



Table Mountain Masonic Lodge #124, Paradise. September 2022 Journal and Trestleboard



Vol 2, Issue 9,

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Worshipful Master's Corner

Hello Brothers and Friends,

This month we begin with the *calendar of events*, followed by a *summary of our last stated meeting*. Then there is information about the recent *2nd degree*. That is followed by an announcement of *our future outdoor and evening degree*. This month our Masonic Formation essay is *The Squares and Compasses of Freemasonry*. We then have a summary of the *Proposed Grand Lodge Legislation for 2022*, followed by the essay *The Chamber of Reflection: An Old Masonic Practice*. This month our focus on Freemasonry around the world is *Freemasonry in Modern Israel*. Then for your consideration and reflection we share some *Quotes about Freemasonry – about striving and introspection*.

There is also some information about *obtaining your own custom Lodge polo shirt*, and our unique *150 year history of table Mountain Masonic lodge*. We are also providing instructions on *how to print your dues card* using your personal computer. Finally, there is *contact information* for our lodge and other Masonic organizations. Please feel free to share this Journal / Trestleboard with other lodges.

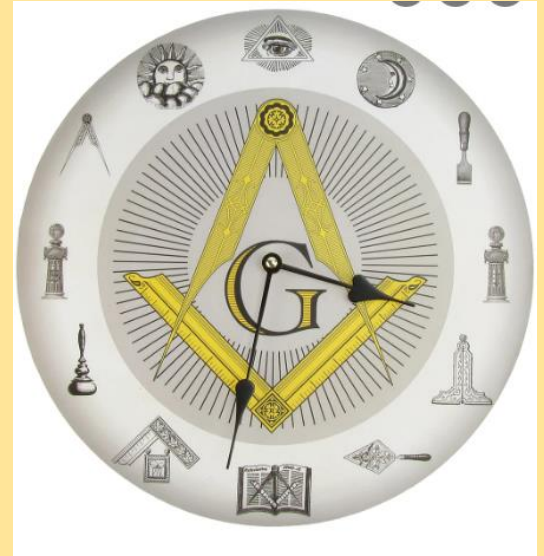
This Journal / Trestleboard is posted in our lodge's message board at the Grand Lodge website



Calendar of Events

Table Mountain Masonic Lodge (3 months)

- Sept 3, Saturday, Stated Meeting starting at 2 pm.
Lunch at 1 pm.
- Sept 10, Saturday, 1st degree date, at 2 pm
- October 1, Saturday, Stated Meeting starting at 2 pm. Lunch at 1 pm.
- October 15, Saturday, [Outdoor evening 3rd degree, at 6:30 pm](#) (also see page 10 for details).
- October 21 - 23. [Grand Lodge Annual Communication event in San Francisco](#).
- Nov 5, Saturday, Stated Meeting starting at 2 pm.
Lunch at 1 pm.



Other local area Masonic Events

- DeMolay – Sept 1 and 15 at 7:30 pm at the Chico Masonic center. Sept 17 DeMolay sports day in Roseville. Sept 24 Yard Sale & Weenie Roast Fundraiser from 7am to 2pm.
- Rainbow – Stated meetings Sept 5 and 19, at Chico Masonic center. Starting at 7 pm.
- Shrine (Cibara) – Sept 4 Fall River Mills Parade.
- Golden Feather Chapter Eastern Star - Sept 7 in Oroville at 7 pm, Sept 24 in Paradise at 2 pm.
- Scottish Rite – Sept 20 stated meeting at 5:30 pm at the Sacramento Scottish Rite center.
- Chico Leland Stanford lodge – Stated Meeting, 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm.
- Oroville Lodge – Stated Meeting, 1st Tuesday of the month at 7 pm.
- Gridley Lodge - Stated Meeting, 2nd Thursday of the month at 7 pm.
- Forbestown lodge - Stated Meeting, 1st Saturday of the month at 7 pm.
- Orland Lodge - Stated Meeting, 1st Tuesday of the month at 7 pm.

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 until December 2022, 4:30 to 9 pm.
- PG&E and contractors will be having regular work meetings in our facility.
- Intermittent use of the kitchen by various contractors, and private parties for special events. Check with Woody Nelson for available dates

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email: paradisefreemasons@gmail.com

Our Recent August 2022 Stated Meeting

At 1 pm, just prior to our Saturday August 6, 2022, Stated Meeting, the brothers, their families and guests met for a delicious lunch provided by Brother Phil Howard. The lunch was well attended and everyone enjoyed themselves and there were lively conversations and good fellowship.

At 2 pm, Table Mountain Masonic Lodge opened on the 1st degree of Masonry, for the purpose of conducting the stated meeting business. Due to Worshipful Nelson's injury, Brother Doug Campbell presided. Due to a wedding, an anniversary, and the price of gas some brothers unavoidably could not attend. However, all the positions were filled, the stand-ins did good work and we proceed to have a highly productive meeting.



Brother Harju, with the assistance of Brother Hamilton, completed his long form first degree proficiency. Brother Harju did an excellent presentation. His 2nd degree was scheduled for August 20th. He expressed appreciation, readiness and excitement for his step in Freemasonry.

There was the normal business of paying bills, reading communications and we discussed several projects and ideas. The investigating committee having returned a full and favorable report on Mr. Gregory Thomas Leal, we voted on his application. He was elected to receive the degrees of Masonry, and his 1st degree was scheduled for Saturday September 10, at 2 pm.

Worshipful Nelson being absent due to injury, there was no report on our progress designing the Camp Fire Memorial which will be located in Magalia. For the same reason, there was no report on our next project with the school district.

Concerning our Oct 15 Outdoor Nighttime Third degree. It was reported that email announcements of the event have been sent out statewide, and will continue to be sent out. We are receiving very positive feedback from across the state. There is wide interest in the event, and already we have reservations from brothers located hours from here. We will also have some grand officers in attendance. Additionally, the Grand Senior Warden Sean Metroka has agreed to deliver the long form third degree lecture. Worshipful Woody has made good progress on the degree site. It is now flat and sawdust is being added and he is proceeding with the parking areas, access improvement. As much possible portions of logs will be used

for the pedestals, alter, maybe some seats, columns and to outline the lodge area. In Yuba city there is some lodge equipment from a closed lodge, some of which we might use. Worshipful Woody is coordinating the actual degree teams. Prior to the degree there will be an early barbecue dinner at the Table Mountain Masonic Lodge building for us and our visitors. The cost will be \$10 with the money and donations going to DeMolay.

