable to attend due to illness. Gary also covered for me at the South Central Conference in Shreveport, Louisiana.

Now I am going to share something that I learned this last year. When I first started as secretary/recorder of Wichita York Rite, I was doing minutes that had the date of the meeting in (Anno Domini)

A.D. There was a second date that was different for all three bodies that I did not quite understand. These dates were also used on most charters for Blue Lodge and York Rite. A few months ago I was rummaging through the archives and found a small book called *Manual for Cryptic Masons* that was prepared by General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons International dated 1982. The book was compiled by Bruce H. Hunt, General Grand Recorder.

In the front of the book was a section entitled, "Masonic Calendar Rules for Determining the Dates to be Affixed to Masonic Documents." The Ancient Craft or Symbolic Masonry uses Anno Lucis (Year of Light) abbreviated to A.L. This date is formed by adding 4000 to the current era. The year 2022 A.D. would be 6022 A.L. Capitular or Royal Arch Masonry uses Anno Inventionis (Year of the Discovery) abbreviated to A.I. This date is formed by adding 530 to the current era. The year 2022 A.D. would be 2552 A.I. Cryptic or Council Masonry (Royal and Select Masters) uses Anno Depositionis (Year of the Deposit) abbreviated to A.Dep. This date is formed by adding 1000 to the current era. The year 2022 A.D. would be 3022 A.Dep. Chivalric Masonry (Knights Templar) uses Anno Ordinis (Year of the Order) abbreviated to A.O. This date is formed by subtracting 1118 years from the current era. The year 2022 A.D. would be 904 A.O. I hope this explanation may guide you in working with the dates used on the various documents.

This year we have been concentrating on initiating new members. We have had a class in Newton, KS on April 2, 2022. We had a class at Liberal, KS on July 9, 2022. We had a class in Goodland, KS on August 27. Chapter and Council conferrals are planned for January 7, 2023, in Junction City, KS.

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Thank you (Continued)

I encourage all York Rite Masons to visit their local Lodges to acquaint the Master Masons with the York Rite. I realize the pandemic has slowed things down. Wichita York Rite had twelve petitions in February of 2020. We were able to complete only part of these petitions.

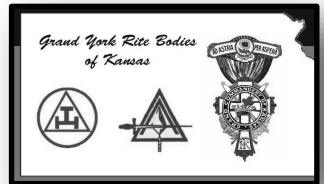
In closing I would like to wish everyone a happy Thanksgiving, a merry Christmas, and a prosperous New Year.

Fraternally yours,

MIGM John Staton

Grand Council Sessions for 2023

The Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of Kansas will be hosting their 156th Annual Grand Council Assembly on Saturday, May 6, 2023, at the Bluemont Hotel in Manhattan, Kansas. The Grand Council will open promptly at 8:00 AM and all Cryptic Masons are invited to be in attendance. The Grand Council session will start on Wednesday, May 3, 2023, at 3:30 PM with the conferral of the Order of the Silver Trowel. The Order will be conferred on eligible candidates who have served or are serving as Illustrious Master of a Council of Royal and Select Masters.



Council Degrees Planned for Junction City

On January 7, 2023, the first Cryptic event of the new year is scheduled to be conferred in Junction City, Kansas. Companions from across the jurisdiction are needed to confer the Royal Master and Select Master degrees upon several candidates who will received the Capitular degrees of the Chapter of Royal Arch Masons earlier in the day. Congratulations to the newly made members of the Council in the Grand Jurisdiction of Kansas! Pictures will be posted in the next issue.



What About Our Duties as New Officers?

In 1927, the Grand Council of Cryptic Masons of Kansas published a book containing the revised by-laws for the Grand Council of Kansas. In a read of this book, several things stand out as important for all of the officers of a Council of Cryptic Masons to know.



The Illustrious Master is charged within the ritual of installation to recite the secret traditions and illustrate the moral principles of the Craft. But what does this mean? It means the Illustrious Master should be well versed with the ritual of not only opening and closing of their Council, but of the degrees they hold. It means the Illustrious Master should be ever ready to act as the representative of the wise King of Israel, Solomon, whom he represents when seated in the East. Be ever ready to instruct, and to explain, your thoughts as the Illustrious Master.



The Deputy Master is charged as the representative of a King, and one elevated in rank above their companions, to remember all the duties they owe to God, their neighbor, and themselves, to always act upon the level of equality. Be the friend to those who need it and be ever ready to counsel and to bring your charges together on the level. We are all equal and your duties cause you to strive for this equality.

The Principal Conductor of the Work, the third officer in the Council, is reminded they are a part of the fellowship of Kings. They are further reminded to be a mediator within their Council. Their job is to support the Illustrious Master and the Deputy Master, but that is not their only duty incumbent upon them. They are to preserve harmony and the unanimity of sentiment among all the members of the Council. When they see dissension among the Brethren, they are to discountenance such behavior and work toward a decision which is beneficial for all.



Each of our principal officers have more to do than to just open and close a Council of Cryptic Masons. We are wise to remember and to act in accordance with the reasons we have been installed into these offices if we have any hope to be the leaders we have been instructed to be.



Councils Outside of the United States

Companion Patrick C. Carr, Editor



We know the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons International is truly an international body. There are several Grand Councils across the world who are under the GGCCMI. But did you know there are still Councils in the world who are not organized under the international body? One such Grand Council is the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of England and Wales.

The Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of England and Wales, and its Districts and Councils Overseas, was formally constituted on July 29, 1873. They were chartered by four Councils who had received their charters from the Grand Council of New York two years previously. They were created as a sovereign body and organized under the Reverend Canon G. R. Portal who was a Past Grand Master of Mark Master Masons. He was then installed as the first Grand Master of the Grand Council. Starting with only our Councils, this Grand Council now has over 250 Councils.

This Council does not confer the three degrees normally observed in Cryptic Masonry in the American York Rite system. They confer four Cryptic Degrees. These are generally accepted as the completion of the Solomonic Legend and are the link between the Mark Master Degree, the Third Degree within Craft Masonry, and the Holy Royal Arch Degree.

The degrees conferred within the Grand Council of England and Wales include the Select Master, the Royal Master, the Most Excellent Master, and the Super-Excellent Master. They also confer the degrees relating to the Chair, which are Thrice Illustrious Master upon those who have been elected and installed into the Chair of the subordinate Council.

Another degree which is permitted to be conferred is that of the Excellent Master degree. This can only be opened and conferred by a dispensation or warrant permitting the Council to confer the degree.

It is always interesting to take a look at groups which are participating in Masonic degree work outside of what we are normally used to. When you have the opportunity to travel, and to witness degrees outside of your jurisdiction, you will always be pleasantly surprised at what you recall and what is entirely foreign to what you have been taught.