

# TRESTLEBOARD



*MacDonough, Webster, Warner, Ethan Allen*

*WM Robert Grandchamp; Sec. Victor Stone*



Brothers,

Well, after a cold and dismal spring, summer has finally returned to the Green Mountain State and boy are the mountains green this time of year!

Mt. Mansfield Lodge has been quite busy lately. On June 6 we raised Carl Ellerkamp to the sublime degree of a Master Mason. It was a fantastic night with a well-attended Lodge room to show support to Brother Carl who performed flawlessly in his proficiency.

On June 15, a large contingent of Mt. Mansfield Brothers attended the annual Grand Lodge event in Killington. It turned out to be a shorter than normal meeting due to the shelving until next year of some business. Bro. Mike Kiessling was appointed as District Deputy Grand Master for District 5. This is a great appointment for the Lodge. We look forward to having Bro. Mike share his wit and wisdom in the two years ahead.

The Lodge renovations continue, and we are looking to have some outside work done this summer. Recently the Lodge room was completed with all furnishings placed back. If you haven't been to Mt. Mansfield in a while, stop in, the Lodge is beautiful.

In July we will have a special barbeque meal and in August we will have our annual Steakout. Both events should be tasty and bond us in Brotherhood.

Lodge education has become an important part of Mt. Mansfield Lodge and at every meeting we have an informative speaker about some topic in Masonic history, ritual or philosophy. If there is any topic that you wish to present to the Brothers, please contact me.

Going into the fall we will again plan to hold a meeting at the old Warner Lodge in Cambridge. Furthermore, we aim to have an open house sometime later in the fall to share Mt. Mansfield Lodge with the greater community.

Lastly Brothers, please keep in touch. If you can't drive and want to come to a meeting, please reach out to any Brother, we will be more than happy to come get you. If you need help around your house on a project, please let us know. If you simply want to chat Masonically or about any random topic, please reach out. A Mt. Mansfield Brother is always ready to meet you on the level and on the five points of fellowship.

Best wishes to all, fraternally,

Robert Grandchamp, WM  
Mt. Mansfield Lodge # 26



### Positivity

Keep your thoughts positive because your thoughts become your words.

Keep your words positive because your words become your behavior.

Keep your behavior positive because your behavior becomes your habits.

Keep your habits positive because your habits become your values.

Keep your values positive because your values become your destiny.

### New Master Mason



Brother Carl Ellerkamp was raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason on Monday June 6, 2022. After impressing the assembled Brothers with his mastery of the Fellow Craft Lecture he was prepared by the Stewards for the third degree. W. Brother Mike Kiessling, who served as Master for the degree, and his degree team did a fine job at presenting the ritual and instructing Bro. Carl in the lessons of the degree and bringing him into full membership in the Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons.

**George Washington's Rule of Civility #3: In the presence of others, sing not to yourself with a humming noise, nor drum with your fingers or feet.**



The following is a review of *Operative Freemasonry* by Kirk White (Brother Kirk is the Grand Junior Warden of the Grand Lodge of Vermont).....by Victor Stone, PGM

The clever and oxymoronic title, *Operative Freemasonry* by Kirk White, offers a well laid out plan for how to operationalize the search for and presentation of Masonic light. In the author's words, "the book is intended to be an introduction on how to do the kind of exceptional masonry that many long for." As its subtitle indicates, it is *A Manual for Restoring Light and Vitality to the Fraternity*.

Several assumptions support Kirk's thesis and lay the substrate on which the book rests:

- Masonry has a higher purpose than a simple social or civic organization
- Initiation rituals are the primary method to accomplish the organization's purpose
- Freemasonry is something special
- To maintain it exceptionalism, Freemasonry must have expectations of its members and its institutions
- Effective communication is critical

- Education is the essential component to the success of the fraternity

The author's focus on light in Masonry provides two nuggets of information that speak to the spirit of Masonic learning. Namely, that Masonic light is a progressive raising up of one's own consciousness toward integration with the mind of God (an age of enlightenment concept) and that as a man receives more light and thus becomes more god-like (i.e. more perfect and noble) he will naturally be moved to shine that light into the world around him. These notions beautifully capture the idea that knowledge and learning elevate the intellectual capacity of man and bring him closer to idealistic perfection. With increased knowledge, one then becomes capable of teaching and refracting his learning among those with whom he engages.

This book does an excellent job of parsing out the subtleties and connections between secrets and mysteries, and to good effect. Secrets are defined as pieces of information that can be told or explained; whereas mysteries can only unfold to the learner through experience. Secrecy reinforces and enhances the experience, particularly in ritual. By maintaining an element of surprise, secrecy focuses the mind of the secret holder on that which he conceals and builds identification with it. At the same time, secrecy opens up the mind of a candidate to the possibility of revelation and mystery. This is a strong argument for keeping the ritual of the fraternity private and central to our method and tradition of introducing and instructing new members.

