

The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio

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Grand Secretary's Newsletter

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Documents Sent via USPS

Several items have been mailed to each Secretary via U.S. postal service. They will be discussed in a little more detail later, but they include:

1. Review of proposed legislation to be considered at Grand Lodge.
2. Proxies for the Worshipful Master, Senior and Junior Wardens.
3. Program for Grand Lodge.

Program For Grand Lodge

A copy of the Program for Grand Lodge was mailed. It should go to the Worshipful Master or his proxy. The specific schedule, list of officers, special events, and various procedures and rules are all detailed in the program. A few highlights which should be emphasized to delegates:

- Bring your apron.
- Bring your dues card. To enter the Annual Communication, a current dues card must be shown.

Proxies For Delegates

If the Worshipful Master, Senior or Junior Warden of any Lodge is unable to attend Grand Lodge, he should sign the proxy for his station (these proxies were enclosed with the mailing), and give the proxy to another elected officer or Past Master of the Lodge to serve as his substitute, with voting rights.

With the possibility of Plural Members, the use of proxies changed a few years ago. By Code, no member can exercise more than three proxies from his "primary" Lodge. If an Ohio Mason holds an elected office as a Plural Member in one or more other Lodges, he may carry an additional proxy — but only one proxy from each "plural" Lodge. If a Plural Member is serving as WM, SW, or JW of a "plural" Lodge, he can be a delegate for that position, and carry just one additional proxy for the "plural" Lodge.

It is possible, for example, that a Mason, who is an elected officer in his "primary" Lodge and is one of the top three officers in two additional "plural" Lodges, could vote seven proxies at Grand Lodge. (The Code prohibits anyone serving as Worshipful Master in more than one Lodge at the same time.)

If you have any questions, please check with the Credentials Committee when you register at Grand Lodge.

Proposed Legislation

In compliance with the Code, a booklet that contains the text of proposed legislation which has been received by the Grand Lodge for consideration at the Annual Communication in October, has been mailed.

There are 13 pieces of legislation printed in the booklet. Items designated with numerals (2015-1 and 2015-2) have laid over the required one year and will be voted on at this annual session.

The items designated with letters (2015-A through 2015-K) were received after last

year's Grand Lodge. Several are seeking "immediate consideration" from Grand Lodge.

The goal of this booklet is to allow Lodges to discuss these various items in advance. Delegates should take this book to Grand Lodge to assist them during the deliberations.

Remember, delegates should retain the right to vote by their own conscience, after listening to debate. They are not to be bound by directions from the Lodge or other brethren, given to them before Grand Lodge.

Submitting Your Lodge Election Results in November

Immediately following your Lodge Annual Meeting in November you will need to enter your election results in MORI. You will enter your Certificate of Election in MORI for your 2016 Officers. Please remember, the year of your entry will be 2016 and not 2015.

We publish and distribute the annual Grand Lodge of Ohio Masonic Directory from the information that you have entered into MORI. The quicker you enter this information following your Annual Meeting, the sooner we can get this annual directory published and sent to you.

Must Have Your Correct Email Address

When entering your 2016 officers please double-check that we have your current email address. It is essential that we have current, correct email and contact information for the Master, Secretary, and the Treasurer.

206th Grand Lodge Session Planned

The 206th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Ohio will be held at the Columbus Convention Center, 400 N. High Street, Columbus, on October 23 & 24, 2015.

Full information on hotel, meal, and special event reservations was sent to each Lodge in May. For online reservations go to <http://www.gl2015res.com/>.

Details and a link for reservations are on the Grand Lodge Web page, www.freemason.com.

Tax Exempt Status Explained

There continues to be a misunderstanding about the tax status of Lodges in Ohio.

All Lodges are "non profit" organizations, according to the IRS. They are NOT "charitable" organizations. Lodges are classified as 501 (c) (10) groups, while a "charitable" group is listed as a 501 (c) (3).

A "non profit" organization, such as a Lodge, is not charged income taxes, but it must pay sales and property taxes (unless an exemption has been granted). If an individual gives a cash gift to a "non profit," that donation CANNOT be deducted from the individual's personal income taxes.

A "charitable" organization, such as the Ohio Masonic Home, or the Grand Lodge Charitable Foundation, as 501 (c) (3) organizations, can be exempt from income, sales and property taxes.

