



July 2022 Journal and Trestleboard

Vol 2, Issue 7, Table Mountain Masonic Lodge Journal / Trestleboard



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Worshipful Master's Corner

Hello Brothers and Friends,

The visual theme of the July Journal / Trestleboard is **Masonic stained glass**. There are numerous examples of this art within this PDF. We hope that you enjoy them. This month we begin with the **Calendar of Events**, followed by **a summary of our last stated meeting**. Then there is a report on the recent **Entered Apprentice degree conferral**, and then information and pictures about the recent **DeMolay installation**. This month's Masonic Formation essay is **on the Masonic meaning of Fidelity**. Then this month's Masonic History essay is **Freemasonry: Benevolent or Revolutionary?** Then in our Freemasonry around the world section there is **Freemasonry in Japan**. Then for your consideration and reflection we share some **Quotes about Freemasonry**. There is some information about the upcoming **Grand Master's Unity Day picnic** and a map to it. There is also information on how you can obtain a copy of our impressive historical work, **150 year History of Table Mountain**

Lodge and **instructions on how to print your dues card** using your personal computer. Also, Finally, there is **Contact Information** for our lodge and other Masonic organizations.

This Journal / Trestleboard is posted in our lodge's message board at the Grand Lodge website.



Calendar of Events

Table Mountain Lodge Events (3 months)

- **July 2, Saturday, Stated Meeting** starting at 2 pm. Lunch at 1 pm.
- July 8, Friday, Grand Lodge corner stone laying at the Chico VA clinic, at 1 pm. **(optional)**
- July 9, Saturday, Grand Lodge corner stone laying at the Redding VA clinic, at 1 pm. **(optional)**
- July 10, Sunday, Grand Master's Unity Day picnic starting at 11am at the Woodson Bridge State Recreation Area. **(optional)**
- **July 16, Saturday, Lodge Workday** with assistance from DeMolay, 1 pm.



- **July 23, Saturday, 3rd degree** starting at 2 pm
- July 30, Saturday, Inspector's School of Instruction (SOI) (TBA) **(optional)**
- **Aug 6, Saturday, Stated Meeting** starting at 2 pm. Lunch at 1 pm.
- **Aug 20, Saturday, 2nd degree**, at 2 pm.
- **Sept 3, Saturday, Stated Meeting**, starting at 2 pm. Lunch at 1 pm.
- **Sept 17, Saturday, 1st degree**, at 2 pm

Other Local Area Masonic Events

- **DeMolay** – July 7 and Aug 4 DeMolay Social meetings, July 21 and Aug 18 Stated Meeting. All events starting at 7 pm.
- **Rainbow** – Stated meetings on July 4 and 18, and Aug 1 at Chico Masonic center. All events starting at 7 pm.
- **Shrine (Cibara)** – July 3, Potentate dinner in Sacramento, Sept 4 Fall River Mills Parade.
- **Scottish Rite** – July 20, Stated Meeting, Valley of Sacramento, in Sacramento.
- **Eastern Star** (Paradise and Oroville chapter) - Dark in July and August

Other scheduled Community Events at the Table Mountain Masonic Center

- **Paradise Rod and Gun Club** – Executive meeting first Wednesday of every month at 6pm. General membership meeting third Thursday of every month 6:30pm
- **Butte County Family Health classes and counseling**, Every Wednesday, 4:30 to 9 pm.
- **Home Spun Holiday Sale** - July 8 and 9,
- For the foreseeable future PG&E and contractors will be having regular work meetings in our facility.

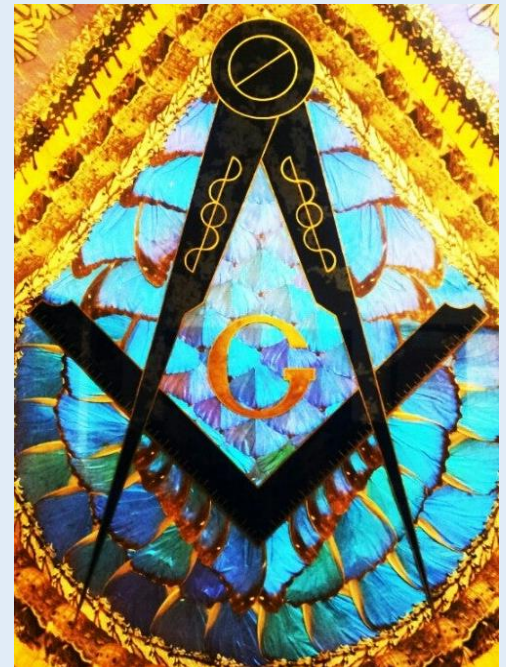
Check with Woody Nelson for available dates

Table Mountain Building/Rooms Rentals - **Woody Nelson, (530) 877-7852 or (916) 202-6942**
email: paradisefreemasons@gmail.com

Our Recent June 2022 Stated Meeting

At 1 pm, just prior to our Saturday June 4, 2022, Stated Meeting, Worshipful Nelson and his wife Jeanne provided an incredibly delicious casserole lunch, also salad, refreshments and delicious deserts. We all greatly enjoyed ourselves and appreciated their effort. Some of our wives also enjoyed the meal and the excellent conversation.

At 2 pm, Table Mountain Masonic Lodge opened on the 1st degree of Masonry, for the purpose of conducting the stated meeting business. The lodge reconvened on the 2nd Degree for Fellowcraft Steve Kane to present his proficiency. Brother Kane was assisted by one of his coaches, Brother Cole Hamilton. Brother Kane successfully presented and passed his long form proficiency, and



the members complimented him and his coach on his preparation and presentation. The lodge was then called to work on the 1st degree of Masonry to proceed with the work of the stated meeting.

