

Table Mountain Masonic Lodge

5934 Clark Road, Paradise, CA 95969

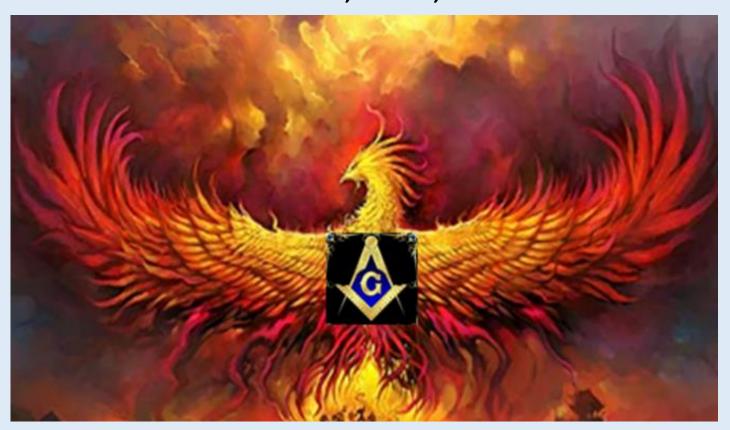
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Website: https://lodge124.freemason.org

Building and Room Rentals

https://www.facebook.com/groups/186319067527278





The Master's Thoughts

For this month our Journal and Trestleboard looks a little different. We hope you like it, and we would appreciate your feedback. Our monthly Journal and Trestleboard is purposely different than other lodges' Trestleboards which are often just a calendar and a few words of encouragement. After the 2018 Camp fire disaster and the worst of the Covid epidemic, our lodge began a quick and impressive recovery. However, many of our members had to move elsewhere to find work or housing. They wished to be in touch with our lodge, but their circumstances did not allow them to regularly attend our meetings or activities. Another group of members thought the lodge could not recover after the area was depopulated. In October 2021 the first issue of this publication was conceived and created to make these missing brothers feel informed, involved and proud to be members of Table Mountain Masonic lodge # 124. The summary of meeting and events, accompanied by pictures has helped our brothers, where-so-ever dispersed, to feel a part of our lodge, and of course has encouraged their return to our activities. Our members can enjoy the information and pictures and share the content with friends and family. Additionally, these digital Journal and Trestleboards will hopefully serve as a permanent record of this lodge's new history.

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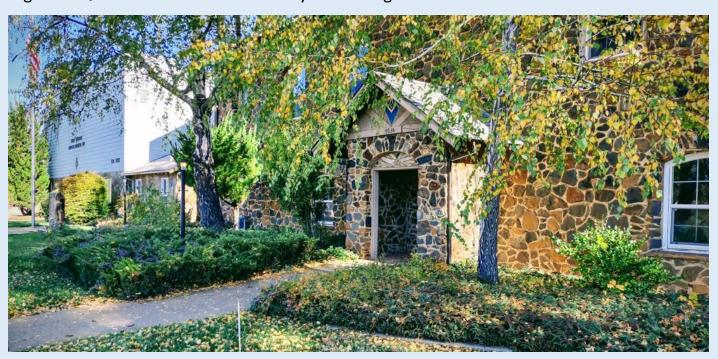
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Calendar of Events

Table Mountain Masonic Lodge

- May 6, Saturday, Stated Meeting starting at 2 pm. Lunch at 1 pm.
- May 8, Monday, Public Schools Employee and Student of the Year Award Ceremony at 6 pm.
- May 11, Thursday 6 pm, Lodge social
- May 13, Saturday, Paradise Chocolate Fest, from 10 am to 5 pm
- May 25, Thursday, Tentative 2nd Degree, starting at 6 pm.
- June 3, Saturday, Stated Meeting starting at 2 pm. Lunch at 1 pm.
- June 17, Saturday, Tentative 2nd Degree, starting at 2 pm.
- June 23, Englebrite Masonic funeral service, 11 am near Lincoln California.
- July 1, Saturday, Stated Meeting starting at 2 pm. Lunch at 1 pm.
- July 8, Saturday, Tentative 2nd Degree, starting at 2 pm.

Important Future Date

• Sept 16, Saturday, Outdoor Evening 3rd Degree, - Performed by the Scottish Rite/Shriners Past Masters Team at our outdoor mountain top lodge

Other local area Masonic Events

- **DeMolay** May 4 and 18 at 7 pm. Location to be announced.
- Rainbow May 1 and 15 at 7 pm at the Chico Masonic center.
- Ben Ali Shrine, Sacramento Ben Ali Shrine Ben Ali Shrine .
- Golden Feather Eastern Star (Paradise and Oroville) May 3, at 7:30 pm, in Oroville.
- Scottish Rite May 16. Stated Meeting and Dinner at 6 pm, at Sacramento Scottish Rite.
- 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

- Community Market at TMML, May 27, from 5pm to 8 pm.
- **Paradise Rod and Gun Club** Executive meeting first Wednesday of every month at 6 pm. General membership meeting third Thursday of every month 6:30 pm
- Butte County Family Health classes and counseling, Every Wed, 4:30 to 9 pm.
- PG&E and contractors are having regular work meetings in our facility.
- Intermittent use by various private parties. Check with Woody Nelson for available dates

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Building and Room Rentals

2023 Officers of Table Mountain Masonic Lodge

Master – Doug Campbell - Phone: 530-519-1695, dgcphd@gmail.com

Senior Warden – Juston Purcell (PM) - Phone: 530-845-4055, ishiyahu1@gmail.com

Junior Warden – Ehren Hawkins - Phone: 530-801-1254, ehrenhawkins@gmail.com

Secretary - Brian Grandfield (PM) - Phone: 530-864-6323, bgrandfield@gmail.com

Treasurer - Rich Gingery - Phone: 530-519-6089, wppcrich@comcast.net

Chaplain - Bob McElroy - Phone: 530-487-8466, bobnpegchico@gmail.com

Senior Deacon - Cole Hamilton - Phone: 858-342-5031, oldkingcreations@att.net

Junior Deacon – Justin (Oso) Harju - Phone: 928-274-3301, jdharju53@gmail.com

Senior Steward - Phil Howard - Phone: 530-873-1979, howardphil69@gmail.com

Junior Steward - Steve Kane - Phone: 530-990-3641, steveransgroup@yahoo.com

Marshall – Matt Sutter – Phone: 530-23-8722, mcsutter@gmail.com Tiler – Caleb Chinn (PM) - Phone: 530-877-2161, calebchinn@gmail.com