Brother Hamilton gave the lodge a short update on the activities and Plans of the DeMolay Chapter. He explained that immediately after the stated meeting DeMolay was having an all-night party in our lodge, where there would be games, movies and food – under appropriate adult supervision.

Brother Bob reported on our sick and missing. Worshipful Woody is recovering from heat exhaustion, Brother Ehren was attending a wedding, Brother Justin and his wife were on a trip celebrating their wedding anniversary. Brother Scott Miller had some issues that are time sensitive, one being his parents moving back into his house that day. Brother Brandon Moran –Smith has recently lost his grandmother and father and is dealing with their estates.

We have a recommendation from the Hiram committee for the next Hiram award winner is Brian Grandfield PM, who has been a Mason for more than 27 years. **The award will be presented at our next installation, Saturday Jan 21, 2023.**

The lodge voted to provide the appropriate financial stipend to Brother Hamilton to attend the Grand Lodge Communication on our behalf.

The preparations and positions for the next 2nd Degree, Aug 20, were discussed and finalized. The visitors from Chico Leland Standard lodge were recognized and thanked for their attendance and assistance.

The Calendar of upcoming events was then reviewed. Then Brother Campbell, filling in as Master for the stated meeting, thanked brother Caleb Chin PM for offering him assistance after receiving news of Worshipful Woody's hospitalization. Brother Phil Howard was thanked for providing the delicious Lunch. Brother Howard was also recognized for his exceptional service and contributions to our local community. Brother Hamilton was recognized and thanked for jumping in on very short notice to assist Brother Oso with his proficiency. Brother Gingery, Brother Howard and Brother Hamilton were then recognized and thanked for their service on local organizations' committees and boards.

The lodge was then closed, peace and harmony prevailing.



August 20, 2nd Degree (Fellowcraft Mason)

On Saturday August 20, at 2 pm, Table Mountain Masonic Lodge # 124 opened on the 2nd degree of Masonry, for the purpose of conferring the Master Mason degree on brother Justin (Oso) Harju. Due to the unusually high temperature, the officers wore their lodge polo shirts.

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 was Senior Warren, Caleb Chin (PM) was Junior Warren, Justin Purcell (PM) was Senior Deacon, and Cole Hamilton was Senior Deacon. Brian Grandfield (PM) was Secretary and Rich Gingery the Treasurer, Marshal was Matt Sutter, Senior Steward was Phil Howard, Junior Steward was Steve Kane, and Donald Grandfield (PM) performed the role of Titler. The sidelines were occupied by our good brothers from Chico Leland Stanford Lodge. We greatly appreciate their attendance. The degree was beautifully done and afterwards, we met downstairs for refreshments, cream pies and the wages of Fellowcraft Mason.



Have you **RSVP**'d for the Table Mountain Masonic Lodge (Paradise CA) Outdoor Evening 3rd Degree?

Plan on attending this unique Outdoor Evening 3rd Degree on Saturday, October 15, at a remote outdoor lodge site near Paradise California. Grand Senior Warden Sean Metroka will be presenting the full long form 3rd degree lecture.

So that we will know how much food and refreshments to have, please **RSVP** by calling Woody at **(530) 877-7852** or emailing ParadiseFreemasons@gmail.com . Since this is an evening event, some of you might want overnight lodging. We recommend the [Best Western in Paradise](#) where we have arranged a special room rate (15% discount) for you. Ask for the Masonic event rate.

Event Schedule – Saturday Oct 15

3 pm	Social Gathering at Table Mountain Masonic lodge. (see map: from Chico , or from Oroville)
4:30 – 6 pm	Dinner available to attendees at Table Mountain Masonic Lodge (see map). The dinner will be barbecued meats and accompaniments, and will be served by DeMolay. Cost is \$10.
6:30 pm	Please be at event location by this time. Sunset is 6:30 pm . Travel to the location from the Table Mountain lodge takes approximately 30 minutes. The road is paved most of the way, then gravel for a short distance. (see map and driving instructions from Table Mountain Lodge to the event location). There will also be signs posted on the route.
7 pm	Degree begins. Since this is an outdoor evening event in a remote location, we recommend that you dress comfortably and wear appropriate footwear . It is a very short walk from the parking area to the outdoor lodge location. For those Brothers with mobility issues, we will provide transportation for them from the event parking area to the outdoor lodge location.
9 pm	Estimated completion time.

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Masonic Formation

The Squares and Compasses of Freemasonry

The builders' tools known as a square and a compass were found in most ancient civilizations. Without creating or obtaining them, advancements in architecture were not feasible. The picture at the right is a 4th century Chinese depiction of two demi-gods, one holding a compass and the other holding a square. Often in ancient times these tools were used as spiritual or moral representations, just as we use them in modern Freemasonry. These tools are also necessary for the carpenter and the other artisan professions. Thus, as symbology they have universal appeal.



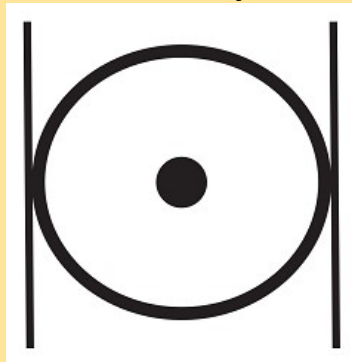
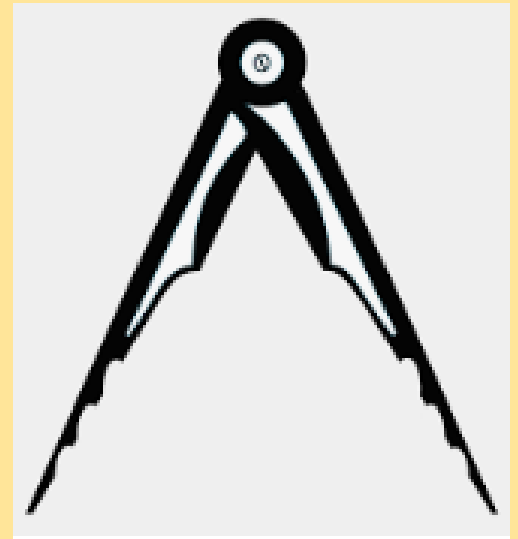
The words *square* and *compass* have various meanings, each a different concept and a different application. Most Freemasons can quickly recall the simplest explanation of how Freemasons should symbolically use the instruments known as a Mason's square and compass. However, some brothers are less familiar with the ideas and philosophy that are the foundation of those explanations. There is the tool called the square and the product of the Mason that is a square, and concept of being square. In addition to the Mason's compass, there is the magnetic compass, the moral compass and concept of encompassing. In this essay I will briefly address the role of all of these in Masonic philosophy.