Once again it was a productive and enjoyable meeting. There was the normal business of paying bills, reading communications and we discussed several projects and ideas. We also reviewed the schedule of upcoming degrees.

Updates were given on the state of our building rentals, our newly updated lodge and building rental websites, our building rental advertising and our progress in regaining control of our lodge website.

Both our building and lodge finances were discussed, specifically our unexpected building insurance bill and the annual assessment we must pay to Grand Lodge. We concluded that we are remaining financially sustainable, primarily due to receiving many late dues and our efforts to rent the building while limiting our expenses. As such, there was no consideration given to withdrawing any money from our investments.

It was noted that we have a brother home with Covid, and another isolating at home after being exposed to Covid. Also, that one of our entered apprentices was not available because he is temporarily working in Louisiana, and another entered apprentice was experiencing transportation problems.

Worshipful Nelson gave an update on the planning, possible locations and design of the propose Masonic Camp Fire memorial. He received wise guidance from brother Kellogg on

how to proceed with the county authorities and representatives. Our concept is for a black granite obelisk in a Magalia park, containing the names of those killed in the Camp fire, thanks to the first responders, and recognition of those rebuilding the ridge communities. Brother Nelson believes he has found the business that will prepare the monument for us and he is exploring the exact cost, and when we might be able to complete the project.

A quick reminder was provided about our next schools project which is starting at the beginning of the next school year. We will be sponsoring monthly birthday celebrations at some schools.

We all agreed that our 2023 installation would be held on January 21, 2023, that being the 3rd Saturday of January, it was not in conflict with other commitments. It was also shared that our planned outdoor degree will tentatively be on October 15, at the facility under construction.

Also, after some discussion, key brothers then agreed to further coordinate with the Master on the DeMolay and Shrine event dates, and concerning the future 2023 dates for the Grand Master's school corner stone laying and rededication of the lodge building.

Brother Hamilton (DeMolay advisor) offered the DeMolay boys to assist with our July 16 Lodge Workday. His offer was accepted and it was agreed that we would provide some remuneration to the boys. Our lodge then reemphasized that our facility was available to DeMolay at any time for no cost. The same offer has been made to the Rainbow girls.

Brother Gingery was pleased to announce that his son Trey was being installed that night as DeMolay Master Councilor. The lodge cheered loudly, joined him in his celebration, and reminded brother Gingery that his son's accomplishments were a reflection of his excellent fatherly conduct.

Brother Dale Alexander expressed his appreciation to the lodge and donated an additional \$100 for lodge projects. Brother Campbell then volunteered to provide the July stated meeting lunch. The meeting ended in harmony and good will; a good day's work being done.



June 25, 1st Degree (Entered Apprentice)

On Saturday June 25, at 2pm, Table Mountain Masonic Lodge # 124 was opened on the 1st degree of Masonry, for the purpose of conferring the Entered Apprentice degree on Justin D. Harju.

Brother Doug Campbell served as the Master of the Lodge for the initiation and presented the lecture. Brother Cole Hamilton delivered the Charge. Worshipful Woody Nelson served as Senior Warden, Chris Birchfield of Chico Lodge served as Junior Warden, Justin Purcell PM as Senior Deacon, Cole Hamilton as Junior Deacon, Brian Grandfield PM as Secretary, Caleb Chinn PM as Treasurer, Bob McElroy as Chaplain, Phil Howard as Senior Steward, Steve Kane as Junior Steward, Matt Sutter as Marshall and Darrel Roe of Siskiyou Lodge 297 as Titler. Afterwards, we met downstairs for refreshments and cream pies.



DeMolay Installation – Paradise well represented!

Table Mountain Masonic lodge of Paradise fully supports and assists DeMolay International, the Masonic youth organization for boys and young men. Our brothers Rich Gingery and Cole Hamilton (pictured to the right) are deeply involved in assisting the local DeMolay chapter. Until just recently our brother Ehren Hawkins was an adult leader in DeMolay. Other members of our lodge were either members of DeMolay or assisted DeMolay in the past. Now, as in the past, the Paradise Masonic center is available anytime to DeMolay, and to Rainbow, the Masonic youth organization of females, without any charge.

We think that the Order of DeMolay is the premier international youth leadership organization for males because it shapes young men into leaders with excellent character and into citizens of the highest caliber.

On Saturday June 4, a full corps of officers were installed in a ceremony at the Chico Masonic center. Trey Gingery (14 year old son of brother Rich Gingery), was installed as their leader, the Master Councilor, in a beautiful and meaningful ceremony.





We offer our congratulations to these exceptional young men and to their adult leaders, and also to brother Rich Gingery for his son's accomplishment, which reflects well on him as a dedicated father. Trey will lead the chapter in generating ideas, planning events, coordinating logistics, and executing their plans and ceremonies.

After the ceremony, there was celebration that was planned and executed by the boys themselves. Advisors, parents and members of the other Masonic youth organizations were in attendance. As you see from the below pictures, the boys demonstrated their dance moves.



New Advertising poster recently distributed.

