

HILLSBOROUGH LODGE NO. 25 F&AM

TRESTLE BOARD

DECEMBER A.L. 2015

MASONIC EDUCATION: IS FATHER CHRISTMAS A MASON?

I have a very serious question to put to you all. I would like to raise it with you, and then do some detective work, examining the evidence that might lead us to answering it. It could be one of the most important questions, that I am sure you have often asked yourself. It relates our Craft to the society in which we live and concerns several major issues of this season. This very serious question is: "Is Father Christmas a Freemason?"

Let us consider the facts of this case: Of whom does this remind you?

A worthy gentleman, who is getting on a bit in years and is perhaps a little overweight, who wears a very distinctive costume as the badge of his activities, who provides the opportunity for friends and visitors to meet in fellowship, who is surrounded by secrecy and mystery, dispenses goodwill and the charity of gifts all over the world (avoiding ostentatious public display while doing so), and is there doing it year after year!

Well, fellow detectives, you must admit that this description could fit either Santa or a Freemason.

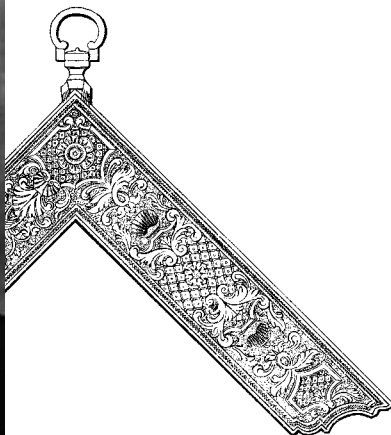


Father Christmas is also known as St. Nicholas, who was a Bishop who lived in the fourth century AD, in a place called Myra in Asia Minor, now called Turkey.

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Degrees on 1st and 3rd Tuesdays
Stated Communications on 2nd and 4th Tuesdays
Masonic Instruction every Thursday
Eastern Star meets on 1st and 3rd Saturdays
DeMolay meets every Monday

FROM THE EAST



Brethren,

I thank everyone for your support and commitment this year. I was told that my year in the East would pass with light speed, and those of you that gave me this insight were correct. I particularly thank R.:H.: Steven J. Silvers, District Instructor, for being my instructor so many years ago. It was a delight to have you as our Secretary for the remainder of this year, and I am forever thankful for your hard work in that office. I would also like to thank Brother Joey Davis for your hard work in the Senior Deacon chair this year; you my Brother have done an excellent job. And to Brother's Drew Baldwin and Kenneth Skillman, I wish you both luck in your labors for 2016. Keep the Lodge moving toward the LIGHT.

This has been one of the most memorable events in my life, right up there with the birth of my children Christian and Paige. They are very important in my life and have been supportive in my work at Hillsborough Lodge. I thank all the Brothers in Lodge, and throughout the 22nd District, for your friendship and Brotherly love. It is definitely felt and needed in our time-honored Fraternity.

I would also like to thank R.:W.: Joseph Gonzalez. You have been a true Brother, as well as a life mentor to me. You will always be with me my Brother. Your support and guidance has truly shown me how important we as Brothers are as living columns for one another.

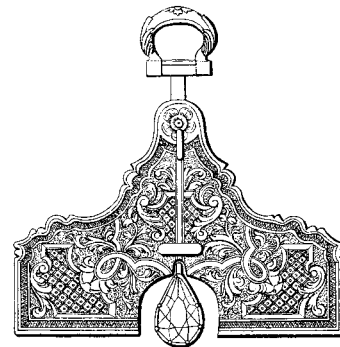
We should all be proud of our labors this year, and I wish the upcoming officers and appointed line the best of luck in the upcoming year. As a Past Master, I look forward to many years of Masonic friendship and Brotherly love.

Fraternally,

Clifford M. Allen

Worshipful Master

FROM THE WEST



Greetings, My Brothers!

As you read this, Hillsborough Lodge No. 25 will be preparing for its Officer Elections, and I look forward to seeing the will of the Craft expressed for the benefit of the Lodge. I would like to extend my thanks to the 2015 Officers and Brothers who worked to make this year a success. In particular, I would like to thank Brothers Billy Scott and Mike Huster who made it a point to be at Lodge before and after every Communication, assisting the Junior Warden in the kitchen and dining room, putting out the flags, preparing the Lodge room, and greeting guests. These Brothers are a fine example of what it means to give generously of your time and efforts to the Lodge.

