

Visitors

As new Brethren, we become very comfortable with what we see in our Mother Lodges. The ritual becomes second nature, the manner of managing the Business becomes ingrained, the way we greet visitors is patterned into our brains in much the same way that Dr. Pavlov trained his famous dogs.

That's unfortunate in many ways, as it often closes our minds to the enjoyment of seeing commonplace things done differently!

"Masonic Visitation" is considered in many jurisdictions around the world to be a "right", very much the same as the "human rights" guaranteed by the UN. The fact is that "visiting" is not a "right" in that sense, as any Lodge, and the Master of that Lodge, has the power to admit or refuse admittance, to any visitor except certain Grand Officers attending in the performance of their official duties. But that's not my point.

Visiting, travelling about, seeing how "the other feller does it" in many ways the lifeblood of Masonry. Our Fraternity is built on the legend of the mobile nature of stone masons and jobs, and this is immortalised in more than one place in our rituals.

I live in Nova Scotia, where I am a member of an English Lodge that sits in the middle of the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia, surrounded by 27 other Lodges within a half hours drive. More than half of them meet in the same building my Lodge uses. Two of those Lodges use a version of Emulation Work, one uses a form of Working based on an Irish ritual, and the rest use an American ritual called variously "Webb Working" or "Ancient York". The inter-visitation and cross-pollination is constant, and the Lodges experience a goodly number of Brethren who have joined additional Lodges. This can have some amusing results, particularly when sitting in Office in more than one place! In our Masonic careers, we often develop a tendency to believe many things are "done best our way", referring to the specific traditions of our Mother Lodges. This of course implies that none of the other Lodges round and about "do it right" at all!

I extend an invitation to any Brother to attend a meeting of The Royal Standard Lodge # 398 EC, meeting in Halifax on the Second Tuesday of each month except July and August, to see some of the possible "differences" for themselves. (Oh, by the way, that's Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, and no, I won't be sending the airfare.)

Bro. Doug Welsh, OGR
PML398 UGLE
L3 GRNS - Virgin Lodge

YOUR STUDY CIRCLE NEEDS YOU

In a resolution of the, Ancient Society of Masons of York, dated 1725, it states & "every 1st Wednesday in the month, a Lodge shall be held at the house of a Brother according as their turn shall fall out and an hour be set apart to talk Masonry".

A great deal has changed since those early days within Masonry, and a great deal has not.

Of the things that haven't changed is the quest for knowledge and truth. Although that truth can sometimes be a vindication of one's opinion, but then one man's opinion is another man's truth, I suppose. And that is the essence of research, that seeking after truth and knowledge and well informed opinion.

Which after all, is what we are essentially all about, at not only the Southchurch Masonic Study Circle, but other bodies like Installed Masters' Lodges, and the like.

And of the things that have changed is that of a falling membership within the Craft. In the Provincial Meeting at held Great Queen Street, in March 2006, the Provincial Grand Master, the RW Bro. John Webb, made reference to the decline in membership figures. He urged that every effort be made to recruit new members and try and halt this trend.

We as a Study Circle cannot afford to rest on our laurels, and believe that this problem will not, does not affect us. It does and it will continue unabated unless we are proactive in our approach to this problem. By the balance of probabilities, we cannot escape unscathed from this phenomenon.

We have what can be best described as a 'fluid' membership base. This has over the years experienced; by its very nature, a certain amount of 'slippage'. If this trend continues with us, as it has with the Craft in general, we may very well be meeting 'at the house of a Brother' if our numbers were to fall dramatically.

A rather drastic scenario maybe, but the potential seriousness cannot be overstated. We need to, as our PGM requested, recruit new members, but also taking such measures that will retain the present membership.

Canvassing has many forms, from telling one's Lodge members of the existence of the Study Circle, and its many advantages and benefits. Advertising at Masonic Halls, either with a Poster campaign or leaflets. The Web Page, on which you are reading this, is yet another weapon in our arsenal in this campaign.

Remember the onus is on every one of us to, not only to bring to the attention of all Lodge members, but also help to apply the motto of our Study Circle, and to make certain that it continues so that it; "*diffuses light and lustre to all within its circle.*"

All of the above methods, where appropriate, will be employed to try and ensure that we grow from strength to strength. But your help as members is required in this campaign. With combined assistance there is no real reason why success should not be achieved in our cause.

And as we approach the 30th Anniversary of our Study Circle, which will be celebrated in April 2007; in an optimistic vein, it will be a milestone 'en route' to those anniversaries yet to be enjoyed.

