

GRAND MASTER’S MESSAGE

What Mark Have You Chosen to Leave?

Operative Stone Masons are known for leaving their “Mark” on stones made proper for the builder’s use. Their good work, true work, and square work attests of their skill, honor, and fidelity or their obligated part in the “Great Work” while traveling through this dimension of space and time. Our Grand Lodge Library contains stones from the White House with such markings along with a hand signed letter given to us as a gift from Mason, Grand Master, and President Harry S. Truman.

Early in our journey as a young Apprentice were taught several lessons. I invite you to join me in a short journey as I briefly recapitulate one of those lessons. There are five American presidents who experienced poverty: Harry S. Truman, Ulysses S. Grant, William Henry Harrison, Thomas Jefferson, and James A. Garfield. Today, I present to you Brother Harry S. Truman.

I have always admired President Truman, particularly the way he handled adversity. Harry S. Truman became our 33rd President of the United States of America. Shortly after taking the oath of office for President, Truman said to reporters, “Boys, if you ever pray, pray for me now. I don’t know if you fellas ever had a load of hay fall on you, but when they told me what happened yesterday, I felt like the moon, the stars, and all the planets had fallen on me.” Brother Truman’s noble calling began in 1884 when Harry S. Truman was born in Lamar, Missouri. Truman did not have a middle name. In southern states, including Missouri, parents typically used initials rather than a middle name. He grew up in Independence and for 12 years, prospered as a Missouri farmer through hard work and dedication.

Truman would enter The Great War as a captain in the Field Artillery and be deployed to France. Over four years, the Great War would leave in its wake a toll of death, carnage, and destruction such as the world had never seen. World War I would forever shape the 20th Century and leave its mark upon Truman and those who served at home and abroad.

Returning from The Great War, he married Elizabeth Virginia Wallace, and opened a haberdashery (a men’s clothing store) in Kansas City. Active in the Democratic Party, in 1922, Truman was elected a judge of the Jackson County Court. Eventually in 1934,

Truman would hear the calling to become a Senator. During World War II, he headed the Senate War Investigating Committee, who was tasked with checking into waste and corruption. It has been estimated Truman saved our government an estimated cost of 15 billion dollars.

President Truman made some of the most decisive decisions in history. Soon after V-E Day, the war against Japan had reached its final stage. Allied Forces issued an urgent plea for Japan to surrender, which was promptly rejected by the Empire of Japan. President Truman, after consultations with his advisers, ordered atomic bombs dropped on cities devoted to Japan’s war effort. The two cities selected were Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japanese surrender quickly followed.

Harry Truman could easily have been an ex-president who died in poverty. When he left the White House, his only income was a pension from his service in World War I. Truman never should have served in World War I in the first place because of his bad eyesight, but he was so desperate to serve his country that he managed to pass the vision test--by memorizing the eye chart. After leaving the White House, he sold some Missouri land that he’d inherited, and he wrote his memoirs, but taxes took most of the money he made from the book. He closed off one potential source of income by turning down all offers to join boards of directors. He said that they didn’t want Harry Truman the man, they wanted Harry Truman, the ex-president, and it was against his principles to trade on the fact that he had been president.

It was because of his precarious situation that Congress established the presidential pension. At the time, the only other living former president was Herbert Hoover, who was wealthy from his business interests and didn’t need more money, but he accepted his pension anyway, reportedly to avoid embarrassing Truman.

We may never face decisions of such magnitude as President Truman faced. We can and should follow his example making a conscious decision to live each day to the fullest, thus leaving a mark of distinction. Worshipful Masters, each of you made difficult decisions concerning Phase 1 and Phase 1-B. Many of our fellow citizens desire for things to return to a state of normalcy, and many of our Brethren desire to return to our Lodge.

Brethren, there will be consequences for each decision we make, whether to go in public without a mask, to ignore safety precautions, at home, work, and Lodge. Worshipful Masters, I am depending on you to lead your respective Lodges. Brethren, I am expecting you to support and follow your Worshipful Master. There may be some Lodges that decide to ask your Worshipful Master to serve again in 2021. The decision is up to the Lodge. Brethren, I hope each of you focus on what is important, and it is not the Lodge, but the family of Freemasonry and your personal family that comes before that.

We in South Carolina have been fortunate to have good men who are willing to serve and “many hands make light work.” Here is one final lesson from Brother Truman. Weary and worn from the conflicts of politics and burdens he had faced, President Truman retired to Independence; and at age 88, he died December 26, 1972, “after a stubborn fight for life.” Although possessing little material wealth in the end, he exhibited high moral fiber, backbone, and the will to do right in the time of adversity and chaos. Good work, True work, and Square work. My Brother, it is the internal and not the external qualifications! President Truman’s life or what I call his body of work was committed to do “that which is right!” His obituary simply read “He left a major mark as a world leader.”

Our Creator has skillfully placed you in this place and time. What will you choose? Will it be the internal qualifications? Will it be what is true and right? What “Mark” Will You Leave?

Fraternally,
Walter C. Disher II
Grand Master

MASONIC EDUCATION CORNER

Happy New Year to each of you. As we move into 2021, I believe we all will say goodbye to 2020. May we all look forward and pray for better days and to be thankful we are here.