A big thank you goes out to all the Brothers, families and friends who contributed toys to make our Toys for Tots campaign successful again this year. Your help is always greatly appreciated!

Please take note that with the exception of Installation practice on Thursday evening, January 7th, the Lodge will be dark from December 9th until Saturday, January 9th, 2016, for the Officer Installations.

Finally, to all of my Brothers, I send you and your families warm wishes for a relaxing and pleasant holiday season! I look forward to seeing you all in the New Year!

"The Masonic system represents a stupendous and beautiful fabric, founded on universal purity, to rule and direct our passions, to have faith and love in God, and charity toward man."

— Bro. Williams Howard Taft, 27th President of the United States, Kilwinning Lodge No. 356, Cincinnati, Ohio

Sincerely & Fraternaly

Kenneth R. Skillman

Senior Warden

FROM THE SOUTH



Greetings Brothers,

I can't believe it's already the end of the year. It seems like yesterday that I was planning my supper calendar for the year. When I was elected Junior Warden, I heard about the grind of cooking every Tuesday and the adventures of cooking for multiple family nights. However, I have experienced so much fellowship and Brotherly love with preparing every meal and providing Masonic Education at every Stated Communication. This will stay with me for a lifetime and I'm truly grateful for that.

I thank Bro. Billy Scott and Bro. Michael Huster for their tremendous help in the kitchen this year. I was extremely blessed and lucky to have you both as Stewards.

Hillsborough Lodge No. 25 remained very involved and active in all facets of Masonic Education districtwide this year. From District and Zone Schools of Instruction, to MLT, to Master Mason I, II, and III exams. We Raised a lot of Master Masons and welcomed many new Brothers into our Lodge who are eager to get involved and learn about the workings of the Lodge. Many Brothers worked hard to advance to new chairs in the ritual work. We continued to give back to our community and we were again very active in the Appendant Bodies.

Serving as Junior Warden was an amazing experience that I will always remember in my Masonic journey. I really enjoyed serving the Brethren of our Lodge this year. So, as I say goodbye to the South, let us never forget what the Plumb symbolizes, and what it admonishes us to do daily.

Election night is December 8th; please plan to attend. I hope you and your families enjoy a wonderful holiday season and a very Happy New Year.

Sincerely & Fraternally,

Drew Baldwin

Junior Warden

HILLSBOROUGH LODGE NO. 25 ■ TRESTLE BOARD

SECRETARY'S DESK
















My Brothers,

It has been a great honor to have been appointed and then elected to serve our Lodge this year as the Secretary. Since taking office, I have streamlined the secretary's office so that its function is smooth and easy to operate; but there is still more work to do. Having fulfilled the obligations of this office, I have a better understanding of our Lodge, it's members and the sacrifice made by those who have served in this position before me. Being Secretary takes time, patience, knowledge, an understanding of our Fraternity, our members, it's laws, rules and regulations, and most of all dedication to the Brothers of our historic Lodge. Thank you for placing your trust in me to fulfill the duties of this office.

At the October 27th Stated Communication of the Lodge, the Craft voted to suspend those Brothers who had not paid their 2015 dues. This year, the Lodge had to suspend 25 Brothers. The Lodge is sustained by both the dues and the participation of the members. Please think about your motivation for becoming a Mason and remind yourself that if you cannot be of service to your Lodge and participate in Lodge functions, it cannot be of service to you. As Masons, we hear regularly that you will get out of Masonry that which you put into it. It's time to come back to your Lodge and be an active participant. The end of this year is almost here and our annual Lodge elections will be held on December 8th. Remember that without a current dues card, you will not be permitted into Lodge and will not be able to vote for next years officers. Come out and be a part of the future of our Lodge.

By this time, each member should have received their 2016 dues notice. Please pay your dues as soon as possible so we can get your 2016 dues card out to you. You can either mail in a check, or there is a link on our web store for payment of 2016 dues. Grab your member card and go to www.hillsborough25.com and pay them online.

