



Letters from District No. 10

Free & Accepted Masons of Washington

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December 2017

Happy Holidays!

Stated Meeting Dates of the District Ten Lodges

Dec 1st Bellingham Bay - 7:30 pm

Dec 14th Lynden Int. Lodge - 7 pm

Dec 21st Whatcom Lodge - dinner at 5:30; meeting at 6:30 pm.

Whatcom Lodge Report

Special Communication: Our Thursday November 2nd meeting was attended by 18 Whatcom Brothers. At conclusion of the opening WM Craig Bruner called for a moment of silence in honor of WB William Hall who passed away on October 26th, 2017. Details of his service are still be finalized at this time and will be announced when available.

Masonic Education: WM Craig Bruner gave a very interesting talk about the meaning of a point with a circle, the apron, Star & Garter, fig leaves and other symbols.

Stated Communication: The November 16th Sated meeting was attended by 16 Whatcom Brothers and 1 visitor, who happened to MW Warren Schoeben, GM of the MW Grand Lodge F&AM of WA. Though he was unexpected he was very welcome. MW Warren joined us for the pre-meeting dinner, enjoyed sitting in and closing Lodge. Lodge brothers were pleased to receive our Grand Master's praise for the floor and ritual he observed during our opening.

Masonic Education: SW Ken Peck and SD Thom Baughn performed a mock EA Proficiency which was very timely as we had three of our EA Brothers sitting in Lodge that evening: Dave Lemon, Jacob Williams and Jerry Hill. Bro.s Ken and Thom did a first rate job.

Bro. Frank Myers repeated a timely quote from the book Washington's Immortals.

Sickness & relief: WB Monte reported that WB Jack Goodwin is experiencing some swelling in his feet and could not attend lodge this evening as a result.

Monthly luncheon: Our next monthly luncheons will be held on Tuesday December 19th, 12 noon at Lee's Restaurant. This monthly event has been working well and affords a nice weekday.

Dues Notices: The dues/assessments should be in most brothers hands by now, so if you've not received yours by now please contact me, my info is on page 4.

Next Special Communication: is on December the 7th. The next Stated Communication will be on Thursday, December 21st. For both meetings Dinner is at 5:30 pm and Lodge opens at 6:30 pm.

Fraternally, John Browne, Secretary ... Contact info is at bottom right corner, page 4



Up-coming Events

Open Installation of Officers... Bellingham Bay Lodge will host an Open Installation of Officer at their **December 15th** Special Communication. They are planning for a Grand Lodge Installation Team to perform the ceremony so mark your calendar for this festive event.

Monthly Luncheon....Tuesday, Dec. 19th. 12 noon at Lee's Restaurant, same as previously.

Feast of St. John the Evangelist 2017 ... Whatcom Lodge will host it's 2017 celebration of the Feast of St. John the Evangelist on December 27th at Giuseppe's Al Porto Ristorante. The social period begins at 6 pm and dinner will be served at 6:30 pm. RSVP to SW Ken Peck at **email: kenwpeck@gmail.com**

District Ten Meeting....will be hosted at the Bellingham Masonic Center on Saturday morning January 13th, 2018. **ALL Masons** and members of **ALL Concordant Bodies** are invited. It will begin with a hearty Brunch prepared and served by the Girls of Rainbow Assembly #17. The Cost is \$15 per person, see page 2 for details. **RSVP** to VW Terrell Goertz at **email: tvgoertz@msn.com**

Notes from Lynden Lodge No. 56

Dec 14th Stated Meeting 7:00 PM
Dec 28th Special Meeting 7:00 PM

Greetings Lynden Brethren:

Change in the name of the Lodge

All of the requirements have been met to change the name of the Lodge from Lynden International Lodge No. 56 to Lynden/Ferndale International Lodge No. 56. The approval of our Grand Master is pending.

Upcoming EA degree

The initiation of Jonah Wilson as an Entered Apprentice Mason will be on Saturday, January 20, 2018 at 1:30 pm at the Ferndale Masonic Hall. Please mark your calendar to help us welcome Jonah to the mysteries of Masonry.

Widows & Widowers Luncheon

Our annual Widows & Widowers Luncheon tentatively will be held on Sunday, February 11, 2018 in mid-afternoon at the Raspberry Ridge Golf Club restaurant. Honored guests will be widowers and widows, whose husbands were members of the Lodge. Watch this space in the future for further updates.

Hands Across the Border - 2018 Spring

Thursday, April 12, 2018 is the date that has been selected by the Deputy Grand Masters for 2018 Spring Hands Across the Border event. We will honor RWB Barry Burch, Deputy Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of A. F. & A.M. of British Columbia & Yukon, and RWB James Kendall, Deputy Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of F. & A.M. of Washington. The social period will begin at 5:00; dinner will be served at 5:30 and the Lodge will be tyled at 7:00. Masons are most welcome! Please put this date on your calendar.

WB Dick Decima,

Secretary - Ph. 392-0145 or by Email: rhdecima@aol.com

District #10 Meeting

This year's District Meeting will be at 10am, the morning of Saturday January 13th. **ALL Masons** and members of **ALL Concordant Bodies** are invited. Join our Grand Master, MWB Warren Schoeben as he fills us in on the activities at Grand Lodge, and engages District #10 Members in an open question/answer session. Lodge Awards will be presented. Leaders of Concordant Bodies will be invited to update us on their work, and give us a short commercial for recruiting purposes. You'll hear a brief report on the "State of the District" from your District Ten Deputy.