Committees and Liaisons

Investments Committee

Woody Nelson PM Caleb Chinn PM Steve Kane

Building Association

Phil Howard Frank Beard Oso Harju Woody Nelson - ex officio Doug Campbell - ex officio

Relief Committee

Woody Nelson PM Bob McElroy Brian Grandfield PM

Liaisons to the Masonic Youth Groups

Cole Hamilton Rich Gingery

Liaison to the Arts and Crafts Community (Community Market)

Cole Hamilton

Lodge Social Media representative

Cole Hamilton

Lodge Liaisons to Scouting

Charlie Haggarty PM Justin (Oso) Harju

Liaisons to the Schools

Rich Gingery Matt Sutter Woody Nelson MP Cole Hamilton

Liaisons to the Magalia Parks Association

Rich Gingery Phil Howard

April 1, 2023 – Stated Meeting

At 1 pm, just prior to our Saturday April 1 stated meeting, the brothers and guests met for a fabulous lunch of pulled pork, homemade baked beans, homemade coleslaw, refreshments and homemade desert provided and prepared by Bother Frank Beard. Everyone enjoyed their meal and especially the dessert. There was great attendance and as normal for our lodge there was lively conversation and lots of good humor. Please note that family and friends are always invited to our monthly luncheons and there is no cost.

Then at 2 pm, Table Mountain Masonic Lodge opened on the 1st degree of Masonry, for the purpose of conducting the April 2023 stated meeting business and for proficiency. Worshipful Doug Campbell presided, and despite some absences, all positions were filled. During the opening ceremony Worshipful



Campbell surprised the brethren by playing appropriate recorded music, for the officers march and for the opening of the Holy Book. The music was exceptionally well received.

Worshipful Campbell then asked the Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts to wait in the anteroom before proceeding to call up the lodge to the third degree for the purpose of examination. Brother Dale Alexander, assisted by Caleb Chinn (PM) completed an impressive proficiency. He was greatly complimented by the brethren. The lodge was then called down to the first degree, to conduct the stated meeting business. The Entered Apprentices and Fellowcrafts then returned to seats in the lodge.

Our Secretary Brian Grandfield (PM) read the minutes of the previous meeting. Our Treasurer, brother Rich Gingery reported that the account total had significantly increased due to our efforts to have past dues paid. However, the IRA gift that the lodge is to receive has not yet arrived from the investment firm. Brother Gingery said that the investment firm appears to be ignoring his emails and call. It was decided that we would get our attorney involved to resolve the situation.

Assured that sufficient funds were on hand Our Secretary Brian Grandfield (PM) presented the bills to be paid. All bills were paid. There were no new petitions or pending reports of investigation, a situation that has not occurred in sometime, but perhaps understandable since we just had a triple first degree.

Our Chaplain Brother Bob McElroy reported on those brothers and families that were ill, that were sent get well and thinking of you cards. Brother Caleb Chinn thanked the lodge for the card sent him and expressed how much he appreciated his lodge brothers thinking of him.

The Membership committee then reported that not all the registered letters had been mailed to those missing or significantly delinquent members that are being suspended. That will be completed and suspensions will be effective and Grand Lodge will be notified in May. Our secretary reported that those brothers having their dues remitted for hardship, have already been recorded as such in the Imember system and that Grand Lodge has been sent the appropriate report.

There was no report from the Relief Committee.

Worshipful Campbell then reminded the brothers that any of them could submit an article for the lodge Journal/Trestleboard, simply by emailing it to him. Also, that we are open to recommendations to improve this publication.

The Building Association trustees reported that they were making progress on the building maintenance and improvement plan. Also, that T ball little league was now using our large downstair lodge for indoor practice. Additionally, that the fellowship renting the lodge on Sundays has just renewed and paid for all of 2023. The Trustees also acknowledged that it had responsibility for the suitable repairs, maintenance and decorations that must be ready for the May 8, Monday, Public Schools Employee and Student of the Year Award Ceremony. It was explained that despite the progress on rentals, there were and are some unexpected expenses for tax preparation, legal documentation, property tax and building insurance. Therefore, the Building Association requested a transfer from the lodge to the association for those expenses. After some discussion among the brethren, a proposal was made and seconded to provide that money, and the brethren unanimously agree to do so. However, it was emphasized that building association needed to increase its income through rentals to reach financial self-sufficiency.

The investment committee reported that all necessary documents had been signed and submitted to our investment managers, and that they had received an investment report. The Worshipful Master requested that a summary of the investment report be presented at the next stated meeting, and then quarterly.

Since the vendor still has not replied to us concerning the proposed Camp Fire Memorial, the idea was put on hold until some alternate ideas can be developed and presented to the lodge.

The Worshipful Master again encouraged the brothers to share feedback about the lodge's Journal and Trestleboard, and also to considering submitting an article for the publication.

The Junior Warden presented an informal report on his food and refreshment fund. Next month he will provide a formal written report so we can proceed with replenishing the fund, sufficient for it to complete 2023.

Brother Hamilton, the Lodge's Liaison to the Ridge Arts and Crafts Community, reported that the last Community Markets to be held at the lodge, was surprisingly successful concerning there were other events ongoing at the same time. This is a positive indication for our Community Market program.

Brother Hamilton, who is also our Lodge Social Media representative, then shared that the Lodge's new Facebook page was almost ready.

Brother Harju, our Lodge's Liaison to the Boy Scouts being absent, there was no report on scouting.

Brother Gingery, one of the Lodge's Liaisons to the Masonic Youth Groups, gave a report on the recent DeMolay Devotion day trip to San Jose and the Great America amusement park.

Brother Gingery, one of the Lodge's Liaisons to the Magalia Parks Association, gave a brief update on the status the association's efforts to secure title to land where the park is currently situated.

Brothers Nelson (PM) and brother Gingery provide an update on the activities of the Shrine.

Our School Liaison committee reported that the school district was now in the process of selecting the awardees for 2023. However, there are those in the leadership of school district that do like our proposal for the lodge to add a financial incentive to the awards. Thus, it is unlikely that we will do the financial incentive. The committee requested the necessary funds from the lodge, to provide snacks and refreshments after the May 8 event. After some discussion, the brethren voted to provide the fundings.