Extending the theme of operationalizing Freemasonry, Bro. White reflects on the reasons why contemporary men seek to join the fraternity and how a Lodge should handle a new request for membership. In the past, family ties and fraternal or community bonding were the primary motivations for membership. In present times; however, the single most common reason why modern men seek out Freemasonry is spiritual growth. It appears that the spiritual and intellectual void in our contemporary society has created an opening for the fraternity. Curious men who desire participation in a group that embraces deeper thought, understanding, and contemplation of the mysteries of life may find a home in Freemasonry. To facilitate the potential candidate's investigation into the fraternity the Lodge should actively and aggressively inform him about the nature of the group, its expectations of members, and what it can provide that is value-adding to his life. Ideally, this will spur the submission of a petition or, equally as important, inform someone who is not suited for membership to recognize that the pursuit of Masonic membership is not a good course of action. Following the submission of a petition the Lodge needs to do its own due diligence to assure itself that it is considering a good man who can contribute to and thrive within the Craft.

This book, in nice order, demonstrates the rationale for why a Lodge meeting is a special time and how the masonic mindset is shaped by preparation for a meeting (proper clothes and proper attitude), and how there is a transition into and out of Masonic fellowship via a vis opening and closing rituals. By bracketing our Masonic experience with ritual, we are consciously separating ourselves from the outside world, recognizing the special nature of Masonic gathering, and celebrating the exclusiveness that exists among men who have a common language and set of symbols. The author uses the concept of entrainment to make the point that a certain synchronization of thought occurs within a ritually opened meeting that triggers the potential for a very high level of unity and harmony among participants.

Nearly twenty percent of this book is devoted to a discussion about initiation. After noting that the word initiation comes from the Latin for “beginning” the argument proceeds to lay out the transformative nature of ritualistic initiation. The premise is that initiation is a ceremony intended to bring about a change in the candidate and how it alters the way a man sees and interacts with the world. The author’s use of the example of initial military service experience (boot camp) is effective in making his point about transformative experiences.

By carrying the operationalization notion to its logical conclusion, the author thoughtfully demonstrates how and why mentoring is critical to the effective integration of a new Brother into the fraternity. The mentor is a guide that facilitates the learning and inculcation of Masonic knowledge and culture by a new member. Excellent mentoring will assure that a new Brother feels a sense of inclusion in his new group, has something to do within the Lodge framework, and is given something to learn. Interestingly, the author advocates for a committee approach to this vital task.

The final admonition of this work is that the lessons of Freemasonry are meant to be lived not just learned.

There is a lot to like about this book. As noted earlier it is a practical, operational guide with ideas, suggestions, opinion, and recommendations. The two strongest chapters in the book are those that propound on relationship between secrets and mysteries and the critical nature of mentorship. Both of these sections are tersely written yet very clear and substantive. Secrets and mysteries in just six pages aides the reader in grasping the nuances and interrelationships of secrecy and mystery and how they play off one another. Equally to the point, the five pages spent on mentoring are instructive and empowering. Perhaps the weakest part of the book is the chapter on initiation. This is odd because it obviously has the most research and thought underlying the argument. Perhaps it is just too much information from too many disparate sources that it clouds the message. Nonetheless, the point about the power of initiatory transformation is understood. Overall this is a good quick read that enables one to operationalize their Masonic practice.

### **I watched them tearing a Building Down**

A gang of men in a busy town,  
With a ho-heave-ho and lusty yell  
They swing a bean, and the side wall falls  
I asked the foreman, “Are these men skilled,  
The men you would hire, if you had to build?”  
He gave a laugh and said, “No, indeed,  
Just common labor is all I need,  
I can easily wreck in a day or two,  
What Builders have taken a year to do,”  
I thought to myself as I went away,  
Which of those roles have I tried to play?  
Am I a builder who works with care,  
Measuring life by the rule and square?



Our Worshipful Master, Bro. Rob Grandchamp, hereby announces that there will be a First Degree of Masonry Ceremony at Mt. Mansfield Lodge #26 on or about **June 22, 2040** for Sawyer Knight Grandchamp. Of course, there will be considerable development and nurturing of this newest member of Rob and Elizabeth's family before he is qualified to join the fraternity. Congratulations to the Grandchamps and best wishes for a long and prosperous life for Sawyer.

## **The Two Hundred Twenty-eighth Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Vermont**



The Brethren of the Grand Lodge of Vermont gathered together at the Killington Grand Resort & Conference Center on the first Wednesday after the Second Tuesday in June, 2022 (June 15<sup>th</sup>) under the direction of the Most Worshipful Grand Master, James B. Stevens, to conduct the business of the Grand Lodge. This was the first full meeting of the Grand Lodge since the two years of pandemic disruption. The Grand Lodge was blessed with distinguished visitors from ten jurisdictions; among them, the Grand Master of Massachusetts and the Grand Master of Ohio. It is unusual for the GM of Massachusetts to attend as the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts usually has a conflicting Quarterly Session and, of course, it is a long trip from Ohio to Vermont for the Grand Master of Ohio.