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY			
		 <p>EA Degree Night For Candidates & Brothers prepared. Dinner 6:30 p.m. Degree 7:15 p.m.</p>	<p>District School of Instruction John Darling Lodge • 7 p.m. 4601 Habana Tampa, FL</p>	 <p>Masonic Education & Catechism 6:30 p.m.</p>		 <p>Chapter 11 Meeting 1 p.m.</p>			
6	 <p>Paul Revere Chapter 7 p.m.</p>	 <p>Stated Communication Lodge Officer Elections Dinner 6:30 p.m. Meeting 7:15 p.m.</p>	7	 <p>Masonic Education & Catechism 6:30 p.m.</p>	11	<p>HIGH TWELVE LODGE Meeting at Noon</p>			
13	 <p>Paul Revere Chapter 7 p.m.</p>	 <p>No Lodge Meeting Incoming Officer Meeting (PM room) 6:00 p.m.</p>	14	15	 <p>Masonic Education & Catechism 6:30 p.m.</p>	17	<p>Masters & Wardens Meeting John Darling Lodge No. 154 6:30 p.m. Tampa, FL.</p>	 <p>Chapter 11 Meeting 1 p.m.</p>	
20	 <p>Paul Revere Chapter 7 p.m.</p>	<p>No Lodge Meeting</p>	<p>MASONIC HOME BOARD MEETING 11 a.m. 3201 1st St. NE St. Pete, FL</p>	21	22	23	24	 <p>Merry Christmas!</p>	26
27	 <p>Paul Revere Chapter 7 p.m.</p>	<p>No Lodge Meeting</p>	28	29	30	31	<p>Lodge Closed</p>		

MORE MASONIC EVENTS

View more Masonic events and updated information on the Lodge web site: www.hillsborough25.org, or follow us on Facebook and Twitter, links available on the web site.

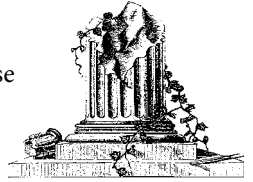


HAPPY BIRTHDAY BROTHERS!

Benjamin B. Risinger Jr.	Joseph Lange
Bryan M. Seland	Julian Weber
Charles L. Kane	Kevin M. McLaughlin
Christopher J. Roberts	Marwam Taouil
David E. Montgomery	Miles B. Beamguard
David S. Liniger	Nicholas T. Awad
Donald G. Anderson	Oliver T. Davis III
Donald R. Marsee	Richard A. Kammier
Dwight K. Hamborsky Jr	Richard L. Davis
Eli R. Bobo	Robert A. Provencher
Frank L. Rosenblatt	Robert C. Weaver
G. Robert Edenfield	Robert J. Nagy
George D. Drew	Ronald S. Lucas
Harold G. Gnann	Rufus M. Smith
Harold M. Wagoner	Samuel T. Schiavone
Jack T. Marsh	Scott M. Sandoval
James E. Doling	Stanley M. Derryberry
James T. Butler	Stanley W. Baker
Jay R. Wolfington	Steven E. Rhodes
Jeremy R. Hall	Travis A. Van Buren
John A. Rivera	Walter R. Ireland
John O. Zilba	William A. Taylor
Johnny C. Butler Jr.	William R. Williams III

HILLSBOROUGH LODGE NO. 25 ■ TRESTLE BOARD

If you hear of a Brother who has passed to that Celestial Lodge Above, please inform the Lodge Secretary so the Lodge can give proper condolence and assistance to his Widow.



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Paul Revere Chapter



Meets at Hillsborough Lodge every Monday at 7 p.m.

For more information, please contact:

Brother Bill Cobb

Personal Representative, Executive Office of DeMolay
813-835-1793

O.E.S. CHAPTER II



Tampa Chapter No. 11 wishes everyone a happy,
healthy and successful Fall Season!

All Meetings Begin at 1pm, 1st & 3rd Saturdays

If you would like to attend a meeting, but need a ride,
please call the Secretary – rides can be arranged.
And don't forget, we have a working elevator.

Sandra Johnson, PGC, Secretary

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“Masonic Education” continued from page 1...