Available for Rent – Special Events and Gatherings Historic Table Mountain Lodge Building

Woody Nelson, (530) 877-7852 or email: paradisefreemasons@gmail.com

Table Mountain Lodge Building is located at 5934 Clark Rd, Paradise,



A beautiful and historic venue for meetings, services, and special events. We have hosted weddings, anniversaries, parties, dances, club meeting, business meetings, memorials, church and funeral services and a variety of community fairs and events. Our facilities include a commercial kitchen, a large dining area, an event hall that can accommodate up to 299 guests, meeting space and plenty of parking. the Historic Lodge Room is perfect for weddings and special ceremonies.

To better serve the community our prices are kept very affordable and we are very accommodating.



Our facilities are fully accessible.
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email: paradisefreemasons@gmail.com

A Non-Profit Organization

Masonic Formation

The Importance of the Concept of *Fidelity* in Freemasonry



In our first degree, the Entered Apprentice is informed that *the ancients worshipped a deity under the name of Fides*. This is part of the explanation given to the new Entered Apprentice to emphasize the importance that Masonry places on the concept of fidelity. However, in this age the concept of fidelity is often given inadequate attention. A dictionary will define fidelity as: *the quality or state of being faithful*. As in “his fidelity to his wife”. While this may be the way many people think of fidelity, in reality, this is a very inadequate definition of an important concept. To truly understand the full meaning and importance of fidelity, we must look back into history.

Fides was an ancient Roman goddess, one of many goddesses that represented attributes that virtuous people should demonstrate. Fides was the deification of good faith and honesty. The function of Fides was to oversee the moral integrity of the Romans. Fides (fidelity) was honored with a significant temple built near the center of Rome in 254 BC, in symbolic recognition of the inviolable trust that must exist between gods and mortals.

Among the attributes of the virtuous, fidelity was perhaps the most important virtue in ancient Roman society. Fidelity meant being steadfast in allegiance and loyalty to your friends, family and state, conscientious in fulfilling your promises and in the performance of your duties, true to your word, upholding your oaths and voluntarily accepted obligations, and honoring the protectors of society. Fidelity represented the combination of trustworthiness, good faith, honesty, sincerity, loyalty, & credibility. To the Roman, fidelity made possible all stable human relations and all virtuous political dealings in accordance with the public interest. Thus, in Freemasonry fidelity is closely aligned with justice in that it inclines us to give all people exactly what they are due. Also, Fidelity requires us to be constant and consistent in our actions and temperament. This implies a high degree of self-control.

The Roman Stoic philosopher Cicero wrote, “Nothing is more noble, nothing more venerable than fidelity. Faithfulness and truth are the most sacred excellences and endowments of the human mind”.

To the ancient Romans, fidelity was the foundation of society, and without it society would be doomed. Without fidelity, there would be no trust. And without trust, cooperation and collaboration would wither. To the ancient Romans, fidelity had four parts: 1) fidelity to the gods, 2) fidelity to the state/city, 3) fidelity to your comrades and 4) fidelity to oneself, one’s

values and family. Thus prior to taking his obligation a Masonic candidate is assured by the Master of the lodge that the obligation he is about to take will not interfere with 1) his duty to God, 2) his duty to his country, 3) his duty to his neighbors or 4) his duty to himself.

For the Romans, fidelity was the essential component in the character of a man that made him worthy of public service, and it was a necessary attribute for all honorable social and political transactions. Fidelity meant 'reliability', a sense of trust between two parties if a relationship between them was to exist. Fidelity was always reciprocal and mutual, and implied both privileges and responsibilities on both sides. In both public and private life, the violation of fidelity was considered a serious matter, with both legal and religious consequences.

The ancient Roman religion was very different than our present religions. The objective of Roman religion observances was to secure the cooperation, benevolence, and peace from the gods. Therefore, there had to be mutual fidelity (to establish trust) between humans and the gods. They believed that they must be faithful to the teaching and rules of the gods to be able to live successfully. Consequently, there arose a body of rules, the *jus divinum* (divine law), ordaining what had to be done (offerings and celebrations) or be avoided. Since each city was protected by one or more specific gods, an individual's failure to show fidelity to the divine law, endangered the city which in turn endangered their family, friends and themselves. This is the reason that Fides, was held to be inviolable (never to be broken, infringed or dishonored).

In 2 Kings 12, there is a story about the power of fidelity to one's duty and the trust that it creates in others. During the reign of King Jehoash, the priests of the temple had the duty of collecting wealth from the population for the purpose of maintaining and repairing the temple. However, the priests did not demonstrated fidelity to their mission. While they collected wealth, the temple was not properly maintained. Thus, King Jehoash put the responsibility for the temple in the hands of "the carpenters and builders" and "masons, and hewers of stone". So reliable and honorable were these tradesmen, that the King directed that their costs be paid without any need for a formal accounting. In other words, their fidelity to their tasks and word engendered trust which then simplified and facilitated the maintenance and repairs.

Even before Roman Republic, the Greek philosopher Aristotle opined that fidelity (between man and man) was an essential component of friendship, and when fidelity did not exist the relationship was at best *imperfect*. The Greek philosopher Plato recognized the challenge that every man faces of remaining loyal and faithful to a flawed state and to one's religion, friends and self. The Roman Stoic philosopher Seneca pointed out that true fidelity cannot be bought with money. He wrote, "Fidelity bought with money is easily overcome by money". However, when an honest person takes just compensation for work that he promises to do, he has not

sold his fidelity, instead his fidelity has allowed his conscience to take just compensation. The taking of compensation beforehand is therefore a promise of fidelity.