After considerable discussion and a fair amount of confusion the Grand Lodge was able to approve budgets for the ensuing year. Given the time spent on that topic the Grand Master decided to delay consideration of the numerous alterations and changes recommended for the Vermont Masonic Code.

A very interesting presentation was given by Bro. James Goss, Chairman of the GL Ritual Committee. He presented the slate of work completed by the Committee- Ritual and Monitor revisions, Candidate Lecture Booklets, Past Master Degree ritual, and Grand Lodge Ceremonials. Bro. Goss also urged the Brothers to make ritual proficiency at priority in every Lodge. To bring home the point he introduced a special guest; the ghost of John Barney. Brother Barney was the historical figure in Vermont Masonry who studied the Web work in Massachusetts and then brought it to Vermont. "Barney's ghost" related how he learned the ritual work and how he had to be certified by Brother Web before he could return to Vermont to train others in the ritual work....and we have been using it ever since.

The Grand Lodge voted to recognize the Gran Logia Benemerito Ejercito de Oriente del Estado Puebla and to approve the merger of Mystic Lodge #56 of Stowe with Mount Vernon Lodge # 8.



A number of awards were presented. Brothers Ken Clay and John Lobdel, both Past Grand Masters of New Hampshire were awarded the Tucker medal. Brother Joe Sampson of Charity Lodge # 43 of Bradford and our own Brother John Parenteau were honored with the John Barney medal for their contributions to Vermont Masonry.

The following Officers were elected to their positions for the 2022-2023 Masonic Year:

James B. Stevens- Most Worshipful Grand Master

Paul C. Mosher- Right Worshipful Deputy Grand Master

William 'Sandy' Karstens, IV-Right Worshipful Grand Senior Warden

Kirk C. White- Right Worshipful Grand Junior Deacon

Stuart V. Corso-Right Worshipful Grand Treasurer

Earl J. Washburn-Right Worshipful Grand Secretary

James P. W. Goss-Right Worshipful Grand Senior Deacon

David McAllister, Right Worshipful Grand Junior Deacon

Following the Grand Lodge session the elected and appointed officers were installed to their places and stations by a team of Past Grand Masters. Brother Roger Crouse: Installing Grand Master (Mt. Mansfield Lodge # 26, Brother George Deblon: Installing Grand Secretary (Rural Lodge #29, Brother Earl Washburn: Installing Grand Marshall (Back River Lafayette Lodge # 85) and Victor Stone: Installing Grand Chaplain (Mt. Mansfield Lodge #26). Of special importance to this Lodge, was the installation of Brother Mike Kiessling as Right Worshipful District Deputy Grand Master of District #5.





Bro. Victor Stone, MW Past Grand Master congratulating Bro. Mike Kiessling, RW DDGM on his appointment and installation.

Brother Mike being installed as RW District Deputy Grand Master by MW Grand Master Jim Stevens



From to left to right:

- Rob Grandchamp
- Dan O'Niel
- Rob Connelly
- Mike Kiessling
- Vince Comegno
- Victor Stone
- John Oleszkiewicz
- David Schuler

On November 4, 1752 George Washington was initiated as an Entered Apprentice in the Lodge at Fredericksburg, Virginia. Records show that he paid two pounds, three shillings and no pence when he joined. The Bible used by Washington when he took his Masonic obligations, and the Lodge minute books that record his initiation, passing

and raising, as well as his attendance in September 1753 and January 1755, are in the possession of Fredericksburg Lodge #4, Fredericksburg, VA.



**Happy Birthday to Brother Vince Comengo, RWPGSD. Vince was honored by his family and friends for attaining the age of 70 years at a surprise birthday celebration at the Green Mountain Masonic Center. Congratulations Vince and many happy returns!**

Mt. Mansfield Lodge #26 meets on the second Thursday of every month in the Lodge building at 64 Vt. Rte. 15 in Jericho, VT. Dinner is at 6:30PM and the Lodge opens at 7:30PM





**Thomas A. Woodard, Sr.**  
**2/7/1928 – 2/12/2022**  
**63 years a Mason**

**Russell A. Sweet**  
**12/30/1943 – 4/26/2022**  
**33 years a Mason**

**Ronald B. Sloan**  
**7/25/1931 – 5/3/2022**  
**62 years a Mason**



**We humbly bow to the  
will of Devine  
Providence. While ever  
cherishing in our hearts  
the memory of our  
distinguished Brothers.  
May they be in perfect  
peace and felicity. May  
the Ashlar of their lives be  
found perfect and fit for  
the Temple. The men of  
Mt. Mansfield lodge #26  
mourn the passing of their  
friends.**

**Mt. Mansfield Lodge #26, F&AM**

**P. O. Box 142**

**Jericho, VT 05465**