Then the status of each current Entered Apprentice's progress on their proficiency was discussed, and each coach reported on their progress and their efforts to facilitate the process. Since the lodge will not need to do a 1st degree in May, the brethren discussed and eventually decided to move the 2nd degree conferral to Thursday May 25. This change will allow time for more Entered Apprentices to be ready to advance, thus have a 2nd degree with multiple candidates.

The lodge then returned to the difficult issue of raising the application (petitioning) fee and the annual dues. Several amounts and designs were discussed for the fee and dues. After a serious discussion, the brothers voted to raise the application fee to \$350, to cover the actual expenses of the degrees, food and refreshments, and supplies. The fee was made effective on April 1, except for those petitions currently in the possession of interested parties.

Then several possible annual dues amounts and formats were discussed. To move toward a more financially sustainable lodge, the brothers finally decided to raise dues for 2024 to \$250 plus per capita (Grand lodge's assessment per member). Brother Secretary was directed to appropriately notify all members that at the June Stated Meeting the raising of the dues would be finalized. The Worshipful Master expressed his thanks to the brothers for thoughtfully addressing and resolving this difficult subject. He also assured the brethren that no member on a fixed income would be suspended for not



being able to pay the new higher amount. He also assured the brothers that prior to 2024 an appropriate communication would be sent to all members explaining the rational for the increase, and their options.

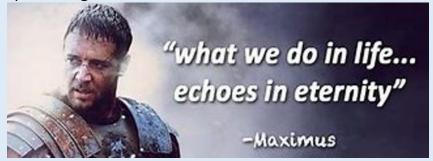
The calendar of events for the next 3 months was briefly reviewed, and there was discussion of other important events scheduled for later in the year.

The Worshipful Master reminded the brothers that the May 8 Public Schools Employee and Student of the Year Award Ceremony was an important event for the community, so it is important for all officers and as many members as possible to be present.

Due to the lateness of the hour, the Worshipful Master chose not to discuss proposed May 11 Lodge Social Event. Instead, he stated that he would provide information by email and text. He also chose to put off discussion of possible lodge fund raising events until the next stated meeting.

Our Senior Warden, Juston Purcell (PM) shared that he made contact with administration of Butte Community College, and that they were interested in establishing a relationship with our Lodge. Worshipful Campbell thanked the Senior Warden for his initiative and stated that he would discuss the matter further with him.

Our Junior Warden Ehren Hawkins thanked brother Cole Hamilton for volunteering to provide the May lunch. There being no further business, the lodge was then ritually closed in short form, brotherly love prevailing.



April 8 and 29 -- Community Markets

The Table Mountain Lodge Community Market is an initiative to provide a low cost opportunity for local craft and product producers to sell their creations in a safe and reliable environment. This twice a month weekend market began a few months ago, and has been a growing success. With the arrival of warmer weather, the market has moved to Saturday evening from 5pm to 8 pm. The next market will be May 27. Plans are in place to have more food vendors and musical performances as the weather continues to warm.

The participants have created a Facebook group page, to advertise the event and to update the public on dates and planned activities. There are currently 873 members of this Facebook group. The link to the group is below.

Table Mountain Masonic Lodge Community Market | Facebook



Table Mountain Masonic Lodge Community Market









Newest Lodge Decorations



A big thanks to Brother Frank Beard and his son Travis, and Brother Phil Howard for putting up our latest lodge wall decorations. The tapestry on the left says, "Meet upon the level, part upon the square". The picture over the door on the right door is a picture of a seafaring ship, in the time of King Solomon.

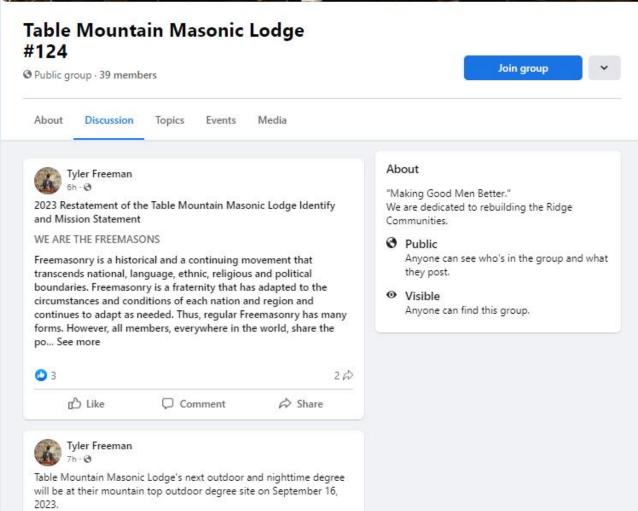
We also have a new celestial globe for the pillar. This one is lighted and is an accurate representation of the stars as compiled by NASA.



Table Mountain Masonic Lodge's New Facebook Group

Thanks to work of Brother Cole Hamilton, our lodge has a new Facebook group https://www.facebook.com/groups/186319067527278. After the 2018 Camp fire we lost control of our previous Facebook group page, and it was severely hacked. We were unable to regain control of it so instead we initiated a new page. If you are Facebook member, please join the group to receive news and photos about the lodge and its programs and activities.





Questions about Freemasonry that you might be asked: With answers

How big of an organization is Freemasonry

In addition to being the world's oldest operating fraternal organization, Freemasonry is also the world's largest such organization. Freemasonry exists in various forms all over the world, and has an estimated membership of around 6 million. Today, just in the US and Canada there are over 2 million Freemasons. Currently there is visible Freemasonry in 57 countries. Additionally, in those countries that officially banned it Freemasons still meet, risking imprisonment or execution. Totalitarian, repressive theocracies, or non-representative governments, their leaders fear Freemasonry.

Who is the supreme worldwide authority for Freemasonry?

There is <u>no</u> supreme worldwide authority for Freemasonry. There is no person, no organization and no secret council that directs or makes decisions for the worldwide communities of Freemasonry. Each lodge is self-governed by a set of elected officers, that for the most part, change every year. The lodges of a state or nation operate under the rules of a state Grand Lodge, which is self-governed by a set of elected officers drawn from the various lodges. Sometimes regularly, and at other times only occasionally, the leaders of various Grand Lodges will meet and discuss issues of mutual concern

Why do Freemasons refer to each other as brothers?