The words of that great English poet, Alexander Pope, seem, at this juncture, to be rather apt; "*pleas'd to look forward, pleas'd to look behind, and count each birthday with a careful mind.*"

Pierre Waddoups. Prov. AGDC (Secretary)

Southchurch Masonic Study Circle



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You are cordially invited to the next meeting of the Southchurch Masonic Study Circle which will be held at the

**Saxon Hall, Aviation Way, Southend on Sea,
Essex, on Thursday 21st September 2006 at 8pm.**

We look forward to seeing you and don't forget, guests are welcome.

Secretary : **W.Bro. Pierre Waddoups**

AGENDA

- 1 **To welcome visitors and prospective new members.**
 - 2 **To receive apologies for absence**
 - 3 **To read and if approved, confirm the minutes of the last meeting held on the 18th**
 - 4 **Matters arising from the minutes**
 - 5 **Treasurer's Report**
 - 6 **Objects of Masonic interest.**
 - 7 **Speaker. Bro. Bernard Williamson will present a paper entitled:-**
 - 8 **Questions and answers.**
- Any other Business**

PROJECT ESSEX OATHS

The SMSC is seeking to celebrate its 30th. Anniversary next year by undertaking a research project. The working title is "Project Oaths" and that will probably change once we undertake the work.

The Aim of the Project is to foster a teambuilding exercise in the study circle that will also have a finished product which will be of use to fellow Essex researchers for the future. We expect to publish the results of our work in booklet form and supply copies to various archives in the county.

See your web site for full details.

<http://www.southchurch-masonic.org.uk>

NOTICE BOARD

"Thirty Five is a very attractive age, London Society is full of women of the highest birth who have, of their own free choice, remained thirty five for years." **Oscar Wilde**, the importance of being Earnest, 1895.

Not quiet thirty five and we really don't want to just stay at our present age, but continue to grow, so next year we celebrate our 30th Anniversary!

I have made tentative arrangements for us, with our respective partners, to mark this special event, with a celebratory meal. The plan thus far, is to hold the event early next year, on a Sunday Lunch time, with a Guest Speaker.

Watch this space, as they say, for further information, and please bear in mind that places, once they become available, will, I am certain, be booked quickly.

Make a note in your diaries for around April 07.

Pierre Waddoups. Secretary.

THE AUTHOR OF THE PAPER.

Bernard Williamson is a Freelance journalist and ex director of the London Press Club. Bernard has featured on Radios 2,4, & 5, TV: BBC2- Newsnight, Channel Four news, & You and Yours, regarding both finance and Masonic matters. During 1995 and 1998 he appeared on live call talk shows on various radio stations discussing Freemasonry in the community. He had a regular bi-monthly slot on News Talk FM.

Bernard has been a Freemason since 1993 and belongs to Craft, Royal Arch, Knights Templar, Knight of Malta and Sir Thomas of Acorn degrees and was a founder member of the Goose and Gridiron Society, an organisation open to non-masons who are researching Masonic inns and taverns. Whilst researching the history of his mother lodge he discovered the only known extant photograph of the original meeting place of the world's first grand lodge. Subsequently in 1997 on the 280th. Anniversary of this Grand Lodge formation he was secretary of a group who successfully petitioned for the erection of a blue plaque in St. Paul's churchyard to mark the site.

From your Secretary

Welcome to the September Summons for our Meeting on the 21st September, which is from the Latin for 7, and also a mystical number that permeates our Rituals.

The Triangle is a combination of 3 and 4, and the 7 branched Golden Lamp stand which stood in the Holy Place in K.S.T, which took 7 years and upwards to build are just a few references to the number 7, not to mention the Liberal Arts and Sciences!

The point being, what? I can almost hear you asking. The point being this; Masonic Research covers such things as those above. To enjoy the thrill and conviviality of, not just the research but the disseminating of it to like minded and potentially like minded Brethren, as well, we need our Study Circle.

For this activity to continue, we obviously need not only new members, but retention of the present ones. Our PGM at the March Meeting at Great Queen Street, made reference to the falling membership numbers affecting the Craft. He went on to say that every effort should be made to halt this decline. This trend has not passed us by, but is affecting us to the point that we need to recruit new members, as well.

Please do look at our Web Site where I have posted an article dealing with this problem, if you don't have internet access, please, contact me by any other method and I will forward a copy to you of my Article, please do this.

On a lighter note, for those of you who missed Alec Hall's Talk, at the May Meeting on, The Royal Society, missed a treat. It was a really well Research piece, and ably delivered. Copies of which I believe Alec has for circulation.

Bernard Williamson, one of our members, will be presenting his Talk, on Sir Christopher Wren at the next Meeting, please give him your support, it will, like the previous contribution, be well worth listening to.

I do hope that you had a good summer.

Pierre Waddoups. Secretary.

Meetings of the Study Circle will be held on:-

18th May 2006

21st September 2006

14th December 2006

For your Diary.

Cheese and Wine evening

14th December 2006