The Roman Emperor and Stoic philosopher Marcus Aurelius believed that a man could only be truly happy, satisfied and successful if he was faithful to himself. Only by being faithful to one's core beliefs and values could he be truly at peace. In that same vein of thought, the famous American Helen Keller wrote, "True happiness is not obtained through self-gratification, but instead through fidelity to a worth purpose".

In Dante's *Inferno*, (the first part of his 14th century epic poem *Divine Comedy*), the deepest two circles of hell are reserved for those who disregard fidelity. The eighth circle was for frauds, and the ninth for those who practiced treachery. Specifically, traitors to family, traitors to their country, traitors to their friends and guests, and traitors to the legitimate authority. These breaches of faith were considered more serious crimes than even murder or heresy.

The concept of fidelity is closely tied to the attributes of honesty, loyalty, reliability, sincerity and candidness. While we today look to the ancient Romans and other western authors for our understanding of fidelity, the concept of fidelity also existed in most great civilizations. In ancient China, they too had this concept and used the following symbol to represent the layers of its meaning.



Today, the words most often substituted for fidelity are loyalty and faithfulness.

this primarily because they have personally failed to meet these high standards and they cannot accept that they alone are responsible for their failures. Thus, to provide themselves an excuse they blame nature, society or genetics, or all three, for their personal failures. However, logically if only one person remains honest and faithful to his beliefs and obligations, then the arguments of those pundits and so-called academics are proven false.

Modern psychology informs us that **the inability of some people to remain loyal, faithful to their responsibilities and to keep our word, is clear indication of insufficient *psychological development* or of a *personality disorder*.** An individual without a fully developed sense and understanding of themselves and their place in the world is unlikely to understand the concept of fidelity, or remain faithful to their friends, words, or their professed beliefs. In a sense, regardless of age, they are stuck in an adolescent phase. Some people remain thus underdeveloped their entire lives. This is another part of the reason that Freemasonry must be attentive and selective about its membership.

A personality disorder is a deeply ingrained pattern of behavior that deviates markedly from the norms of generally accepted behavior, typically apparent by the time of adolescence, and causing long-term difficulties in personal relationships or in functioning in society. People with one of these conditions are, to varying degrees, mental ill, and therefore they are often completely incapable of fidelity, faithfulness and loyalty. Their thoughts and minds are not normal, and therefore they do not respond to logic and rational argument as we would expect them to. Also, they are often incapable of forming the human bonds that both create and facilitate healthy relationships. This is another part of the reason that Freemasonry must be attentive and selective about its membership. By some estimates, as much 10% of the U.S. population is affected by these conditions. This 10% along with the higher percentage of our population with a psychological development problem, greatly and negatively affects the functioning of our society.

Even for the relatively mentally healthy person, failing to fulfill one's promise, obligation or commitment, or the failure to remain loyal, often comes with a heavy psychological burden. We each have a mental picture of ourselves and a public persona that we trying to maintain. Failure to render fidelity, can make a mockery of one's perception of self and of one's public persona. This can lead the person into a state of self-doubt, depression, low self-esteem and even self-loathing. Any honorable man would be disappointed with himself for failing to fulfill an obligation. However, failing to fulfill an obligation can also lead to a person adopting the unhealthy mental process of delusional scapegoating, which is irrationally blaming others instead of accepting their obvious personal responsibility.

The virtue of fidelity, along with the cardinal virtues of temperance, fortitude, prudence and justice are precursors, sustainers and the evidence of a mentally healthy and of a morally responsible individual. Adherence to these virtues enables success in life. This is

why these virtues are emphasized in Freemasonry and why they should be taught to every child and adult.



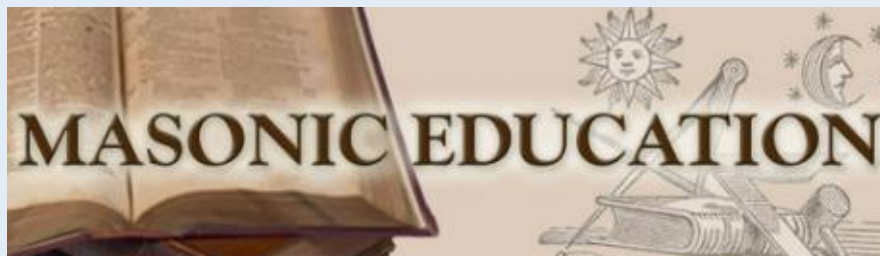
Final thoughts:

As the Mason proceeds through each of the degrees, he takes yet another obligation, and with each obligation he promises fidelity to more duties and loyalties representing more Masonic virtues, values and principles, until finally he has voluntarily bound himself to an entire system of morals and ethics that if he is faithful to them, they will remake him into an improved man. A worthy man, better qualified to be a free man, citizen and a brother.

However, **fidelity is not the taking of an obligation. Instead, fidelity is the fulfillment of your obligations every day, in every moment.** Fidelity is an endless task. Man is an imperfect creature; we strive and sometimes fail. Redemption comes after admitting our mistakes and returning to our obligations. **Redemption is renewing your fidelity and rededicating yourself to do better, be better, and be the man and Freemason that you want to be.**

Masonic Virtues

Brotherly love, relief, truth, fidelity, temperance,
fortitude, prudence, justice, faith, hope and charity.



Masonic History:

Freemasonry: Benevolent or Revolutionary?

When I became a Mason, I thought that Freemasonry could be wholly defined as a worldwide non-political, non-sectarian fraternal organization sharing a common set of beliefs and a common set of practices, and dedicated to benevolence (the quality of being well meaning; kindness).