But this is all merely circumstantial evidence. We need some proof!

Let us start with his movements on the eve of December 25th. All the reports have him coming from the North Pole. As the sun rises in the East to open and enliven the day, and with him needing to finish the world before dawn, then he would have to begin in the East and move towards the West. Therefore Father Christmas must begin his journey at the north-east corner of the world.

Similarly, you would assume he would finish heading for home, which would place him in the north-west corner at the end of his work, to give his salute to the world and leave. Convincing proof, you must agree!

But, think too, he undertakes this great journey to provide the gifts but once a year, and I am sure that any Brother Treasurer will agree that this is exactly the frequency with which most brethren provide the gift of their charity to the Lodge! And the secrecy, the mystery? Those of you who are parents, remember. What was the worst crime that an older child could commit at this time of the year? To tell the younger ones the secret of Santa, to break the faith that they should have kept. I am sure your punishment of them pointed out that they were void of all moral worth and totally unfit to be received into the dinner table but be sent to their room for destroying something that was so good, so worthwhile and so innocent.

All evidence thus far shows us beyond doubt that perhaps Father Christmas is a Freemason! He practices Brotherly Love and Relief; we are happy to meet him and enjoy the Christmas holiday season, and sorry to part. All the details, his wearing of a uniform, the rituals that happen year in year out, the fact he is a male.

On a more serious note, Brethren, the way the whole Christmas season has developed and is practiced does have many things in common with Freemasonry, and we can learn much about each from the other. For instance, where did the figure we call Father Christmas come from originally? What is his background? Father Christmas, or Santa Claus, or St. Nicholas has elements of pre-Christian myths and legends, which developed through the Middle Ages by being built into the great Christian story of God's wonderful gift to the world.

By the eighteenth and nineteenth century these details were formalized into the character that we still have today: his stylized uniform, his way of working, his ritualistic activities and sayings. This all sounds very Masonic.

The pre-Christian legends of Solomon's Temple, the pyramids, Pythagoras, and so on were developed through the Middle Ages by the great Christian cathedral builders, then formalized in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries into the uniform, the work and rituals that we use today.

Continued on page 7

"Masonic Education" continued from page 6...

St. Nicholas was actually a 4th century Turkish bishop who had originally been a rich nobleman. One of the stories about him was that he had helped a poor man who could not afford to pay for weddings for his 3 daughters. St. Nicholas climbed onto the roof and threw a handful of gold coins down the chimney and these coins fell into the girls' stockings that had been hung up by the fire to dry. The girls were then able to marry well and lived happily ever after. He has been considered the patron saint of poor children ever since.

The legend became very popular in Europe, especially the Netherlands, where it was mixed with elements from the pagan Yule or mid-winter festivals. St. Nick became Santa Claus, who would arrive on December 6th (St Nicholas' Day) mounted on a white horse and visit children to enquire about their behaviour the previous year. Good children would be rewarded, and bad ones punished. The night before, children would leave out a pair of the shoes or clogs, filled with hay and carrots for the horse. In the morning these would be found, filled with sweets or small presents.

These traditions were taken to America by Dutch settlers, but it was the famous poem by Professor Clement Clark Moore which begins " 'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the house...." which settled most of the details into the Santa figure we know today. Many of these details (such as the reindeer, and their names, the flying sleigh, coming down the chimney) were first brought together in this poem; but, Professor Moore took them from old traditions from as far afield as Finland and Siberia. They have stuck and become a single story. You can see how similar this is to the creation of our ritual and ceremonies.


While these also certainly include many elements that are ancient folklore, they were put together quite deliberately by identifiable people, with a specific aim: to create an impression in the minds of the Brethren taking part. Like the Santa legend, the details may be fictional, they may come from many different sources, and they may even be inconsistent with each other. That does not matter. It is the impression that all of them create as an entirety that is important. Would you deny all the good that the Santa story achieves, all the happiness it creates, just because it is a story? Of course not. And this is the real linking of Father Christmas and Freemasonry.

Why do we have Christmas and why do we have Father Christmas? We celebrate religious beliefs about the birth of goodness, and hope for the future; we reaffirm the belief that people are basically good and can develop into more loving, caring, helpful, supporting friends to each other. We look to a New Year where things can be better.