Our meeting will begin with a hearty Brunch, cooked up and served by the Evergreen Assembly #17 Rainbow Girls. Cost of admission will be \$15. Proceeds will cover cost of preparation, and "profits" will be split between the Rainbow Girls and the Grand Master's charity.

The meeting will cap off with a short picture show presentation of the Home/Museum/Graves sights of our two Masonic Grand Master U.S. Presidents, MWB Andrew Jackson and MWB Harry S. Truman, past Grand Masters of Tennessee and Missouri.

Please **RSVP** to tvgoertz@msn.com See you there! VWB Terrell Goertz, DD to the GM for Dist #10

Here is what **Bellingham Bay**

has going on.

Friday December 1st Stated: We will look at the 2017 year in review and see what things we ought to have learned.

Friday December 15th Special: We will be holding our Annual Installation of Officers.

Companions,

Bellingham Council #16 will have their stated assembly on Monday December 11, 2017. Dinner at 6:30 followed by Assembly at 7:30. Hope to see at our meeting before Christmas.

Just a reminder that dues for 2018 are now being accepted. Bellingham Council #16 has decided that the Grand Council assessment of \$2.50 which we have not collected in past years will now be collected, so your dues are now \$15.00 plus the Grand Council Assessment of \$2.50 for a total of 17.50. **Life members are required to pay this assessment of \$2.50.** There are 7 Companions that owe dues for 2017, if your dues card does not read 2017 on it you are in arrears. They are \$15.00 for 2017 and can be remitted to the return address below. Please note the new email address for the recorder, jammerguson1@gmail.com.

Fraternally,

Doug Jerome

Recorder

[Jammerguson1@gmail.com](mailto:jammerguson1@gmail.com) phone: 360-675-6796

Bellingham Council #16

Royal & Select Masters of WA

1346 SW Leschi Dr

Oak Harbor, WA 98277

Is Father Christmas a Freemason?



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 is a most important question that I am sure you have often asked yourself, and relates our Craft to the wider 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 (we must admit) 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. But this is merely circumstantial evidence. We need some proof! Let us start with his movements on the evening in question. 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. This, of course, is exactly what we do with an Entered Apprentice. 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. And 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. Surely all this evidence shows us beyond doubt that Father Christmas is a Freemason! He practices Brotherly Love and Relief; we are happy to meet him and the Christmas 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 ritual 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, the rituals that we use today.

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 behavior the previous year. Good children would be rewarded, and bad ones punished. The night before, children would leave a pair of the shoes or clogs out, 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 sledge, 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 and 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 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, or even if we hold no formal religion except the pleasure of seeing a child's face transfixed with wonder and delight. 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 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!

Merry Christmas.
David Downie St Trinians Lodge No 2050 Isle of Man



BMC = Bellingham Masonic Center on W. Maplewood ; FMC = Ferndale Masonic Center;
 FHMC = Friday Harbor Masonic Center; NMC = Nooksack Masonic Center; SRH = Scottish Rite Hall

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29	30	1 BB # 44 - stated 7:30 pm.	2
3	4 Hesperus Com-mandery No. 8 - 7:30	5 ML-OES # 58 (BMC) 7:30 p	6 V of B Scottish Rite: Dinner at 6:30 pm & Stated Mtg at 7:30 pm <i>Feast of St Nicholas</i>	7 W #151 - Special Dinner at 5:30 pm. Lodge opens at 6:30pm. <i>Pearl Harbor Day</i>	8 BB # 44 A Val-entine Dinner RSVP to Sec'y Russ, see BB #44 page 2 for details	9
10 Lynden Int #56 hosts it's annual Win-dows lunch see page 2.	11 F # 264 - 7:30 p Bellingham Council No.16 R&SM - 7:30 p	12 Bethel # 25 at 6:25 pm <i>Hanukkah Begins</i>	13 V of B Scottish Rite: Education Night at 7 pm Chuckanut Chapter DeMolay 7:30 pm	14 L # 56 Stated, 7:00 pm Evergreen RB # 17 7 p. (BMC)	15 BB 44 Spl Comm 7:30 p. Book presentation open to public, see page 2. (SRH)	16
17	18 Bellingham Chp Royal Arch - 7:30 p. F-OES # 223 7:30 p. (FMC)	19 W-151 lunch at 12 noon at Lee's restaurant. ML-OES # 58 7:30 p. (BMC)	20 V of B Scottish Rite: Education Night at 7 pm <i>Hanukkah Ends</i>	21 W 151 - stated dinner at 5:30 lodge opens 6:30 pm. <i>Winter Solstice</i>	22	23 Bethel #25 at 6:25 pm
24 <i>Christmas Eve</i>	25  <i>Christmas Day</i>	26 Bellingham Temple Association meeting 7:30 PM <i>Boxing Day</i>	27 Chuckanut Chapter DeMolay 7:30 pm	28 L # 56 special meet-ing 7:00 pm Evergreen RB # 17 7 p. (BMC)	29	30
31 Dues and assessments are due by this day. <i>New Year's Eve</i>	1 <i>New Year's Day</i>	2	3	4	5	6

**Widows & Orphans Fund
for District No. 10**

If you would like to know more about the W & O Fund contact the officer listed below.

WB Jesse Petersen at
360- 319-5556,

or you may contact
your Lodge Secretary
or your Worshipful Master.



Has your message missed this publication. Don't get left out. Please send your group's article, event information and/or calendar note by the 22nd of each month. In order to promote events occurring at the beginning of each month I try to send out the newsletter on or about the 25th of each month. Thanks,

To contribute to this newsletter please send your letter, comment, historical fact, poem or calendar announcement, by the 20th day of each month, to:
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 Maple Falls, WA. 98266
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