An individual making a cash donation to a "charitable" group can deduct that gift from his income taxes.

All Lodges and Temple Companies MUST file an annual IRS 990 form to retain their non-profit status.

Lodge Mergers

If you are contemplating a merger with another Lodge, please let our office know. We can help explain the process and what steps need to be followed in order to achieve a smooth consolidation.

Sister Jurisdiction Service Awards

If you are asked to present an out-of-state service award, please remember to follow-up by notifying our Office that the presentation was made. We then can close the loop by letting the Sister Grand Jurisdiction know.

Deaths Since our Last Issue

- Frederick J. Henderson II, Ralph R Rickly #670; Master; passed 5/17/15
- Richard J. Harless, Harmony #8; PDDGM 9th District; passed 5/23/15
- James L. Evans, Warpole #176; PDDGM 16th District; passed 5/23/15
- George P. Finch, Thornville #521; PDDGM 18th District; passed 5/25/15
- William P. Mayberry, Sr., Millennium #779; Past Grand Master; passed 7/18/15

We Mourn the Passing of Most Worshipful Brother William P. Mayberry, Sr., Past Grand Master

Most Worshipful Brother William Perry Mayberry, Sr. served the Grand Lodge of Ohio as its Grand Master in 2002-2003.

He resided in the Dayton area with his wife, Delores. He was retired from Mayberry Moving & Storage and enjoyed traveling and spending time at their retirement home in Florida.

His memorial was sent to each Lodge where it was to be read at the Lodge's Stated Meeting. The altar should be caused to be draped for a period of 60 days.

Endowed Membership Fund Distribution

Endowed Membership distribution was calculated in July by the Grand Lodge Investment Committee and approved by the Grand Lodge Advisory Committee. Owing to the volatility of the stock market, returns on the Endowed Member Fund this year were flat. To ensure Lodges receive a 5% payout, the Grand Lodge Investment Fund will subsidize the Endowment Fund this year.

Distribution for \$600 and \$800 Endowed Members will be \$30 and \$40 respectively.

Endowed Member checks will be disbursed to lodges the first week of November.

Property Tax Exemption

As of this date, over 165 Ohio Lodges have received their requested property tax exemption. This represents a collective savings of over \$400,000.00.

Official Out Of State Correspondence

Just a reminder, all official correspondence between Grand Jurisdictions must be transmitted through the respective Grand Lodge Offices. This includes all requests for dimits, certificates of good standing, requests for courtesy work, affiliations, etc.

Consequently, if you correspond directly with a Lodge in another jurisdiction on any of the aforementioned transactions, they will be delayed until such time as the proper Masonic protocol is established. However, a member of a Lodge of a sister jurisdiction, even though he may now reside within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Ohio, is at liberty to correspond directly with his Lodge.

So, please remember to observe proper Masonic protocol in dealing with all official out-of-state transactions and/or correspondence.

Note on Dispensation Requests

When requesting a Dispensation through your DDGM, please allow time for the process to work. Submit your request at least two weeks prior to the event.

If your Lodge is planning to perform some type of degree work outside Ohio, i.e. a "Foreign Jurisdiction", you need a Dispensation, and so does the foreign jurisdiction. The same holds true if a foreign jurisdiction comes into Ohio—the non-Ohio Lodge needs a Dispensation from their Grand Master, and so do you.

Be thorough in your request. For example, for an outdoor degree, what is your "Plan B" in the event of inclement weather? How securely will the event be tiled?

Please know that no foreign lodge can come into Ohio to participate in degree work

without our Grand Master's knowledge and approval.

“Unfinished Candidates”

If you have Entered Apprentices or Fellow Crafts in your membership who have not completed their initiation, do not “Withdraw” them from membership. There is no reason to withdraw them from MORI on your membership roster. There is no fee, per capita, or other charges or penalty for these EAs or FCs to remain in MORI as your members.

They are members and are entitled to sit in Lodge as an EA or FC. They should also be a focus for you in your communications encouraging their completion of their initiation journey.

Unless they individually, in writing, request to drop their Masonic membership, they are not to be withdrawn in MORI.

Arrearages—Not In Ohio!

In Ohio, a member either pays his annual Lodge dues, the Lodge remits his per capita dues, or the Lodge suspends him for nonpayment of dues. An Ohio Mason does not accumulate multiple years of delinquent dues (arrearages).