Freemasonry is known as the Brotherhood of Man, under the Fatherhood of God. Freemasonry is clearly a Brotherhood because it fits all reasonable and rational definitions of the word. Freemasonry is an alliance of men freely associating to accomplish specific common purposes. As Freemasons we seek to improve ourselves, by striving to be better men, better citizens, better husbands, better fathers and to guide and support our fellow Freemasons in the same efforts. We are united through our shared practice of Freemasonry's principles and ethics. As Freemasons we hold ourselves accountable to God, and also feel accountable to each other and to the fraternity. We feel kinship with all Freemasons on this common path, and thus we call each other brother, with true affection. We feel bound to each other and the fraternity through the common educational experience of our degrees. Through those degrees we are changed, made different from other men, and placed on the path of betterment. Only our Masonic brothers can fully understand what effects that process has on us. That shared experience is a special bond between all Freemasons. We therefore immediately recall that bond and have the feeling of brotherhood whenever we meet another Freemason anywhere in our travels, nationally or internationally.

Masonic Formation

Editor's Note: Some people still have the mistaken idea, that the moral teachings of Freemasonry, and specifically the use of operative mason's tools to represent moral teachings, was the creation of one of early Grand Lodges. This article further refutes that false idea.

The Geometry of Character: Considerations of the Moral Elements of Operative Masonry.

By Morgan Smith M.A. From the Jan/Feb 2023 Edition of Scottish Rite Journal https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHd6-vorQpQ

When the Roman architect Vitruvius penned the first written work on architecture in 27 BC title *De Architectura*, the named the branches of study he deemed necessary for a complete education of an architect, from music and medicine to astronomy and history. It is his discourse on the virtues of philosophical study, however, that is most prophetic of the moral underpinnings of later speculative Freemasonry. For Vitruvius, the architect's study of philosophy "renders him courteous, just and honest without avariciousness. This is very important, for no work can be rightly done without honesty and incorruptibility"¹. It remains one among several pieces of evidence that the moral training of the building has been with us from antiquity, that moral conduct was, even in the earliest days, a distinct piece of what Dr. Albert Mackey referred to as "the skeleton upon which was strung the living muscles, and tendons, and nerves of the speculative system"².

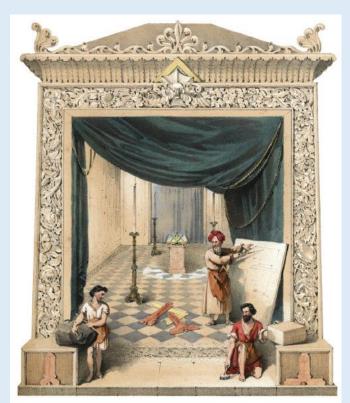


Illustration of Entered Apprentice Degree »

"THAT MORAL INSTRUCTION IS TIED TO THE IMAGERY OF CRAFT IS, PERHAPS, AN INEVITABILITY WHEN ONE CONSIDERS HOW THE ACT OF CRAFT HAS BEEN PERCEIVED AT ITS DEEPEST LEVEL ACROSS CULTURES OF BUILDERS."

Masonic tradition holds that speculative Masonry developed from a purely operative system. However, in contradiction to that, we now know that the groundwork for moral instruction seems to have existed from masonry's earliest operative forms — the result perhaps, of an almost universal perception across the ancient and medieval

world of the inherent link between craft and the creative spirit, humanity and divinity, geometry and creation. That moral instruction is tied to the imagery of craft is, perhaps, an inevitability when one considers how the act of craft has been perceived at its deepest level across cultures of builders. Most religious built temples, and high architecture in antiquity was inextricably bound to the elevation of the human spirit.

The ancient Greeks, wielding the tools of craft in philosophical imagery, used the square to refer to a man of supreme honor and virtue. Aristotle wrote:

"the square or cubical man would subject himself to the perfectly square test of justice and integrity"³

In this way Geometry, as the substructure of all forms of craft, acts as the foundation on which civilization and moral understanding is grown. Plato wrote in his Republic that Geometry lends itself to "Knowledge of the eternal" and "will draw the soul towards truth, and create the spirit of philosophy"⁴. It is therefore a certain deeper insight into the workings of the cosmos — including the harness of these laws in the effort of making and building — through which man reaches ever nearer to God and thus the highest moral potential of his own heart. The ancients doubtless recognized the special status held by arts and craft as unique among all human endeavors in that they most manifest the God-given creative instinct in man and, further, the moral capacity of the only creature made in his image. Christian writer and philosopher Dorothy Sayers, writing in the 1940's on the subject of man's creative will, put it well when she remarked, "if the common man is to enjoy the divinity of this humanity, he can come to it only in virtue and right of making"⁵.

The idea persisted into the Middle Ages, revealing itself in the moral instruction set within the framework of operative lodges. Similar to the instruction found in *De Architectura*, the 16th Schaw Statues, penned by William Schaw to Scottish stonemasons' lodges, implore brothers to do their jobs with virtuous character, charity, and brotherly goodwill, giving moral structure to operative duties. A number of Masonic historians, further, have placed the ancestral moral element of modern Freemasonry firmly within the earliest operative lodges. Writer of Masonic history Thomas Carr believed that the Old Masonic Constitutions were plainly moral in nature.

"In these Ancient Charges we get evidence of the commencement of Moral teaching and of Secret Signs. It is at once obvious that from very early times a high moral standard was inculcated by these Ancient Charges"⁶.

Some, such as W. M. Don Falconer, have argued that the ecclesiastical proximity of Mason's guilds lent itself to the development of moral precepts reflected in these original charges⁷. Quite tellingly, the chief architect of the Abbey of Saint-Nicaise de Reims in France, Hugues Libergier, was interred (1263 AD) with a stone slab (picture at the next page) that bore his own image, surrounded by his tools, a measuring rod, compass and square, and vested in what one scholar believes to be none other than the robes of an academic theologian⁸.

Editor's Note: Also, in the picture are two prominent pillars similar to those now found in Masonic lodges. Located near the Abbey of Saint-Nicaise de Reims at this time was a commandery of the Knights Templar. While this is not proof of a direct association between Freemasonry and the Knight Templars, it is additional evidence that operative masons and Templars were in close proximity, and therefore could have exchanged ideas, symbols and customs.

It can be said that true mastery of a thing requires self-mastery, that the built reflects the spirit of the builder as much as Creation reflects the mind of the Creator. It is not a coincidence that the symbolic foundation of Freemasonry should be those tools used in the act of craft and building – those very acts that make us human and connect us as creators directly to our higher Creator. Tipping his hat to the work of John Ruskin, Joseph Fort Newton once wrote that beauty in architecture "depends for its dignity upon arrangement received from the



Hugues Libergier's tombstone

human mind, expresses, while it reveals, the quality of the mind, whether it be noble or ignoble"⁹.