A compass of the type used by operative stone Masons is defined as:

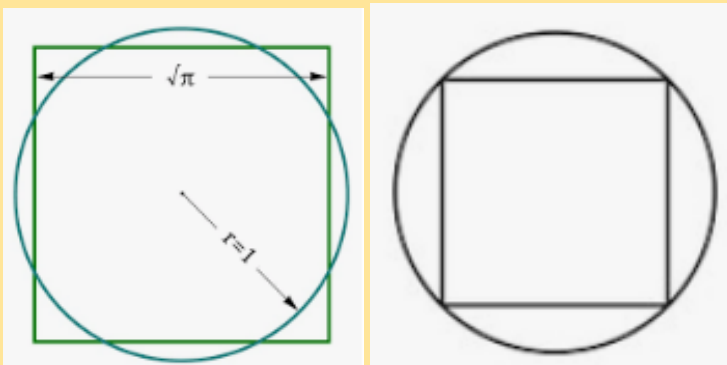
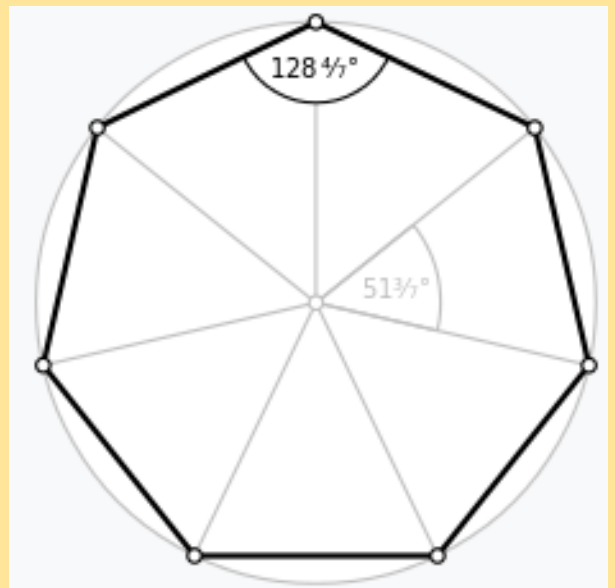
"an instrument for drawing circles and arcs and measuring distances between points, consisting of two arms linked by a movable joint, one arm ending in a point and the other usually carrying a pencil or pen".

Note: The above picture is not meant to imply that some ancient form of Freemasonry reached China by the 4th century. There is no reliable evidence of Freemasonry reaching China until the 1800's. However, the so-called silk road between the west and China began about 130 B.C. So, westerners did travel to China as long as 2000 years ago, although only a small number. Also, when this picture was created the Christian Nestorian or Church of the East had penetrated China and established churches there. Perhaps western travelers took builders and they took their symbology with them. Therefore, it is possible that a very long time ago western artisans and stone masons could have been in contact with Chinese builders, and shared tools and symbology with them.

The Compass and Square were used by operative stone Masons to *square* a stone. *Square* in this context means to make a stone into a three dimensional square of four equal sides (a box shape). A suitable stone was roughly shaped into the approximate shape of a square. Then using the compass, a perfect circle was inscribed on each side, then the Mason used his tool also called a square to inscribe the corners and measure the angles. The process was completed using the plume and level. **Through this time consuming method, the stone Mason would create a perfectly square stone or an oblong square (the equivalent of two perfect squares side by side, which today we call a rectangle).** This process might have been the original inspiration for the symbol below:



As building techniques and architectural designs developed the compass, square and straight edge were used to make all sorts of perfectly formed shapes, such as the heptagon pictured to the right. Using this technique, no matter how many sides the form had, each side was equal. The heptagon has seven sides, and thus was often used to graphical represent or explain the seven liberal arts.



The circle and square are the foundations of most architecture because of their **symmetry** and inherent structural **strength and beauty**.

There have been references to the square as a moral or philosophical symbol long before modern Freemasonry. The ancient Egyptians, the ancient Chinese sage known as Confucius and the ancient Greek philosopher and scientist Aristotle all referred to 'square actions' and associated this with honest dealings, high morality and virtue. Across many cultures and civilizations, the meaning or symbolism of the perfect square or perfect cube has been remarkably consistent.

The tools of the square and compass combined is the universal symbol of Freemasonry, and can be thought of as representing **the squaring of a man, specifically the process of creating a square man, a person of the highest morality and ethics**.

However, unfortunately some people think the concept of being *square* means something else. In the 1940s in the U.S., a growing community of the *irreligious libertines* began using the word square to describe someone who was conventional or traditional. *Irreligious* means indifferent or hostile to religion, or having no religious beliefs, and a *libertine* is a person that behaves without moral principles or a sense of responsibility. Such people are of course just the opposite of Freemasons.

Most importantly, Freemasons are taught to symbolically use the compass *to circumscribe our desires and to keep our passions within due bounds*. Unfortunately, some modern educators and therapists seem to glorify the concept of acting out one's passions and feeling with little or no limitations. Some of them even go so far as to campaign against logic and self-discipline, and urge individuals to make decisions and take action based on their immediate passions and emotions. Such an attitude is dangerous and at odds with the wisdom of the ages and the guidance of just about every major religion. The oldest of philosophers and sages noted that when man allows his actions and decisions to be ruled by passions and emotions, the outcomes are likely to be undesirable, uncivilized and fraught with negative results.

Likewise, that portion of the population that mainly acts and decides based on passions, emotions and physical desires, are easily manipulated by those who can stir their reactions and seek to control them. By placing a symbolic limit to passions, emotions and desires, we are more likely to behave logically with others, and protect ourselves from manipulation.