I now understand that Freemasonry is not just an organization or fraternity, but instead it is a historical and a continuing movement that transcends national, language, ethnic, religious and political boundaries, and that it promulgates the powerful belief that good men of faith, freely acting together as brothers, with tolerance and respect, and in accordance with sound ethics and virtues, can create and sustain positive social change and self-improvement.



I have long thought that Freemasonry represented no threat to anyone. Yet as I researched Freemasonry and its history, I learned that at one time or another, in most places, Freemasonry was repressed and vilified. It is no exaggeration to say tens of thousands of Freemasons, and maybe more, have been killed or imprisoned for their association with Freemasonry. One of the first actions taken by any despot, fascist, communist or religious extremist regime is to ban Freemasonry and perhaps physically eliminate Freemasons. This is a fact that seems often overlooked or avoided by American Masons.

To many people, the idea that our non-political, non-sectarian and equalitarian fraternity spreading virtuous behaviors poses a threat anyone, is blatantly ridiculous. However, after in-depth research I have now come to the conclusion that Freemasonry has always dovetailed nicely with the ideas of the Age of Enlightenment, a philosophical movement that rejected religious dogma, elevated reason and scientific inquiry, and gave rise to the idea that freedom, democracy, and tolerance should be central to human existence. As a result, **Freemasonry is and has always been perceived as a threat to power and influence of evil people and evil regimes (the intolerant, the authoritarian, the despotic, the terrorist, the racist, the prejudiced, the bigoted, the fearmongers, the power hungry, the selfish, the repressive, the paranoid and the ignorant) precisely because we are a non-political, non-sectarian and an equalitarian fraternity advocating virtuous behaviors.**

Throughout history, the men of our benevolent movement could not and have not been able to tolerate injustice, dishonesty, intolerance and tyranny. While no political or sectarian discussion is tolerated within a lodge, the Masonic lodge was and is the natural meeting place of like-minded men who remain true to *Age of Enlightenment* ideals such as every human has value, god given individual rights, freedom to pursue knowledge and reason, liberty, virtuous behavior, progress, toleration, fraternity, constitutional government, and separation of church and state.



Freemasons everywhere, and in all ages, have taken oaths to be lawful citizens. However, there is an old Masonic adage, **“Adherence to the law does not require tolerance of despots”**. American Freemasons must reconcile with the fact that Freemasons were among the leaders of the American revolution, a rebellious act against the authority of the British King and state. They did not take this act lightly or without attempts to avoid it. The leaders of the American revolution spend years petitioning and appealing through the legal and government processes the totalitarian suppression of what they consider their legal and God-given rights. **This was a revolution of honorable men, many of them Freemasons, insisting on fairness and justice. In a very real sense, they were faced with the dilemma of remaining compliant with a despotic earthy authority or supporting action to ensure god given human rights.** Their fidelity being first to God, they chose the only option available to a true Freemason. The following is an excerpt from our Declaration of Independence.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are **endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights**, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and

to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

In South America, the primary leaders of the revolutions that threw off the yolk of the despotic Spanish King were Freemasons. Simon Bolivar and Francisco de Miranda in Venezuela, José de San Martín in Peru and Argentina, and Bernardo O'Higgins in Chile were all Freemasons that met in Masonic Lodges. They were all admirers of the American Masons, particularly George Washington. They all had taken oaths to serve the lawful authorities, until they realized that the caste system and the despots that they served were not lawful because of those governments suppressed God given human rights. Without a viable peaceful alternative available to them, those Freemasons lead the revolutions. A similar chain of events was repeated throughout the 19th and the early 20th centuries all over the world, ending in either revolution (often peaceful) or the suppression of the Freemasons.



Today, Freemasonry is still banned in a variety of places with totalitarian regimes and single religion controlled nation states. The oppressors and the power hungry of this world fear the power of Masonic ideas to unite people to oppose hate, and seek a more free, equal and representative society. The oppressors and the power hungry still try to denigrate and suppress the **Masonic supported ideas: that every human has value, God given individual rights, freedom to pursue knowledge and reason, virtues, liberty, progress, toleration, fraternity, constitutional government, freedom of association and freedom of religion.**

No Masonic lodge or Grand Lodge has ever attempted to seize political power, and no political lecture or discussion is allowed in lodge. **Yet, in the eyes of some regimes and disturbed individuals Freemasonry is a threat to them precisely because Freemasonry encourages and supports education, rationality, logic, self-control, equanimity, fellowship, brotherly love, faith, truth and charity, and other virtuous behaviors.**



Freemasonry around the World:

Freemasonry in Japan

Historical Background

For much of history, Japan's civilization developed in relative isolation. Prior to 1543, the few foreign cultural influences gradually reached this island came from the geographically close countries of China and Korea. The first Westerners to reach Japan were Portuguese traders who arrived in 1543. They landed on Tanegashima, a small island in southern Japan. Slowly a few other western nationalities visited Japan. Then the ruling shogunate became concerned about the growing foreign influence and therefore in 1639 most foreigners were banned from Japan. During that period only a few Protestant Dutch and non-Christian Chinese were allowed to do business with Japan. Among those Dutch traders who came to Japan during this period was Isaac Titsingh. He is believed to be the first Freemason to visit Japan. He was initiated in 1772 when he was in the service of the Dutch East India Company. He came to Japan three times - 1779 to 1780, 1781 to 1783, and 1784 to 1786 and ran the Dutch trading post in Nagasaki. Bro. Titsingh made acquaintance with many important Japanese officials and Japanese scholars. His books and letters are valuable sources of information about Japan and its people and customs in the latter half of the 18th century.