We do this at this season whether we are celebrating the Christian Nativity; or the Jewish Hannukah with its lights and gifts and story of peace; or the Hindu Diwali with its festival of lights and gifts of sweets and toys. And why are we freemasons? Because we believe that there are important things like goodness and hope for the future, and that men can develop into loving, caring, helpful, supporting Brethren to their families and each other.

We not only look to a future where things can be better, but we see it as our role, as Free and Accepted, or Symbolic Masons, to help to build that future.

So, I feel I can safely say that Father Christmas is in fact a Freemason. Not only does he show so many of the signs and tokens of being one, but he brings us a message that we, as Freemasons, can heed for the whole year.

Peace on earth, good will towards men ! 

Source: Brother David Downie, St. Trinians Lodge No. 2050

"From the Secretary's Desk" continued from page 3...

The Lodge will mail your new dues card as soon as we receive notice of your payment. It's that easy! Please remember your Masonic Home when mailing in your dues, by including the suggested \$7.30 (or more) donation for the Let your Pennies Make Good Sense program.

I hope everyone has a very Happy Holiday!

Fraternally,

Steven J. Silvers

Secretary
District Instructor



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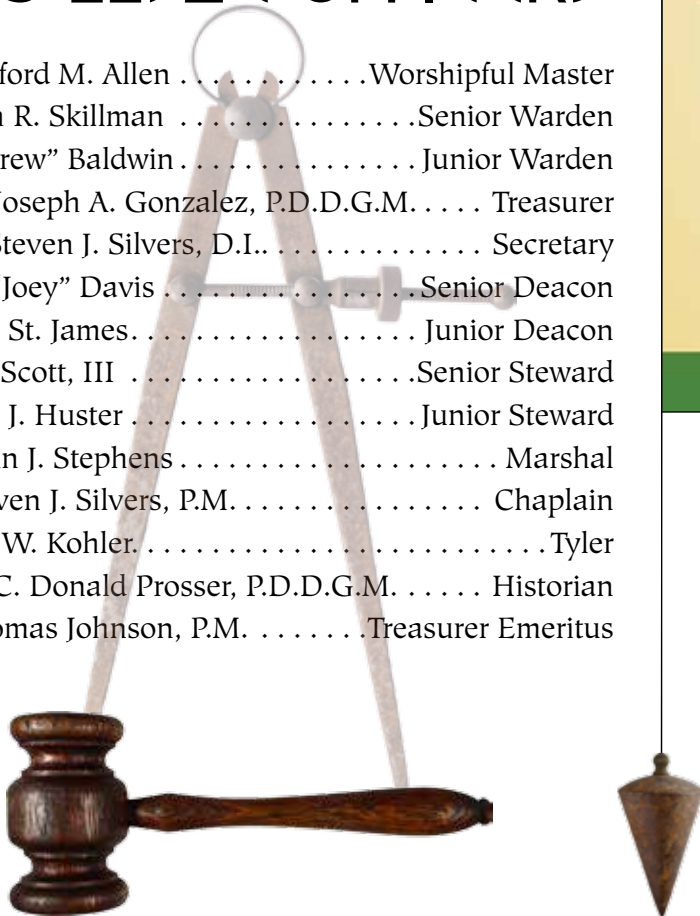
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2015 LODGE OFFICERS

W.: Clifford M. Allen Worshipful Master
 Kenneth R. Skillman Senior Warden
 John "Drew" Baldwin Junior Warden
 R.:W.: Joseph A. Gonzalez, P.D.D.G.M. Treasurer
 R.:H.: Steven J. Silvers, D.I. Secretary
 Robert "Joey" Davis Senior Deacon
 Michael St. James Junior Deacon
 Billy D. Scott, III Senior Steward
 Michael J. Huster Junior Steward
 Benjamin J. Stephens Marshal
 W.: Steven J. Silvers, P.M. Chaplain
 Rodney W. Kohler Tyler
 R.:W.: C. Donald Prosser, P.D.D.G.M. Historian
 W.: Thomas Johnson, P.M. Treasurer Emeritus



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