

My Masonic Life



On Saturday, December 1, I will be installed as worshipful master of my masonic lodge. It is a big deal, to me anyway. After a few years of service in various office positions in the Lodge, I will now sit in the chair that is basically used by the president of the lodge.

Yes, I'm a mason (in case you missed it in last months newsletter).

OK, first off, freemasonry is not a cult (in case a few of you were thinking that). It is more a fraternity of men whose goals can be summed up in one phrase: to make good men better. It's believed its ancient roots go back to the building of the pyramids, or even possibly before. Men who had the skills to build permanent stone structures kept those skills a secret. Those secrets were an advantage in gaining employment. To prove you had those skills, there were certain words and (the famous) handshake used, so one mason would know another. Nowadays, most of the old masonic secret skills are taught in high school: mathematics and geometry.

As a brotherhood, masons also maintained a certain moral code. When several were working together on, let's say, a cathedral in medieval times, it was much safer if you could trust the masons working around you with heavy stones and at great heights. It is from this moral code, of working together in peace and harmony, that modern freemasonry is based.

My masonic journey began in 2009. Having moved to Elko, Nevada, there were only a few pipers in the area. We would get together to play in the masonic lodge in town because most of them were masons. I'd never been in a masonic lodge before. Consecrated in 1873, Elko Lodge #15 had a long history in the town and being a history buff, I found many of the objects and pictures in the building fascinating. I started asking questions and before long, I went through the initiation rite to join. Now, I can't tell you anything about the ceremonies and what goes on in a lodge, but I can say my fraternal brothers are a great bunch of guys and we carry out a lot of charitable work. They come from all walks of life. Plumbers, janitors, clerks, administrators, public servants, scientists, engineers, CEO's. Even politicians and lawyers. And in lodge, we are all equal.

On moving to Calgary, I joined a new lodge. Their charitable project is running a subsidized housing project for seniors. The building has just been paid off and we're going to build another, bigger one. I cannot describe how good it feels to being part of something much bigger than myself. And no matter where I go in the world, I can visit a masonic lodge and be greeted as a friend. With my travel for work, I try to see if there is a lodge nearby where I can visit if one of their meetings is taking place while I'm there.

I'm looking forward to the ceremony placing me in the worshipful master position of my Lodge. It will be my job to guide the lodge through business, degrees, and generally make it a great place to meet with friends. My Calgary lodge is coming up to its 100th anniversary in 2020, so I will have a lot of preparation to do for the celebrations throughout my year, including organizing masonic education, leading meetings, determining charities to support, and overseeing the operation of the lodge in general. It will be a great year for me.

So, next time you see some article on the internet telling you freemasonry is trying to take over the world, remember that we've been around since the dawn of time and if our goal was to take over the world, we'd have done it a long time ago. As a mason once said in a TV interview, "Our buildings have masonic symbols plainly marked on them. Our schedule of meetings is listed on the door. If we are a secret society, we're doing a terrible job of it." We are about making good men better, and in the process make the world better through good works and charity. It's that simple.