Freemasonry arrives in Japan

Japan's relative isolation lasted for more than two centuries. In the first half of the 19th century illegal encroachment by foreign vessels increased significantly. Then on July 8, 1853, American Commodore Matthew Perry led his four ships into the harbor at Tokyo Bay, seeking to re-establish regular trade and discourse between Japan and the western world. It was reported that within a year of Perry's arrival a Masonic meeting among Americans was held. There are no written records of this meeting. However, Japanese historians acknowledge that there were private meetings among Americans who used certain symbols. The description of those symbols can be identified as symbols used by Freemasonry.

The End of Isolation

Commercial traders and the representatives of other nations urged Japan to open ports and increase trade. Eventually the Japanese government opened the country and concluded treaties with foreign powers. Beyond just allowing more trade, the treaties included an extra-territoriality clause, which allowed some foreign residents in Japan, and placed them under the legal jurisdiction of their own countries' consuls for all legal matters.

The abolishment of the isolation policy threw Japan into turmoil. Rampant inflation, largely due to the commencement of foreign trade and other factors resulting from the opening of the country caused some Japanese, especially the samurai (professional warriors), to entertain the idea of "Sonno Joi" (reunifying the country under the imperial rule and repelling

the incursions caused by foreigners). Dissatisfied with the government policy toward foreign countries, some samurai took advantage of the situation and assaulted foreigners in order to harass the weakened government. Such attacks became frequent in the late 1850s and early 1860s. As a result, the foreign powers lodged strong protests with the Japanese government, and in 1863 the Japanese Government agreed to allow British and French troops to be stationed in Yokohama to protect foreigners.

It was during that period that the first regular Masonic lodge came to Japan. In 1864 Sphinx Lodge No. 263, Irish Constitution, came to Japan with a detachment of the British 20th Regiment which arrived. While in Yokohama, the lodge held meetings and admitted civilian members. Being a military lodge, it only operated in Japan until the unit was redeployed in March 1866.

Meanwhile, those western brethren living in Yokohama decided to form a lodge of their own and they petitioned for such a lodge to the United Grand Lodge of England. Thus, the first local regular lodge, Yokohama Lodge No. 1092, came into being, holding its first regular meeting on June 26, 1866. A total of six English and three Scottish lodges were then formed in Japan. With the abolishment of the extra-territoriality clauses of the treaties in 1899, the brethren held their meetings in accordance with a *gentlemen's agreement* with the Japanese government. The Japanese government would not interfere with the fraternity's activities as long as the membership was limited to foreign nationals and that the meetings were conducted without ostentation.

The members of those lodges in Japan included individuals who later significantly contributed to the modernization of Japan, e.g., Bro. E. Fischer, a German merchant involved in the development of Kobe; Bro. William G. Aston, a British diplomat and scholar of Japanese literature whose works introduced Japan and its civilization to the English-speaking world; Bro. A. Kirby who built the first iron-clad warship in Japan; Bro. Thomas W. Kinder, a Briton who was in charge of the Mint Bureau in Osaka; Bro. John R. Black, a British journalist who published an English-language newspaper, the Japan Gazette, and Japanese-newspapers, Nisshin Shinjishi and Bankoku Shimbun, and wrote an important book, Young Japan; Bro. William H. Stone, a British telecommunications engineer; Bro. Paul Sarda, a French architect; Bro. Edward H. Hunter, a British shipbuilding engineer; Bro. John Marshall, a British port captain; Bro. Felix Beato, a Venetian-born British photographer; and Bro. Stuart Eldridge, an American doctor. All the members of the lodges in Japan in those days were foreigners.

Some Japanese nationals joined the Craft while abroad. Among them were two Japanese scholars Amane Nishi (1829-1897) and Mamichi Tsuda (1829-1903) who studied at the University of Leyden in Holland from 1862 to 1865 under Prof. Simon Vissering who was a Freemason. Nishi was initiated in La Vertu Lodge No. 7 in Leyden in October 1864 and Tsuda in November 1864.

Count Tadasu Hayashi (1850-1913), a career diplomat and later a successful statesman, was stationed in England from 1900 to 1906 and became a member of the Craft while in England. He was initiated in Empire Lodge No. 2108 in February 1903, passed to the Second Degree in March and raised to the Third Degree in May. Bro. Hayashi became the Master of the lodge in January 1904. His rapid progress to that office was due to the lodge members' wishes to acknowledge his high official position and his possible departure from England in the near future for appointment to some other post. As the Japanese mission in London was promoted from a legation to an embassy, he became the first Japanese Ambassador to Great Britain. Japanese nationals were initiated in some other countries as well, e.g., the United States and the Philippines. However, he eventually had to resign from Freemasonry because of political pressure from some individuals in the Japanese government.

The Outbreak of Second World War

The safety of Freemasons in Japan began to deteriorate in the late 1930s when the government began to crack down on the fraternity, especially after the outbreak of war with China in 1937. In the early 1940s the anti-masonic activities intensified. Warnings were published in newspapers concerning what would happen to Masons if they didn't get out of Japan. In November 1941, the last Masonic meeting was held in Japan until after the second world war. The Freemasons along with the International Rotary Club and Boy Scouts were banned in Japan. The Rotary Club was said to be conspiring with the Freemasons against Japanese policies. The Freemasons were said to be the origin of the Boy Scouts' pledge of brotherhood and therefore banned. During the war, public exhibitions were held in a Tokyo department store to encourage the Japanese people to fear Freemasonry. In these exhibits Masonic regalia were displayed in a denigrating matter. Most of the Japanese anti-Masonic propaganda was translated from German Nazi materials.