In this way, he echoes St. Bonaventure, who wrote as far back as the 13th century that the "mechanical arts" are a means by which the artisan inculcates his or her spirit into a created work and that a creation cannot be separated in this way from the creator ¹⁰.

Whether or not ancient and medieval builders wholly recognized the deeper significance of their need for a civilized code and moral standard ultimately may still be debated, but the Masonic tradition sheds much light: the order in creation parallels the order that must be cultivated in one's own heart through moral refinement and edification. As an orderly mind and conduct was deemed necessary for the proper construction of temples to the divine, so now does "geometry of character" bring the same structure, stability, illumination, and beauty to a man's life.



Villard de Honnecourt's medieval sketchbook (MS. Fr 1...

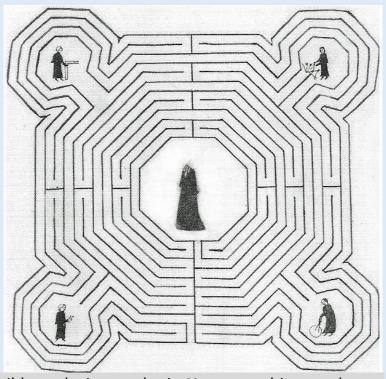
End Notes / References

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- 2. Albert Mackey, *The Symbolism of Freemasonry*. New York: Clark and Maynard, 1869. Page. 84. https://www.gutenberg.org/files/11937/11937-h.htm
- 3. Ibid, Page. 60.
- 4. Plato, *The Republic*. Benjamin Jowett, trans. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888. Page. 527. Allan Bloom's translation is at: https://www.marcellodibello.com/PHI171/resources/Plato-Republic-b4.pdf
- 5. Dorothy Sayers, The Mind of the Maker, San Francisco: Harper, 1987. Page. 527
- 6. Thomas Carr, *The Ritual of the Operative Free Masons*. Ann Arbor: Tyler Publishing Co., 1911.
- 7. Don Falconer, *The Square and Compass: In Search of Freemasonry*, Don Falconer, 1999. Chapter 4.
- 8. Claude Wenzler, *Cathedales Gothiqus -un Defi Medieval*. France: Editions Quest, 2018. Page 51.
- 9. Joseph Fort Newton, *The Builders*. Cedar Rapids: Torch Press, 1914, Page 8. https://www.gutenberg.org/files/19049/19049-h/19049-h.htm
- 10. Saint Bonaventure, *De Reductione Artium ad Theologiam*. Sister Emma Thérèse Healy. Trans. New York: The Franciscan Institute. 1955.
- 11. Joseph Fort Newton, *The Religion of Masonry*. Kingsport: Southern Publishers, Page 97.

Editor's Note: This editor feels obligated to note that some of referenced translations listed in the end notes are rather old and in most cases there are newer and more accurate translations available. *De Architecture* was last retranslated in 1999, although the cited translation is very enjoyable and is readily available online. There are several newer and more accurate translations of *The Republic* that are readily available, all of which reveal significant mistakes in the earlier translations. However, Sister Emma Thérèse Healy's 1955 translation of *De Reductione Artium ad Theologiam* is still the definitive translation. Albert Mackey's 1869 *The Symbolism of Freemasonry* is often cited and quoted, and for its time it was admirable work. However, today it cannot be considerate authoritative. It has been found to contain assumptions, flights of fancy, and straight forward factual errors. Joseph Fort Newton's *The Builders*, suffers from the same flaws.

Additional relevant information from the Editor:

A year after Hugues Libergier's death in 1263, work on the Abbey of Saint-Nicaise resumed. A few years later a labyrinth was installed in the main nave of the church. A distinctive aspect of it was the depictions of the master masons of the cathedral. Note the tools in their hands (square, level, and compass). The identities of these master masons are precisely known, because a survey of the labyrinth was done in 1640 by Canon Cocquault, and in 1779, just before its destruction, by Robin and Havé. These surveys also contained dates and descriptions of the masons' works. The labyrinth was destroyed in 1779 by the



priests who were supposedly disturbed by children playing on the it. However, this was also a period when Freemasonry was exceptionally active in France, and the Catholic church was opposing it. In 2009 the labyrinth returned to the church's nave in the form of a light projection (see below). **Note the Master Mason's and their tools are now <u>not</u> depicted.**



Masonic Formation

Freemasonry's Philosophy of Tolerance and the US. Constitution

The philosophy, ethics and morals of Freemasonry are an amalgamation of the complimentary parts of the Abrahamic religions, ancient Greek and Roman philosophies and the scientific, social and philosophical ideals of the Age of Enlightenment. Thus, Freemasonry was naturally attractive to the founding leaders of this nation who were polite and well-mannered devout Christians and Jews of various denominations, most of them schooled in the Greek and Roman philosophical classics, and by economic and social necessity tolerant of different traditions, and intolerant of totalitarianism and any efforts to centralize control or impose upon personal liberties.

The influence of Freemasonry on the founders of this nation resulted in the inclusion within our Constitution of a form of required governmental tolerance; specifically recognizing and tolerating the philosophical and religious diversity of our country, promoting freedom of thought and religion, the neutrality of the state on issues of religion, the freedom of speech and the freedom to associate as one pleases. These now sacred principles are the backbone of the U.S. constitution and our way of life. In a very real sense, Freemasonry is the philosophical foundation of the U.S. Constitution.

It is of course not surprising the totalitarian, fascists/socialists, and communist regimes, as well as theocracies oppose these concepts, and therefore fear Freemasonry. However, it is rather surprising that here in this nation dedicated to tolerance, we find that some leaders of churches and religions attack Freemasonry with arguments that are incompatible with the principles contained within the U. S. Constitution. For example: They falsely claim that Freemasonry's tolerance of other religions and philosophies equates to promulgating the idea that all religions and philosophies are equally right, thus undermining the belief that there is no one true faith. These critics don't seem to realize that they are de facto arguing against the government's constitutionally required religious neutrality, without which their churches and religions might not be allowed to exist. Also, by arguing that religious tolerance is de facto either support or opposition to a specific religion, those religious leaders are effectively encouraging a more divided and polarized society. Freemasonry tolerance of different religious viewpoints is not an endorsement of anything other than tolerance itself, and acting with tolerance is not a statement of opposition to anything other than intolerance.