The tool known as the square represents *truth and morality*, guiding principles in all our individual actions. It is also referred to as *the square of virtue*. Some old Masonic references suggest that the altar of the ancients, as well as the altar in early Masonic lodges were a perfect square (cube). Thus, the positioning of the Holy Book between the square and compass, and the altar (square) could be said to symbolize the key role of God in the squaring of a man.

An entirely different type of compass, with a very different purpose, is the magnetic compass. It is called a compass because of the round shape of it in old Italian is *compasso*. The magnetic compass or navigational compass is a device that shows the cardinal directions (north, south, east and west) and is used for navigation and geographic orientation. It commonly consists of a magnetized needle or other element, which can pivot to align itself with magnetic north.



To the best of modern knowledge, the magnetic compass was first invented during the Chinese Han Dynasty (about 206 BC). The ancient Chinese primarily used it for divination. Much later they began using it as a navigation tool. The first use of this type of compass in the Western European and Islamic world occurred around 1190. **The value of the magnetic compass to the navigator being great, soon it was symbolically used to represent higher direction. Religious leaders were sometime represented as navigators, taken people through the darkness or storm to a better place.**

The face of a magnetic compass shows the four cardinal points (North, East, South and West). In a sense, the Masonic lodge room is similar, also having the four cardinal points of direction, except that our focus is to the East, toward the *Light* that through the ages has represented God, the Creator. **And like the magnetic compass, the Masonic lodge and Freemasonry in general, provides consistent direction that can help us to reach our desired moral and ethical destination.**



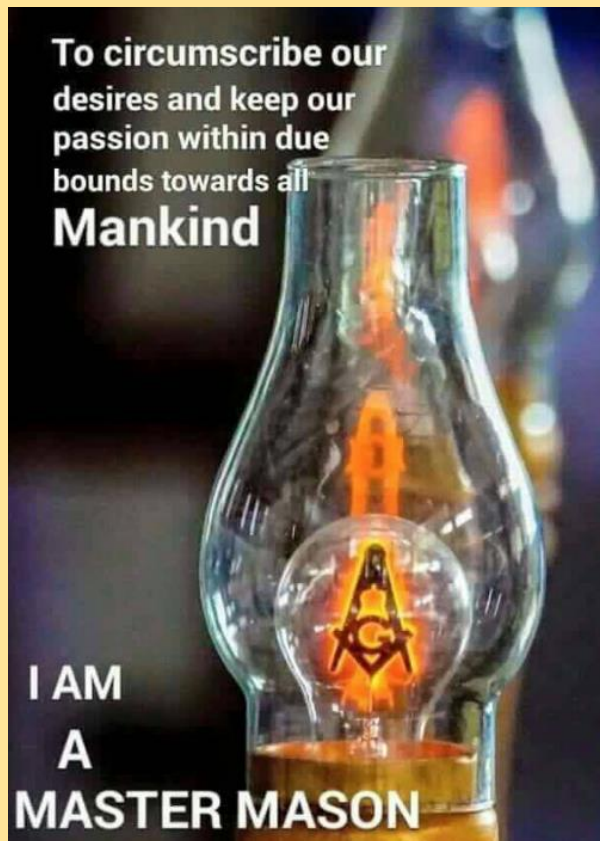
One 18th century English Masonic ritual aligns the four cardinal virtues of Freemasonry with the four cardinal directions or stations of the Masonic lodge. Specifically,

“Justice in the east, Prudence in the west, Temperance in the south and Fortitude in the north”.

In other versions of Masonic ritual, it is the corners of the Masonic lodge that represent the four cardinal virtues. Thus, in lodge we are symbolically bounded or **encompassed by the four cardinal virtues. These are the virtues we are to practice to be able to circumscribe our desires and to keep our passions within due bounds, and thus become better men.**

PRUNE IDLE THOUGHTS AND
SINFUL SUGGESTIONS, AND THUS
KEEP YOUR PASSIONS WITHIN
DUE BOUNDS AND PREVENT
YOUR FANCY FROM LEADING YOU
ASTRAY AFTER THE VANITIES
AND VICES OF THE WORLD.

Since Freemasonry is a system of morals, in addition to a philosophy of priorities and virtues, **Freemasonry, along with their Holy book, can be the foundations of a person's personal moral compass.** A person's moral *compass* is their internalized set of values, principles and priorities that guide them with regard to ethical behavior and decision-making.



The square and compass, just like the other working tools of Freemasonry can represent multiple concepts. Learning about each concept deepens our understanding of the depth and sophistication of our Masonic system of morals, ethics, values and principles.

Proposed Grand Lodge Legislation for 2022.

New Legislation

ALLOWS LODGES TO MEET LESS THAN MONTHLY FOR CERTAIN BUSINESS IN ALTERNATE MONTHS.

Opinion: We support this. This alternative may be helpful for struggling lodges and those lodges that are in areas with severe weather.

Carry-Over Legislation from 2021

ESTABLISHES THE LODGE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AS A STANDING COMMITTEE

Opinion: We strongly oppose this potentially harmful requirement. A Masonic lodge is one of the oldest examples of a democratic environment, where decisions are made in open stated meeting after reasonable and polite discussion and debate. Decisions should not be arranged or made privately by an elite group of brothers. In Table Mountain Masonic Lodge, the entire lodge present at a stated meetings is encouraged to participate in discussion, to offer suggestions, ideas and proposals. In this way there is complete transparency occurs and no one will feel left out the process.

PERMITS VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION IN STATED MEETINGS.

Opinion: The proposal allows virtual participation, yet does not allow virtual participants complete participation. It is step in the right direction, although it may not go far enough.

NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AT MEDIATION MAY BE BINDING AND FINAL UPON THE AGREEMENT OF PARTICIPANTS.

Opinion: We agree. Such an arrangement would mirror California state law.

TRANSFER OF AN ACCUSED TO THE GRAND MASTER'S LODGE.

Opinion. We disagree. Adjudication of a charge under Masonic should remain with the lodge. Accused brothers may demit.

Resolutions for 2022

RESOLUTION NO. 22-02: GIVES THE GRAND MASTER THE RIGHT TO GRANT THE TITLE OF PAST MASTER WHEN A CONSTITUENT LODGE'S CHARTER IS SUPSEDED OR REVOKED.

Opinion: We agree.

RESOLUTION NO. 22-03: PROHIBITS ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER STATED MEETINGS, DEGREE PRACTICES AND DEGREE CONFERRALS.