After the Second World War

After the war, Masonic activities resumed in Japan. One English and two Scottish lodges had survived in secret. The Grand Lodge of the Philippines began to found lodges in Japan. During a 10-year period from 1947 to 1956, 16 lodges were founded. Gen. Douglas McArthur, who was the Supreme Commander of the Allies forces occupying Japan and himself a Mason, was very supportive of Masonic activities in Japan. The Imperial Japanese household agency and other top leaders in Japan were briefed on the fundamental principles of Freemasonry. Also, American Masons promised to support a project to "Build For A Better Tomorrow". They also promised Japanese leaders they would support Scouting, which was considered to be a very important post-war project to reconstruct Japan with the spirit of humanity and democracy in the minds of young people.

Eventually Masonic membership became available to Japanese nationals. Prince Higashikuni, uncle of the Emperor and post-war Prime Minister, became the first Japanese in post-war

Japan to present an application to the Fraternity. Prince Eun Lee (whose wife was a cousin of the Empress), Naotake Sato (President of the House of Councilors), Ryutaro Takahashi (Minister of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry), Prime Minister Ichiro Hatoyama, Yahachi Kawai (President of the House of Councilors), Viscount Michiharu Mishima (a former member of the House of Peers), and many other leaders petitioned to join the Masonic Order in early 1950.

In March 1956, the 15 Philippine lodges operating in Japan formed the Grand Lodge of Japan. The membership steadily increased, reaching 4,786 in 1972. Since then, however, the membership has been on the decrease and it now stands at just over 2,000. The fraternity is considered to be quite exclusive, is extremely charitable and well-respected, but it is also highly scrutinized by the public. As a result, Japanese Freemasons have been very careful about their outward image. Today the Grand Lodge of Japan is in amity with more than 150 Grand Lodges around the world.



In addition to those lodges operating under the Grand Lodge of Japan, there are several other lodges in Japan which were in existence at the time of its formation in 1957 - one English lodge, two Scottish lodges, two Philippine lodges and one American lodge (Massachusetts) which, originally founded in Shanghai, China, was reactivated in Tokyo in 1952. There are several more lodges which meet in Japan under the charter of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Washington, with which the Grand Lodge of Japan established fraternal relationship in 1998.

Most of their Masonic charity activity is carried out by the Tokyo Masonic Association (T.M.A., or Zaidan Hojin). It is governed by a board of trustees for which Tokyo Masonic Lodge No. 2 and the Tokyo Scottish Rite bodies each send three members. The number of charities the T.M.A. sponsors is too large to list here. Some of the most notable are the Toy Library, which donates toys to handicapped children and their parents. In the first four years of the program, the number of T.M.A. centers grew from 32 to 200.

The Grand Lodge Annual Picnic is a festival for children from various orphanages, child and maternal associations. From 1976 to 1987 the number of children attending grew from 200 to 800. Various local civic groups attend showing their support for the activities. The T.M.A. also supports the Sri Lanka Eye Donation Society which has an eye bank in Kyoto. Since 1976 three Masonic Lodges have participated in an annual sports meet in Kunitachi for handicapped persons. There are also countless local charitable projects carried out by the individual Lodges, such as donations to the distressed, and the support of orphanages.

The Tokyo Masonic Association has its headquarters in Tokyo in a building called the Tokyo Masonic Building. Being dedicated in 1981, it is one of the most modern Masonic Temples in the world. There are Lodge and Scottish Rite Ritual Halls, along with offices for various Masonic bodies. All Masonic Bodies in Japan have access to the building. The Tokyo Masonic Building is located on the site of the former Japanese Imperial Naval Officers Club. General MacArthur oversaw several Masonic projects, including the negotiations with the Japanese government to purchase that land.



Primary Sources:

A Brief History of Freemasonry in Japan. <http://www2.gol.com/users/lodge1/history-e/history2.html>

Freemasonry and Modern Japanese History. [Freemasonry and Modern Japanese History \(gol.com\)](http://www.freemasonryandmodernjapanesehistory.com)

Turmoil in Japan: <http://freemasonsfordummies.blogspot.com/2018/03/turmoil-in-japan.html>



Quotes about Freemasonry – for personal reflection.

“Above all remember that Masonry is the realm of peace, and that among Masons there must be no dissension, but only that noble emulation, which can best work and best agree.”

“Wherever there is strife and hatred among the Brethren, there is no Masonry; for Masonry is Peace, and Brotherly Love, and Concord. Masonry is the great Peace Society of the world. Wherever it exists, it struggles to prevent international difficulties and disputes; and to bind Republics, Kingdoms, and Empires together in one great band of peace and amity.”

“Masonry is useful to all men: to the learned, because it affords them the opportunity of exercising their talents upon subjects eminently worthy of their attention; to the illiterate, because it offers them important instruction; to the young, because it presents them with salutary precepts and good examples, and accustoms them to reflect on the proper mode of living; to the man of the world, whom it furnishes with noble and useful recreation; to the traveler, whom it enables to find friends and brothers in countries where else he would be isolated and solitary; to the worthy man in misfortune, to whom it gives assistance; to the afflicted, on whom it lavishes consolation; to the charitable man, whom it enables to do more good, by uniting with those who are charitable like himself; and to all who have souls capable of appreciating its importance, and of enjoying the charms of a friendship founded on the same principles of morality.”