Additionally, some of these religious leaders also criticize American Freemasonry for allowing men of different faiths to be members. They claim that activities and dialogue between members of different faiths results in a form of religious syncretism which leads to individual losing confidence in their faith, and becoming de facto adherents to a new faith which is a combination of religious traditions. They therefore claim that Freemasonry is a kind of new faith that undermines traditional churches and religions. Only thinly veiled in this argument is

their dislike for the American individual rights to freely associate and freedom of thought. Freemasonry is not a vehicle for religious syncretism for we do not allow and discussion of religious doctrine, activities or issues in our lodges. However, so paranoid are some of these religious leaders that they refuse to acknowledge our restrictions and that we encourage our members to practice their personal faith.

Some church leaders have argued that referencing any part of any ancient work of philosophy or religious treatise, other than the Holy Bible, is an effort to undermine the infallibility of the Holy Bible. Therefore, by extension they claim that Freemasonry's inclusion of the Cardinal Virtues and other elements from ancient philosophical works weakens their members' faith in the Holy Bible. This type of argument reflects totalitarianism at its worst. It is a fear of individuals freely thinking. It is the desire to restrict knowledge. It is the want of total control and absolute obedience. Please note that long ago, upon the rediscovery of many of the key Greek and Roman philosophical works, Christian scholars found immediate correlations to and support for the lessons of gospels. The resulting treatises by these Christian scholars have long been an integral part of higher level western Christian education.

Freemasonry is aligned, nearly perfectly, with the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. However, from my contacts with the type of religious leader or person; that I have described, it appears to me that the majority of them are convinced that they are the true blue Americans and faithful supporters of the Constitution. Many of them are equally convinced that Freemasonry represents a threat to the U.S. Constitution. As explained here, there no evidence or logic that supports their conclusions. All the evidence contradicts their conclusions.

Perhaps this is a case of *Vincible Ignorance*, which is a term to describe ignorance that a person could remove by applying reasonable diligence in the given set of circumstances. However, it is often difficult for people to apply reasonable diligence to the process of gathering knowledge and analyzing information. People do not always think or act rationally, or even seek to become rational. Emotionally satisfied with their behavior, they will reject both logic and evidence if it will lead to a painful realization.

Cognitive dissonance is a term to describe the state of having inconsistent thoughts, beliefs, or attitudes, especially as relating to behavioral and attitude. A person claiming that they believe in a set a principles, and then knowingly behaving contrary to those principles is one form of cognitive dissonance. The reasons for such behavior are often deep-seated inadequacies.

Perhaps Freemasonry will always have to deal with the type of people and the type of attacks that I have described. However numerous are the attacks, Freemasonry is strong enough to withstand them, and you are strong enough to calmly deal with them.

Table Mountain Masonic Lodge in California Freemason magazine

Our own Table Mountain Masonic Lodge # 124 was featured prominently in the recent Spring 2023 edition of California Freemason magazine. Brother Campbell was interviewed and provided input for a possible article in November 2022, but never heard anything about the author proceeding with the article. Below is the link to the entire article, and below that is a short excerpt of the parts that are relevant to Table Mountain Masonic Lodge.

https://californiafreemason.org/2023/03/27/masonic-rebirth-infiniteloop/?utm source=newsletter&utm medium=email&utm campaign=california freemason t he infinite loop of freemasonry&utm term=2023-03-31

INFINITE LOOP

THE HISTORY OF MASONRY IS A NEVER-ENDING CYCLE OF DEATHS AND REBIRTHS, ENDINGS AND BEGINNINGS. AS MASONS LOOK TO THE FUTURE, IT'S A REMINDER THAT EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN.

BY TONY GILBERT

The COVID era has been a unique opportunity for Masons, lodges, and the fraternity as a whole to reconsider what matters to them and meditate on their values. Accordingly, many of their priorities have changed. The lodges that are thriving post-pandemic are, largely, the ones that have adapted to a new reality. Says Douglas Campbell, master of Table Mountain № 124 in Paradise:

"It's a wonderful thing to have to reinvent yourself."

Douglas Campbell, Table Mountain No. 124

That's especially resonant for a fraternity whose central allegory revolves around new beginnings and rebirth. Rather than representing the end of Freemasonry in California, the pandemic and subsequent shutdown have afforded it something like a hard reset—an opportunity to start again. If COVID spelled the death of Freemasonry, it was also its opportunity for a Masonic rebirth.

A History of Change and Rebirth

As an institution, Masonry has been through the cycles of death and rebirth many times. The oft-repeated narrative about a slow and steady decline in lodge membership is both true and incomplete. In California, membership in the fraternity peaked in 1965, when 244,586 members belonged to the Grand Lodge of California. In 2020, that number was 44,586—a loss of precisely 200,000. Nationwide, membership in the fraternity has dropped by roughly 75 percent since 1959, according to NPR.

But Freemasonry is a particularly old tradition, and its late-20th century decline represents only a fraction of that history. In fact, membership has ebbed and flowed many times over the past 300 years. Over the long haul, periods of sharp decline and rapid growth are equally common. Indeed, the popularity of Masonry in the time of Washington and Franklin, in the late 18th century, was followed by a bust and precipitous drop in membership during the height of anti-Masonry in the first half of the 19th century, followed by a boom in the so-called "Golden Age of Fraternalism" only a generation later.

Throughout that history, Masonry has constantly adapted—from the comparatively raw form of the craft practiced in the 18th century, when lodges often met above taverns and helped birth revolutionary fervor, to the more muscular institution that overtook it, manifested in physical form in grand structures like the 333-foot George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Virginia, the life-sized bronze statue of Benjamin Franklin and George Washington outside the ornate Philadelphia Masonic Temple, or in the travertine marble-clad California Masonic Memorial Temple—which opened at the fraternity's postwar membership peak.

The tension between, on the one hand, Masonry's constant need to reinvent itself, and on the other, its open embrace of history and tradition is a big part of what makes it so dynamic. Ask any two members to define what Masonry is, and you might hear ten answers. Is it a charity? A spiritual outlet? A system of morality? A dinner club? A service organization? A philosophy? In short, yes—with a dozen asterisks and footnotes and nuances and subtle differences. Masonry has been described by the old chestnut about an enigma wrapped in a mystery inside a riddle. When it comes to reinventing itself, that amorphousness is perhaps its greatest asset.