Opinion: We strongly disagree. The authors claim that meetings and practices are being disrupted by alcohol. We do not believe that there is such a problem in California. Additionally, if there is a lodge some place in California where it is a problem, there are already sufficient rules and regulations for the leadership to deal with such things. In many lodges, after a stated meeting or degree conferral, a toast or drinks are shared.

RESOLUTION NO. 22-04: MODIFIES THE THRESHOLD AMOUNT OF A CONTRACT REQUIRING THE APPROVAL OF THE GRAND LODGE COMMITTEE ON MASONIC PROPERTIES from \$25,000 to \$50,000.

Opinion: We agree. This is a reasonable adjustment needed due to continuing inflation.

The Chamber of Reflection: An Old Masonic Practice

Around the world the initiation rituals of Freemasonry are similar, but there are always some differences. Most American lodges do not incorporate the *Chamber of Reflection*, which is one of the oldest ways to prepare candidates. While uncommon in U.S. craft Freemasonry, the Chamber of Reflection has for many years been used in other jurisdictions and Rites of Freemasonry. Most brethren who were initiated in Europe, Mexico, Central and South America, the Middle East and Africa will be acquainted with the Chamber of Reflection. Additionally, the practice can be found in the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, the French Rite, the Brazilian Rite and other rites derived from those listed.

The purpose of the Chamber of Reflection is to mentally prepare the entered apprentice candidate for his initiation into the Fraternity. The Chamber of Reflection is exactly what it implies, a quiet room where the candidate is placed to reflect before his initiation. This is a very old type of ritual that was used in many ancient traditions. Supposedly, isolation in a cavern-like room is where a symbolic metamorphosis can be experienced, and where the neophyte then emerges symbolically transformed and ready learn.

The Masonic Chamber of Reflection is intended to be the candidate's very first experience in Masonry. Imagine the effect on a candidate of entering a small room and being seated in a simple chair. A skull is positioned against one wall of the chamber. Two human leg bones are beside the skull, along with a collection of other items that were meticulously arranged: an antique hourglass, a crystal flask, a



lit candle, two saucers of pale powder (salt and ash), perhaps a gravestone, and a mirror upon the wall where the candidate can see his reflection. Also, propped against the wall is a long scythe, its curved blade associated with the grim reaper and death. The room is purposefully cold, uncomfortable and austere. Here a candidate can reflect on his own mortality. Placed in front of the candidate is a sheet of paper or scroll upon which are written questions for the candidate to ponder:

- Are you truly as good and wise a person as you claim to be?
- Are you truly the man you want to be?
- Are you truly the husband you want to be?
- Are you truly the father you should be?

Do you claim to be a believe in God, yet take his name in vain?
How much of your life has already passed? A quarter? A third? A half?
How much time do you have left on this earth?
Should you make changes in your life?
Why are you making excuses?
What are you waiting for?

The candidate is instructed that when he is all alone, he is to read each question out loud and to look into the mirror after each question. The candidate is left to reflect for about 10 minutes, and then taken to the preparation room for the conferral of the 1st degree. By reflecting on the state of his being and life, and the inevitability of death, the candidate will hopefully gain valuable perspective on the fleeting nature of life, and the need to improve himself. It all may serve to cause the candidate to consider the relative meaninglessness of the superfluities of daily life, and put into perspective his own mortality.

In some rites in some countries there is a session in the Chamber of Reflection prior to each degree, with perhaps different questions to ponder.

Modern psychology has confirmed that reflecting upon one's mortality, accomplishments and failures, and one's remaining life can have positive effects. Freemasonry has long known this. Science calls this *mortality legacy awareness*, a condition that drives the need to leave something good behind after death – thereby outliving and transcending death. That good could be a better reputation, a happier family or a positive community legacy. Significant positive personal change comes only after an honest assessment of oneself. The Chamber of Reflection can assist that process and thus better prepare a candidate for the mysteries of Freemasonry.

Consider the well-known story of *A Christmas Carol*, written by Charles Dickens in 1843. The story is about Ebenezer Scrooge, a recalcitrant old man who wanted nothing to do with the Christmas season, giving or charity, and had no friends or love in his life or heart. After being visited by the ghost of his dead business partner Jacob Marley, and the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Christmas Present and Christmas Yet to Come, Mr. Scrooge undergoes a remarkable transformation. Faced with the pleasures and pains of his past, the reality of world around him, the consequences of his actions and inactions, and the reality of his future death, Mr. Scrooge undergoes a symbolic metamorphosis and emerges a new man. Risen from sleep he becomes the Masonic model of kindness, charity, good cheer, and seeks to correct his previous mistakes. In a sense, Scrooge's bed chamber was his Chamber of Reflection.

A Christmas Carol's message of love, redemption, and of the period's generosity has reverberated with a great many generations, regardless of whether read, heard, or watched. The story was clearly influenced by Masonic ideas that were strongly present within English

society in Charles Dickens's time. While no record has yet been found of Mr. Dickens' initiation into Freemasonry, it has been confirmed that his brothers and sons were all Freemasons. Whether he was or was not a Freemason is irrelevant, because he was strongly influenced by Masonic thoughts. He once spoke at Freemason's hall in London, concerning the need for and benefits of charity. In some of his books Freemasonry is mentioned in very positive terms.

Contrary to the thinking of some brethren, Freemasonry must never become a stagnant set of rituals and words, or unwilling to adapt or innovate to improve. There is nothing preventing any lodge from creating and using their own version of a Masonic Chamber of Reflection. Additionally, every Freemason can experience his own personal Masonic Chamber of Reflection from time to time. Many researchers have posited and then found a positive correlation between self-reflection and positive individual change. As Freemasons we should always be striving for the impossible self-perfection.

James 4:14 KJV

Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

Psalms 39:4-5 KJV

Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is: that I may know how frail I am. Behold, thou hast made my days as a handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them. And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in thee.

Ecclesiastes 7:2 NIV

*It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, for **death is the destiny of everyone; the living should take this to heart.***



Freemasonry around the World

Freemasonry in Modern Israel

Introduction

Jerusalem is the spiritual and emotional center of the Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam). Being the location of the ancient temple of King Solomon, it has a special position in Masonic lore. The nation now known as modern Israel, is located within the land previously known as Palestine during its occupation by the Ottoman Empire and later during the British Mandate. The ownership of that land has been contested even before the founding of the ancient kingdom of Israel. In this essay, we will provide some historical context to assist in understanding the arrival and growth of modern Freemasonry in this region. This will be followed by a discussion of the current state of Freemasonry in modern Israel.