“A Freemason should be a man of honor and of conscience, preferring his duty to everything, even to his life; independent in his opinions, and of good morals; submissive to the laws, devoted to God, to humanity, to his country, to his family; kind and indulgent to his brethren, friend of all virtuous men, and ready to assist his fellows by all means in his power.”

“Masonry is not made for cold souls and narrow minds, that do not comprehend its lofty mission and sublime principles. To comfort misfortune, to popularize knowledge, to teach whatever is true and pure in religion and philosophy, to accustom men to respect order and the proprieties of life, to point out the way to genuine happiness, to prepare for that fortunate period, when all the factions of the Human Family, united by the bonds of Toleration and Fraternity, shall be but one household—these are labors that may well excite zeal and even enthusiasm.”



The Upcoming Grand Master's Unity Family Day Picnic

(All Masonic bodies, youth groups, and family members are invited)

The Grand Master's Unity Day picnic will be on **July 10th**, starting at **11am** at the **Woodson Bridge State Recreation Area**, a park located along the Sacramento River in Tehama County. The event is **open to all members and family members of all Masonic organizations**. There is **no cost**. Lunch will be **barbeque tri-tip, chicken, sausage**, etc. **Dress comfortable**. While there will be picnic table seating, you might want to bring folding chairs / lawn chairs. **This is a casual event**. **Directions:** North on Hy99 from Chico, left at South Avenue going toward Corning. The parking lot is just before the river on the **right side**. **Google map:**

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Woodson+Bridge+State+Recreation+Area/@39.8841967,-122.0605332,13z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x8082ec0d08d19d79:0x349f1fd1609f480118m2!3d39.9151405!4d-122.0851666>



Miscellaneous

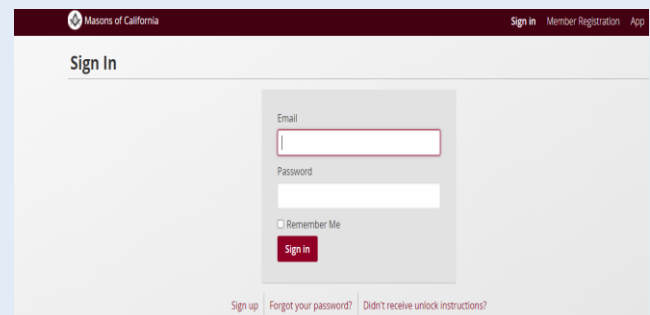
The 150 History of Table Mountain Masonic Lodge # 124

Our 150 year history of Table Mountain Lodge, covering the years 1857 thru 2008, is still available to you. This book contains many rare historical pictures, is enjoyable reading and is well indexed for research purposes. It is professionally produced, spiral bound and available to you at our cost. Unfortunately, the price of paper has dramatically increased, so these copies cost \$30 each. To obtain a copy of this important Masonic historical record, please contact our Secretary - **Brian Grandfield PM, 530-864-6323**, email: bgrandfield@gmail.com

Printing your own Dues Card

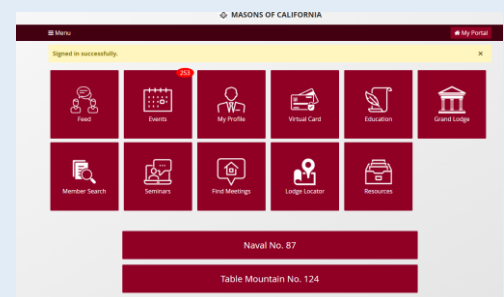
To print your dues card. Using your computer, open your browser and go to <https://freemason.org/>. In the right corner, push “member sign in”

This is the “sign up” and the “sign in” page. If you have never been to this website before, then go to “Sign up” in the lower left. It will only take you a minute to create your password. You will need your member number which is on your dues card. After that you sign in using your email and password

A screenshot of the 'Masons of California' website's 'Sign In' page. The page has a dark blue header with the logo and navigation links for 'Sign in', 'Member Registration', and 'App'. The main content area is white and titled 'Sign In'. It contains a form with fields for 'Email' and 'Password', a 'Remember Me' checkbox, and a 'Sign in' button. Below the form are links for 'Sign up', 'Forgot your password?', and 'Didn't receive unlock instructions?'.

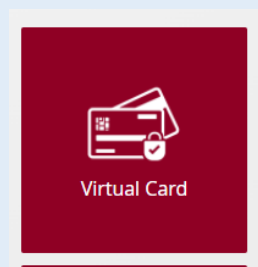
This will be the page you see after signing in

There will be a noticed posted on this page if you have not paid your dues. There will also be a link so that you can immediately pay your dues using a credit card.



To download and print your dues card, go to “Virtual Card”

Follow the very simple instructions to print your Due card. The new dues card does not have to be signed by the lodge secretary.



There is also a I Member 2.0 app for your smart phone. Find out about it at:

<https://masonichome.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Intro.iMemberLOApp.pdf>

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[Table Mountain Masonic Lodge #124 - Home | Facebook](#)

Table Mountain Lodge's website - <https://lodge124.freemason.org>

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Shrine / Shriners – Woody Nelson, 916-202-6942, email: woody@wolfranchfarm.com

<https://beashrinernow.com>

York Rite – <http://royalarch.org/locations.html>

Scottish Rite – David Anderson, Sacramento Valley Scottish Rite.

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Paradise and Oroville Eastern Star – Peg McElroy, Secretary Golden Feather Chapter,

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