In his 2018 book *The Square and the Tower*, author Niall Ferguson credits Freemasonry's longevity precisely to that ability to adapt. That, he writes, has historically been driven by its decentralization. As a result, Freemasonry has been practically impossible to extinguish. Instead, throughout its various life cycles, it keeps reforming in the image of its members. "Hierarchies housed in high towers have claimed to rule," he writes, "but often real power has resided in the networks in the town square below."

Rebirth in Paradise

There's perhaps no better illustration of Masonic rebirth than in Paradise, California, where in 2018, the Camp Fire destroyed 95 percent of the structures in town, killing 85 people. Amazingly, the stone lodge hall of Table Mountain No 124 survived the blaze. And in the months that followed the fire, when all but 10 percent of the town's population moved away, the lodge became a beacon to the battered town—one of the last surviving structures, and almost by default, a communal gathering place.

During the prolonged covid shutdown, the few remaining members of the lodge set about repairing the damaged hall—all the while leasing it out to various nonprofit groups and government agencies. In doing so, Campbell says, the very nature of the lodge changed to become more intimately tied to the community around it. "When we stepped forward and went to the schools, when we provided space for community services, for the school dance—the value of those events was bigger here than it would be in a larger or more secure community," Campbell explains. The need to give back gave the lodge a renewed sense of purpose. Even within the lodge, Table Mountain emerged as a group open to trying new things. Members experimented for the first time with holding large, outdoor degrees. They tried meeting on weekends.

"We reinvented ourselves in a real way. I think we're transforming Masonry."

Douglas Campbell, Table Mountain No. 124

For Campbell and others in the region, the result has been a new brand of Freemasonry. And it's already started to draw new members in—and bring some old ones back. Alan Rellaford is one of them. A volunteer chaplain at Enloe Hospital in Chico, about 15 miles from Paradise, Rellaford had grown up with Masonry for most of his life, back to his initiation in DeMolay at age 13. At 24, he joined Table Mountain № 124. But work, moving, and travel called him away. In 1995, a decade after being initiated, he let his annual membership dues lapse.

That stayed the case for years. But in many ways, he never completely lost touch with Masonry. While Rellaford might not have held a dues card in his wallet in the intervening years, he stayed connected with several friends from the lodge, and espoused the kind of values Masons are charged to demonstrate outside the lodge room. In the aftermath of the fire, Rellaford worked with an interfaith group that assists the suddenly enormous population of homeless and marginally housed people in Chico, providing basic necessities like clothes, water, and the simple dignity of a friendly conversation.

Like so many others, Rellaford was deeply moved by the community's mobilization—including the lodge's—throughout the fire and then the pandemic. So, in 2021, after a 26-year gap, Rellaford renewed his Masonic affiliation. "I missed the camaraderie, the ritual, the greater connection," Rellaford says. "It's truly a fraternal and lifelong bond. It isn't just a club. We really live those principles."

Read the Latest Issue! - California Freemason Magazine



International Freemasonry

The Rite of Baldwyn

In this journal's previous Masonic Formation articles, we redefined **Freemasonry as a worldwide movement consisting of many different forms and variations, but all with a common philosophical foundation**. As evidence of that, we have discussed many forms of Freemasonry, known as Rites, found in many different countries. In this article we will discuss The *Rite of Baldwyn*, sometimes referred to as the Rite of the Seven Degrees but also known as the Baldwyn Encampment or Camp of Baldwyn. It is practiced only in Bristol, UK, and in one similarly specific area in Australia. This Rite is considered regular in both the UK and Australia.

Today the Baldwyn Rite represents itself as "A Cohesive Remnant of Pre-1813 Freemasonry"... before they "de-Christianized the rituals of Craft Freemasonry in England". This is a rather unique and combative perspective. The Rite of Baldwyn seems to have developed in or around Bristol, a very old sea port and population center in the southwest of England. It has relatively easy and short sea access to and from France and Ireland, and as such has a rich maritime history. Perhaps because of its history as an entry point for foreign visitors and goods, the people of this city have long been known for their independent attitude. Bristol was also a starting place for early voyages of exploration to the New World. On a ship out of Bristol in 1497, John Cabot, a Venetian, became the first European to land on mainland North America. In 1499, William Weston, a Bristol merchant, was the first Englishman to lead an exploration to North America. The river Avon also enters the Irish sea at Bristol.

The Rite or Camp of Baldwyn takes its name from the early European crusader kings of the *Kingdom of Jerusalem*. After the conquest of Jerusalem in 1099, the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem was established, and Godfrey de Bouillon became the first king (though he used the title of "Defender of the Holy Sepulcher" rather than that of "king"). After his death the following year, the crown was passed to his brother, Baldwyn. After his death in 1118, the mantle of the king was placed on a cousin, also named Baldwyn, and it was Baldwyn II who played an important role in the formation of the *Knights Templar* and their residence in the Stables of Solomon. It is this supposed or real connection to the Knights Templar that plays a prominent role in the claimed history of this Rite. Specifically, it has long been claimed by some that the Baldwyn Encampment is the lineal successor of actual historical Knights Templar.

The lack of documentation and the debate over the reliability of existing documents are common challenges in doing historical research about Freemasonry. Establishing a reliable history, prior to 1850, of any form or Rite of Freemasonry is difficult and grows with difficulty the farther one looks back in time. There will always be gaps in our knowledge of

Freemasonry's history, and as a result there will always be spirited debates about what is the true story or true origins of anything in Freemasonry.

Concerning the question of whether the connection between Freemasonry and the historical Knight Templar is either historical fact or merely symbolic; until now we have carefully avoided this controversy and we mention it here only for the purpose of presenting the continuing mystery of the beginnings of the Rite of Baldwyn. Please note that this author is not taking sides on this issue.

It is exceptionally difficult to establish the history of the Rite of Baldwyn because there is very little documentation and there are many claims that are yet unsubstantiated. One, as yet unsubstantiated claim is that the oldest records of this Rite were burned during the Stuart Rebellion (1745-1746) to protect its members. Currently the oldest documentation that has been found concerning a Baldwyn Encampment is a January 1772 mention, in the *Bristol Journal*, of a meeting of *Knights Templar* at the Rose and Crown Inn in Bristol England. As it appears to be a casual reference to the meeting, some researchers have concluded that the readers must have been familiar with the organization, therefore this couldn't have been their first meeting. Bristol has long been associated with the Knight Templar. A preceptory of Knight Templar was established there in the 12th century. They constructed a church consisting of a round structure, as they did in other locations. In 1313 the Knights Hospitaller acquired the church, following the suppression of the Templars, only to lose it in 1540.