Historical Background

From the 15th century onwards, the Ottoman empire headquartered in Constantinople in what is now modern Turkey, controlled much of North Africa, the middle east and a significant portion of the Balkans. The area then known as Palestine was directly administered by them until the dissolution of the Ottoman empire at the end of the first world war. The Ottomans were far from unsophisticated, their lands being administered by a complex and modern bureaucracy, that effectively suppressed conspiracies or foreign influences.



Constantinople, capital of the late Ottoman empire

While the records show that the Leaders of the Ottoman Empire were officially unfriendly to Freemasonry until nearly 1870, we have first person accounts of Freemasons and Lodges operating within the empire in the late 1860's, and it appears that Freemasonry began to significantly thrive throughout the Ottoman Empire in the 1870's.

Soon after the American civil war, the well-known American Freemason Dr. Robert Morris (creator of the Order of Eastern Star, Past Grand Master of Kentucky, and self-styled poet laureate of American Freemasonry) undertook a trip to Europe and then to the middle east with the intention of exploring Jerusalem and the area around it for evidence to support Masonic lore and biblical passages.

Brother Morris wrote of being received in Smyrna (a formerly Greek city located at a strategic point on the Aegean coast of Anatolia and currently known as Izmir, Turkey) by Freemasons and attending lodge there in 1868. He described a very active Masonic community in Smyrna. Upon reaching Constantinople, Brother Morris tells of a meeting of prominent Masonic

leaders. As he approached Palestine, he found a very active lodge in Lebanon, having been in operation since 1861. Upon reaching what is now modern Israel, Brother Morris wrote of encountering numerous Freemasons, but no firm evidence of active lodges. For this reason, the historic origins of modern Freemasonry in what is now Israel is attributed to Brother Morris, who in 1868 oversaw a Masonic ceremony in the Cave of Zedekiah, popularly known as King Solomon's Quarries, deep under the walls of the old city of Jerusalem.



Dr. Morris then assisted with the establishment of the supposedly first regular Masonic Lodge by obtaining a charter for them from the Grand Lodge of Canada. This lodge was Royal Solomon Mother Lodge No. 293, established in 1873 in Jerusalem. Most of its founding members were Christian Americans living in Jaffa. During that historical period there was the "Palestine Emigration Society", a small group in the U.S. and Canada that were encouraging Christians to move to the ancient land of the bible. Perhaps because this Lodge worked only in English it did not attract members from the native population. The lodge had a short and difficult existence. After only a few years, it stopped reporting to the Grand Lodge of Canada, and was finally erased from the list of lodges in 1907.

In the official accounts of the Grand Lodge of Israel, no other lodge was established until 1890. However, there is some reason to doubt this claim. The fact is that Freemasonry spread rapidly in the Middle East between 1875 and 1890, becoming one of the most influential social institutions in the Ottoman Empire. Many lodges were influenced by the French form, which promulgated French revolutionary ideas. While these lodges were popular with the young Ottomans, intellectuals and the business class, they maintained secrecy to avoid the attention of the suspicious government officials. There is some evidence of the existence of such lodges in the area then called Palestine, although some would claim them to have been irregular (not officially authorized).

However, despite that evidence, today it is claimed that the next Masonic Lodge to be formed in Israel was established in Jaffa, around 1890. A group of Arab and Jewish Brethren petitioned the Masonic Misraim Rite, then based in Paris and which was very active at that time in Egypt, and founded the Port of King Solomon's Temple Lodge. This lodge worked in French. That Lodge quickly received a large influx of affiliate members, primarily French engineers who had come to build the Jaffa-Jerusalem railway.

A colorful Masonic figure at the time was a Christian Arab called Iskander Awad, who anglicized his name to Alexander Howard. Brother Howard was the local agent for the British travel firm, Thomas Cook. He also owed hotels in Jaffa and Jerusalem, and ran a stagecoach service between both towns. His own home in Jaffa was used as a Masonic Temple, and the ornate marble entrance stands to this day, though the place is now a furniture store.

In 1906, realizing that the Misraim Rite was unrecognized by most Grand Lodges of the world, the Jaffa Brethren decided to change the Lodge's affiliation to the Grand Orient of France, which was very active throughout the Middle East. They adopted a new name, Barkai (Dawn), and eventually became integrated into the Grand Lodge of the State of Israel. Lodge Barkai is considered the oldest lodge in Israel still in existence. While it now works in Hebrew, rather than French, it preserves many features of the French rituals.

Three other Lodges were constituted before World War I, before the area became a British Mandate. It is very likely that there also were British Army regimental Masonic lodges meeting during and after the war. During the British Palestine mandate, a number of lodges were chartered by the Grand Lodges of Egypt, Scotland, and England, and the Grand Orient of France. Some of these Lodges are still in existence to this day, while others disappeared for various reasons.

Of particular interest is that of the five German-speaking lodges founded in Israel in 1931 by the Grand Master of the symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany. With great vision, M.W. Bro. Otto Müffelmann realized that the rise of Hitler in Germany sounded the death knell for Freemasonry in his country. He traveled to Israel and, with the help of German Brethren who had emigrated there to escape the racial laws of the Nazis, founded Lodges in the three main cities: Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, and Haifa. Soon after that, Freemasonry was indeed banned in Germany, the German Grand Lodges disbanded, and many Brethren met their fate in the concentration camps. German-speaking Lodges in Israel (and also in Chile) kept alive the flame and rituals of German Freemasonry during those dark years and, after the end of the second world war, were instrumental in restoring regular Freemasonry to Germany.

The first National Grand Lodge in Israel was formed in 1933, even before the creation of the official State of Israel, and brought together all the Lodges that had been working under Egyptian or French jurisdictions. However, the English-speaking lodges in Israel refused to join

the new Grand Lodge and continued working separately, and the United Grand Lodge of England refused recognition to the new Grand Lodge due to its hostility to its inclusion of foreign Masonic Rites that didn't pay regular homage to it or accept subserviency to the United Grand Lodge of England. Also, because Israel was not then yet an officially recognized nation state, and at that time the British government officially opposed the creation of a separate Jewish state. After a bitter struggle with the British, the modern state of Israel was declared in 1948, on the same day the last British troops left Jerusalem, effectively ending the British Palestine mandate.