As the New Year starts, Lodges have installed new officers. I was honored to install the officers of my home Lodge, Buffalo 202. While I was preparing for this opportunity to serve my Lodge, I was reminded by reading the Senior Warden Installation (ref: Ahiman Rezon 2019 page 220), something I have read on different occasions, but at this time of reading, it seemed to jump off the pages and give me another opportunity to stop and reflect on this.

The Level demonstrates that we are descended from the same stock, partake of the same nature, and share the same hope; and though distinctions among men are necessary to preserve subordination, yet no eminence of station should make us forget that we are Brethren; for he who is placed on the lowest spoke of fortune’s wheel, may be entitled to our regard; because a time will come, and the wisest knows not how soon, when all distinction, but that of goodness, shall cease; and death, the grand leveler of human greatness, reduce us to the same state.

As we share the same hope, I am convinced we all share the same hope of health for our families and friends.

May we never forget we are Brethren and while we have the chance to serve each other, we should always be willing to lead a helping hand. Remember we will all be judged by the same standard and there will be a time when the grand leveler will forbid us the chance to serve each other.

May the Blessings of Heaven rest upon us all.

“Our Best Is the Least We Owe Each Other”

Steven D. Hames, Senior Grand Warden
Chairman, Masonic Education Committee

LATEST EDITION OF THE AHIMAN REZON AVAILABLE

The latest Edition of the Ahiman Rezon is available at the Grand Lodge Office. Lodge Secretaries are requested to ensure that the Officers have the latest edition of the Ahiman Rezon and that members, especially new members, have a current edition. Lodge Orders for Ahiman Rezon may be charged to the Lodge. The cost of the current edition of the Ahiman Rezon is \$25.00 which includes shipping. Orders may be placed by phone, 803-808-4377 or by email: grandsecretary@scgrandlodgeafm.org

IN MEMORIAM

WILLIAM HAROLD SALLEY
 PAST DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTER
 June 8, 1929 Springfield, SC
 December 5, 2020 Springfield, SC

DENNIE ERNEST MARCHBANKS, SR.
 PAST DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTER
 November 24, 1957 Greenville County, SC
 December 9, 2020 Taylors, SC

CLARENCE ELTON TURNER
 PAST DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTER
 November 20, 1927 Pickens County, SC
 December 9, 2020 Easley, SC

We wish to express our deepest sympathies, to the family, friends and Lodge Brethren.

2021 ANNUAL COMMUNICATION OF THE GRAND LODGE

Plans are being made for the 2021 Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge to be held on April 22nd and April 23rd in North Charleston. Once the plans are finalized, the details will be emailed out from the Grandview System and also included in a special February Issue of the Masonic Light.

LODGES CONDUCTING THE ANNUAL INSTRUCTIONAL MEETINGS

The following letter from Right Worshipful Brother Steven D. Hames, Senior Grand Warden, along with packages of the Masonic Educational Materials required for the Lodge Instructional Meetings were mailed and should have already been received by the Lodge Secretary. If you have not received the Masonic Educational Materials, please contact the Grand Lodge Office. Best Wishes for successful and informative Instructional Meetings.



**THE GRAND LODGE OF ANCIENT FREE MASONS OF SOUTH CAROLINA
 DECEMBER 21, 2020**

INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES FOR 2021 INSTRUCTIONAL MEETINGS

Dear Worshipful Sirs,

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic that continues to affect the traditional form of our meetings, our Grand Master,

Most Worshipful Walter C. Disher, II, has issued his Order for Lodge Openings (Phase One and Phase One B) to assist us in opening Lodges as safely as possible.

As we follow the guidelines of his Order (Phase One and Phase One B) MW Walter C. Disher, II and the Elected Line have determined that to maintain each part of the order including social distancing of six feet, that we will not be able to hold our District Instructional Meetings as a District because of the large number of Brothers that must attend. We have determined that the safest way to move forward with the

instructions for each Lodge Officer will be to have the instructions given in each Lodge for the Officers of that Lodge. Please advise the Officers that this is the information needed to perform the duties in his Masonic Office.

Worshipful Sirs, these instructions should be given at your Regular Stated Communication Meeting under Phase One B and completed by the end of January, 2021.

If your Lodge has not opened under Phase One and Phase One B, you will not be able to have the instructions and you will need to inform the Grand Secretary's Office that your Lodge has not opened. Once your Lodge has opened under Phase One and Phase One B, you will be required to hold the Instructional Training.

Worshipful Sirs, it is important that you choose a well-informed Brother from your Lodge which must be at a minimum, a Past Master. Worshipful Sir, this is your Lodge and you should choose wisely for this duty. If you have any questions, please contact your MEC in your District.

Included in this package is a copy for each Officer's Duties and Instructions on those duties that must be covered by the appointed instructor. Your Masonic Education Committeeman will assist you if you have questions about the material.

Worshipful Master, when you have received this Instructional Package, you should provide the Brother that you have assigned this duty, the material for his review so that he may be better prepared for your Lodge Instructions.

After the instructions have been given, you should have each officer who received their instructions and the instructor sign on the attached sheet. The Lodge Secretary shall mail the attached form to Grand Lodge signed by the Worshipful Master and attested by the Secretary with the Lodge Seal affixed.

Fraternally,
 Steven D. Hames, SGW
 Chairman, Masonic Education
 Committee

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