The earliest claim of a relationship between Freemasonry and the Crusaders is a 1737 oration by a Chevalier Ramsay, who claimed that European Freemasonry came about from an interaction between masons and the Knights Hospitaller. This was repeated in the Berne manuscript, written in French between 1740 and 1744. Ramsay was supposedly initiated as a Templar into the non-Masonic French society in Paris, using the name *Ordre du Temple* around 1710. Ramsay was later initiated into Freemasonry around 1730. Since Ramsay's supposed Templar status predated his relationship with Freemasonry by some 20 years, some think he is the likely person who introduced Templarism into Freemasonry.

Documentation shows that In 1779 the High Knights Templar of Ireland Lodge, Kilwinning, obtained a charter from Mother Lodge Kilwinning in Scotland. That Irish lodge then began to grant dispensations to other lodges to confer the Knights Templar Degree. This event is significant for two reasons. First, Bristol is short sea trip from Ireland and the Rite of Baldwyn has many elements that are similar to Irish Freemasonry. Second, the documentation concerning a Baldwyn Encampment dated January 1772, predates by seven years, the High Knights Templar of Ireland Lodge receiving their charter.

Sometime around 1790 the Early Grand Encampment of Ireland was formed, which began to warrant Templar Lodges, and evolved into the Supreme Grand Encampment in 1836. The Early Grand Encampment chartered several Scottish "encampments", one of which having been

chartered in 1805 as the "Edinburgh Encampment No. 31", then became the "Grand Assembly of Knights Templar in Edinburgh". It seems that the Templar degree had filtered into the lodges of the Ancients from Ireland about 1780, and was recorded at York about the same time. The most well-known document associated with the Baldwyn Encampment is the 1780 Charter of Compact that was established when the existing Templar group constituted themselves as the "Supreme Grand and Royal Encampment of Knights Templar of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitallers, and Knights of Malta etc." Today they still maintain that they are "Supreme". All this only serves to show that the Baldwyn Encampment "might be", as they claim, the oldest existing Templar group associated with Freemasonry.

As currently structured the Rite is an amalgamation of separate Masonic bodies and degrees including the Rose Croix, Knights Templar, and Holy Royal Arch. It is described as being seven degrees; however, each of the seven degrees could also be described as a body of its own.

1st Degree - Craft Freemasonry:

- Entered Apprentice
- Fellowcraft
- Master Mason

2nd Degree – Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch

• Camp of Baldwyn (or Five Royal Orders of Knighthood)

3rd Degree - Knights of the Nine Elected Masters

4th Degree - The Ancient Order of Scots Knights Grand Architect

- Order of Scots Knights Grand Architect
- Order of Scots Knights of Kilwinning

5th Degree - Knights of the East, the Sword, and Eagle

6th Degree - Knights of St John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes, and Malta

- Knights of St John of Jerusalem (or Knights of Malta)
- Knights Templar

7th Degree - Knights of the Rose Croix of Mount Carmel

The Royal Arch degree worked in the Baldwyn Encampment is unique in England and has rituals closer to those found in the US or in Continental Europe. The 3rd , 4th , and 5th are said to be unique to the Baldwyn Rite, but their names are similar of degrees worked in the Scottish Rite and Allied Masonic Degrees. The 6th degree as conferred by the Baldwyn Encampment falls under the authority of the Great Priory of England and Wales. The final degree of the Baldwyn Rite is the Knight of the Rose Croix of Mount Carmel is worked in the Bristol Chapter of Rose Croix under the authority of the Supreme Council of the Ancient & Accepted Rite of England and Wales. It is curious to note that if a candidate of the Baldwyn Rite already has gone through the Templar, Malta, and Rose Croix degrees elsewhere, he is considered a full member of the Rite. The rituals of the Baldwyn Rite, particularly the orders of knighthood, are not copied and are jealously guarded. They operate out of Freemason's Hall in Bristol and it is by invitation only.

Quotes suitable for Masonic Reflection

Our character determines our destiny

"Our character determines our destiny," is a quote attributed to the ancient Greek philosopher, Heraclitus. This quote implies that destiny, or fate, is not a predetermined outside force, but that one's future, or destiny, is determined by his own inner character.

Good character is not formed in a week or a month. It is created little by little, day by day. Protracted and patient effort is needed to develop good character.

Heraclitus was a Greek philosopher who was active around 500 B.C., and is known as the last of the Ionian philosophers. Little is known about his life and family, beyond his birthplace, which is believed to be Ephesus.

The content of your character is your choice. Day by day, what you choose, what you think and what you do is who you become.

His work is notable for obscurity and riddles. Heraclitus views included the unity of opposites, and universal flux, a philosophy that theorizes that all things in the universe are constantly changing. He is also considered to be the first Western philosopher to search for moral applications for his philosophies.

Misc.

Get your Table Mountain Masonic Lodge # 124 Challenge Coin

Each coin comes in a round, transparent, smooth, strong plastic case to protect the surface from damage.

To obtain one of these please contact Doug Campbell at **530-519-1695**, or email <u>paradisefreemasons@gmail.com</u>

The cost is \$20

Cash or check is acceptable.

Any profit will go to Table Mountain

Masonic Lodge #124 general fund.



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

Link to Building and Room Rentals

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

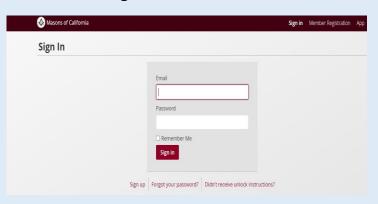
The 150 History of Table Mountain Masonic Lodge # 124

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.



This will be the page you see after signing in.

There will be a notice 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 Dues card. The new dues card does not have to be signed by the lodge secretary.



There is also an 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 Lodge's website - https://lodge124.freemason.org

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

DeMolay - 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

Golden Feather Chapter Eastern Star – Peg McElroy, Secretary

email bobnpegchico@gmail.com

THE MISSION OF TABLE MOUNTAIN MASONIC LODGE

- 1. To help good men become better men through the practice of Freemasonry's principles and ethics.
- 2. To assist and provide relief to our members, our members' family and those of the greater Masonic community in need of support and assistance.
- 3. To support our public schools and local charitable organizations, and in general contribute to efforts to alleviate the suffering of those in need.
- 4. We seek to advance and spread Masonic principles and ethics throughout our local communities by being examples worthy of emulation by the general public.