Regular Lodges known to have been founded before Independence in 1948

Lodge	No.	City	Founded	Language
Carmel	1085	Haifa	4 May 1911	English, then Arabic, currently English
Jordan	1339	Jaffa	28 May 1925	Hebrew, later Arabic
Holy City	1372	Jerusalem	12 January 1931	English
Reuben	1376	Haifa	14 September 1931	Hebrew
Mizpah	1383	Jerusalem	19 January 1933	Hebrew
Sharon	1381	Tel Aviv	30 January 1935	English
Prophet Elijah	16	Haifa	1936	Hebrew
Aviv	1397	Tel Aviv	18 January 1940	English, later Hebrew
Menorah	19	Haifa	1944	Hebrew

The Present

In 1948 the new state of Israel faced war with its Arab neighbors that claimed legal authority of the area. After that war was resolved in favor of Israel, Freemasonry began a period of significant growth. In 1953 the Grand Lodge of Israel received international recognition, which lead to uniting of all Masonic lodges in Israel under a single Grand Lodge.

From 30 Lodges at its foundation, the number of Lodges working under the Grand Lodge of the State of Israel has grown to some 70 active lodges and 15,000 members at this time. The last to be formed was in 1993, was the French-speaking "France" Lodge No. 77 of Jerusalem, consecrated in the presence of the Grand Master of the (regular) French National Lodge. 70 lodges might not



seem to be a large amount, but Israel is a rather small nation. In total size it is just slightly larger than New Jersey.

In 1948, at independence, the country was 31% Jewish, 7.2% Christian, and 60% Muslim. The rest being Druze and a mix of other religions. In the years after independence there was a large influx of Jewish people from around the world. Today Israel's population is about 77% Jewish. The complex origins of its population are reflected in the large number of Lodges operating in foreign languages. Apart from Israel's two official languages (Hebrew and Arabic), there are Lodges working in seven other languages: English, French, Spanish, German, Romanian, Dutch and Turkish. Most Israeli Lodges work in Hebrew and the vast majority of their members are Jewish, although there are no statistical numbers on the religious affiliation of Israeli Masons, because no such question is ever asked of a candidate. Arabic-speaking Brethren, whether Christian, Muslim, or Druse (and even some Jews originally from Arab countries) work in five Lodges, in Acre, Haifa, Nazareth, and Jerusalem.

These Lodges differ not only in language, but also in their rituals. Hebrew and Arabic-speaking Lodges work according to rites and rituals approved by the Grand Lodge, based on the English tradition. Foreign-language Lodges use the rituals habitual to their countries of origin. An example is Raanana Lodge, which was founded by immigrants from South Africa and Rhodesia, use the Netherlands (Dutch) ritual. Spanish-speaking Lodges use the Scottish Rite ritual, widely used in Latin America and Spain.

Israel, unfortunately, is a land beset with internal religious and ethnic conflict that often results in the isolation of communities, economic inequalities, and sometimes violence. The growth of religious orthodoxy and religious fundamentalism has put up additional barriers to communication and conflict resolution. As a result, Freemasonry is one of the few institutions in Israel that actively promotes better understanding between the different ethnic and cultural segments of Israeli society, particularly between Jewish and Arab Brethren. An Arab lawyer, M.W. Bro. Jamil Shalhoob, was elected Grand Master for 1981 and reelected the following year.

Three Volumes of the Sacred Law are opened side by side upon the altar in the Grand Lodge of Israel: The Hebrew Bible (Tanach), The Christian Bible, and the Koran. Furthermore, there are three Grand Officers to bear these books. The official seal of the Grand Lodge encloses the symbols of the three great monotheistic religions: The Christian Cross, Jewish Star of David, and Muslim Crescent, all intertwined



within the square and compasses. Frequently, joint meetings are held between lodges, so that sometimes three or more different languages are heard in the course of a single meeting.

Individual Lodges and the Grand Lodge itself perform numerous charitable activities, including donations of expensive medical equipment to hospitals, help to the blind, and food for the needy. The Order maintains a parents' home in Nahariya, a town near the Lebanese border.



Grand Lodge meets in Tel-Aviv, but there are Masonic Temples in all important cities, from Nahariya in the north to Eilat, Israel's southern port on the Red Sea. In Acre, the Masonic Temple is located in the Old City, in a building with the characteristic arches and vaults of medieval construction. In Jerusalem, King Solomon's Quarries are used several times a year to conduct Masonic meetings. The underground quarry could explain what is written in the Bible, that no sound of metallic tools was heard at the building site of the Temple. If the stones were dressed underground, no noise would have reached the Temple site.

Freemasons Hall in the Zedekiah Cave



In 1993, the Grand Lodge of the State of Israel celebrated its 40th anniversary. It maintains close fraternal ties with regular Grand Lodges throughout the world. Frequent visits by delegations and individual Brethren from abroad give testimony to the universality of our Order.

Despite its small size, the Grand Lodge of the State of Israel is proud of having been able to foster and develop a true fraternal spirit within its Lodges even under the most trying circumstances. They are endeavoring to bring the Masonic message of enlightenment, toleration, and fraternal love to all, in hopes of bring the divergent communities together, build better men and a better future for their nation.

Just north of the Egypt border (first intersection) on the main highway into Israel (which literally goes all the way to the northern border into either Syria or Lebanon) is an unusual monument to Freemasonry.