If he is SNPD and later wishes to reaffiliate, he only owes the current year's annual dues amount.

If you use the MORI system to process annual dues, MORI is set up to allow arrearages because other Grand Jurisdictions charge delinquent dues in this manner. You need to zero-out dues in arrears each year and only charge our members the current year annual dues.

MORI Training Videos

There are a number of tutorial videos to help you in mastering the MORI membership program.

They are 2 to 5 minutes in length.

The videos can be accessed by logging into MORI as you normally do. Then look at the left column and you will see “MORI Users

Guide,” and “MORI Training Videos.” A click of your mouse will connect you to the videos.

They are great aids in learning, among other things, how to prepare your program for reporting and computing dues received.

RWB Russell Herner—Published Author

Past District Deputy of the 16th District, Right Worshipful Brother Russell Herner, has published an outstanding book entitled, “*Cathedrals Built by the Masons*”. The book contains:

- Color photographs 30 European Cathedrals with overviews of each
- Operative Stonemason Lodges and their apprenticeship training programs
- Photographs of primitive tools operative Masons used and a description of their use
- Romanesque and Gothic architecture designs
- Birthplace of Gothic architecture
- The origin and development of Freemasonry
- Connections that link modern Freemasonry and Ancient Craft Stonemasonry
- Description of Freemasonry and Masonic Lodges today

RWB Herner presents his opinions on the origin and development of Freemasonry and how it descended directly from the Operative Stonemasons of the Middle Ages. It tells the story of how the Master Builders and craftsmen designed and built the beautiful masterpiece cathedrals. It explains the Operative History of our Craft.

Books may be purchased at your local book store, online retailers such as Barnes & Noble, Amazon, or Books-A-Million, or from Schiffer Publishing Ltd.

This might be a good educational tool for the new member as well as the old. Or, a great discussion topic at Lodge meetings.

Inspection Reports

Copies of the Lodge Secretary and Treasurer Inspection Reports are now available to prepare for your Lodge's inspection in 2016. The reports are available on the Grand Lodge webpage, www.freemason.com.

Be sure to use these new copies and not copies from previous years. Only forms with "2016" at the top will be accepted.

Service Award Policy

When MORI prints your Service Award Eligibility form, it lists all members of your Lodge who are eligible for their award regardless if he is a Plural or Primary member.

An individual should only receive his Service Award one time, and that should be from his Primary, home Lodge. He should not receive a Service Award from his Plural Lodge where he holds membership.

When receiving your order form, the Grand Lodge Office has no way of knowing if the named recipient is a Primary or Plural member of your Lodge. Only, you, the Lodge Secretary knows your Plural Members.

When submitting your Service Award Order Form, mark-out or do not order a certificate and pin for your Plural members, only your Primary members.

Service awards are permitted to be presented any time following the Annual Communication. This means you can hold your 2016 Awards Night at any time after October 24, 2015. Please don't forget to honor your senior members.

Reminder— Fee for Replacement Dues Cards

As previously reported, there is now a \$1.00 fee for any replacement dues card. The fee is not charged for newly raised MMs, dual, plural or affiliated members.

Invoices will be sent quarterly.

American Union Lodge #1—Marietta, OH

Did you know that American Union Lodge #1 located in Marietta is older than the Grand Lodge of Ohio?

American Union Lodge was a Connecticut Revolutionary War military lodge, and many of the first officers were members of the Connecticut regiment. It was constituted at Roxbury, Massachusetts on February 20, 1776 by John Rowe, then Grand Master of Massachusetts authorized to work "anywhere on the continent of North America where no Grand Master is appointed." It worked in Washington's army at Boston and then moved to New York after a stop in Ridgefield. It moved from encampment to encampment in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York and New Jersey.

In 1779, Rufus Putnam was initiated, passed and raised, and Moses Clevealand was made an Entered Apprentice in the Hudson River Valley camp. The lodge moved westward and became a part of the Western Reserve—which eventually became Ohio. Putnam went on to become the first Grand Master of Ohio, and Clevealand went westward to form a city which bears his name with a slightly different spelling (Cleveland).

Quote of the Day

"Real joy comes not from ease or riches or from the praise of men, but from doing something worthwhile." - Wilfred T. Grenfell

See you in Columbus!

***C. Michael Watson,
Grand Secretary***