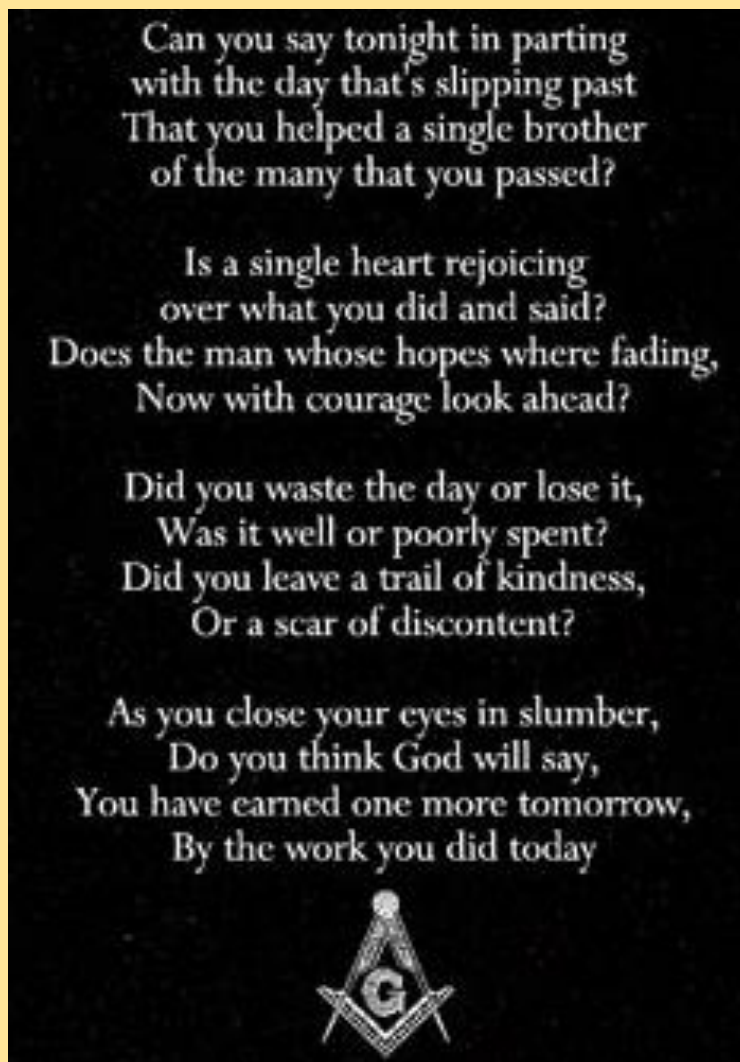


Quotes about Freemasonry – for personal reflection.

Slightly edited for readability:

Ritual memorization and proper execution, social intercourse and visitation, and knowing and complying with Grand Lodge regulations are all critical elements in a Masonic environment. However, ritual just for the sake of tradition is worthless. Ritual for the sake of enlightenment is valuable. An understanding of the ritual's meaning is far more important than just memorizing it.

The Masonic journey is one of self-discovery and self-improvement, demonstrated by internal transformation and external behavior. Only when one has achieved this journey, can he with all honesty call himself a 'Master Mason' in the true spirit of the Craft. Until that happens, we must strive to subdue our egos and accept the fact that we are all apprentices, regardless of our rank, age and position. **We must also never forget that masons are builders. As we build better foundations within ourselves these foundations shall inevitably reflect a positive impact on the world around us.**



Miscellaneous

Get your Table Mountain Masonic Lodge Polo Shirt

Show your pride with this attractive lodge shirt.

Embroidered with the **Table Mountain #124 logo**, this high quality, breathable 100% polyester polo shirt is highly attractive and comfortable. Only one color, graphite. The shirt is made by *Port Authority*. The embroidery is done locally. Yours for just \$40.

To obtain one of these please contact brother Doug Campbell at **530-519-1695**, or email paradisefreemasons@gmail.com . Please give your name, shirt size and phone number.
Cash or check is acceptable.



Available for Rent – Special Events and Gatherings Historic Table Mountain Lodge Building Link to [Building and Room Rentals](#)

Woody Nelson, [\(530\) 877-7852](tel:5308777852) 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, business meetings, memorials, church and funeral services and a wide 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.

For more information and a tour of our facilities, please contact Woody Nelson at **(530) 877-7852**, email: paradisefreemasons@gmail.com

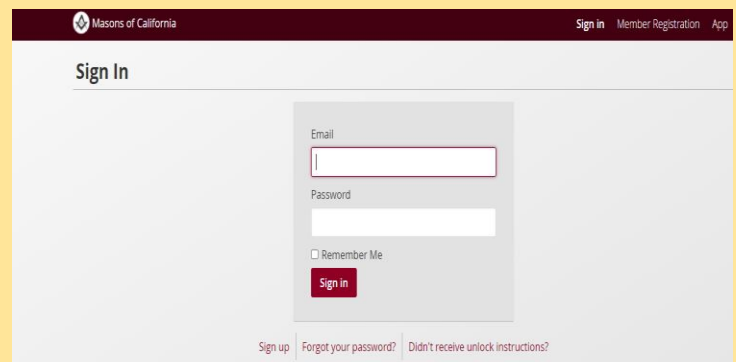
The 150 History of Table Mountain Masonic Lodge # 124

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

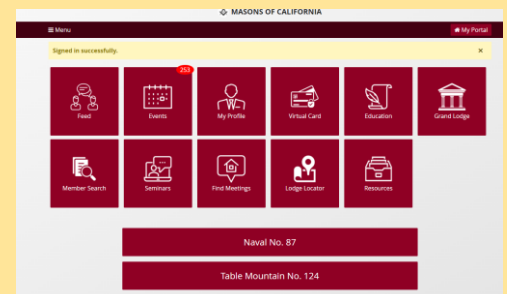
To print your dues card. Using your computer, open your browser and go to <https://freemason.org/>. In the right corner, push “member sign in”

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: 'Sign in', 'Member Registration', and 'App'. Below the header, the 'Sign In' section contains a form with fields for 'Email' and 'Password', a 'Remember Me' checkbox, and a 'Sign in' button. At the bottom of the form, there are links for 'Sign up', 'Forgot your password?', and 'Didn't receive unlock instructions?'.

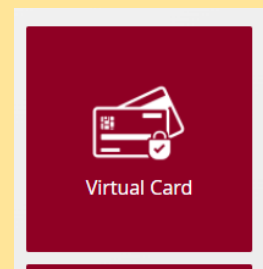
This will be the page you see after signing in

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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Journal / Tresleboard - Doug Campbell, 530-519-1695 email: dgcphd@gmail.com

Table Mountain Lodge's Facebook page – Cole Hamilton, 858-342-5031

Email: oldkingcreations@att.net

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

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

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DeMolay - Mike Meyer, 530-514-0252, email: allaboutlocks@gmail.com

Cole Hamilton, 858-342-5031, email: oldkingcreations@att.net

Rainbow Girls (for all of Butte County) – Laura Ray, 530-828-4748.

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.

danders@sacramentoscottishrite.org

<https://www.sacramentoscottishrite.org>

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

email bobnpeg@sbcglobal.net

