



From The Chair



Message

Brethren,

We have been quite active in the district this spring. At our March regular meeting we raised Bro. Richard Stellar to the sublime degree of a Master Mason. Congratulations to Richard for his being raised and his perfect work.

As well at our March regular meeting we balloted on Bro. Miodrag Slepcev and Bro. Joseph Dixon for affiliation. Welcome to our new members: we look forward to sitting with you in lodge! As well, Mr. Bryan Keith Thomson was balloted on and accepted as a candidate. I must express a personal excitement for his upcoming initiation, which will be held in May.

In March we were the official visitors at West Gate lodge for their official visit from the District Deputy Grand Master. We had a great turnout with 13 members attending, which was met by applause from the members of West Gate.

We also hosted the third District Education Event with a presentation by our own W. Bro. Robert Lund with a very large attendance, thanks to Rob for a great evening.

At our Emergent Meeting in April, we presented Bro. Phil Horrigan with the badge of his office (the office outside of

the Lodge) - a nice new Chef's jacket with "Kilwinning 565" emblazoned on it. No more food-stains on that dress shirt!

At our regular meeting in April we will host Ionic lodge and conduct a second degree for Bro. Trevor Thelwell, W. Bro. George Thelwell's son. Please plan to come out to support Trevor and see W Bro. George assume the chair of Senior Warden for the evening.



As always, thanks to our fabulous officers and members for making Kilwinning so strong in our district.

W. Bro. Alex Thomson



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Journey by thatgamecompany

I came across this game for the Playstation 3 (yes I play video games). It had a very brief description: a journey of discovery in beautiful landscapes. Not much to go on, but it intrigued me and only cost \$15, so I downloaded it.

There were no instructions and no objectives provided. I soon discovered that these were not necessary. The objective was obvious - to reach a distant mountain from which a light shone to the sky. The landscapes turned out to be rolling desert and snowy mountains dotted with archaeological ruins - but the starkness had its beauty.

It turned out to be a very relaxing experience, easy at first, but gradually became a little more difficult, due to obstacles and forces working trying to prevent one from reaching the objective.

Some time into the game, it dawned on me that this was a very spiritual experience, symbolic of any spiritual journey. Along the way, one discovers symbols, glyphs, and shrines, and one learns about

the origin of the ruins. One also picks up entities which prove to be guides and, if there is an Internet connection, one will discover a fellow traveler who will work together to solve some problems. The two travelers will also provide each other with energy. Losing a fellow traveler leaves one with a sense of loss.



The whole experience is uplifting, the environment and the music help with creating a sense of awe and magic. Reaching the objective was, I found, a disappointment. To me, it was all about the journey.



An Ear of Corn Article by Rob Lund

Fellowcraft Masons will recognize the following quote from Judges 12:

“And the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and went northward, and said unto Jephthah, Wherefore passedst thou over to fight against the children of Ammon, and didst not call us to go with thee? we will burn thine house upon thee with fire.

And Jephthah said unto them, I and my people were at great strife with the children of Ammon; and when I called you, ye delivered me not out of their hands.

And when I saw that ye delivered me not, I put my life in my

hands, and passed over against the children of Ammon, and the LORD delivered them into my hand: wherefore then are ye come up unto me this day, to fight against me?

Then Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim: and the men of Gilead smote Ephraim, because they said, Ye Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim among the Ephraimites, and among the Manassites.

And the Gileadites took the passages of Jordan before the Ephraimites: and it was so, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead said unto him, Art thou an Ephraimite? If he said, Nay;

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Did you know.....?

Sir John Joseph Caldwell Abbot, Viscount Richard Bedford Bennett, Sir Robert Laird Borden, Sir Mackenzie Bowell, John George Diefenbaker, Sir John Alexander MacDonald. I'm sure that you recognize some, or all, of these names. These men have at least two things in common: the first was that they were all Prime Ministers of Canada at one time or another, some as early as 1867. John A MacDonald had two terms in office but were not successive terms (1867-1873 and 1878-1891 when he died in office); the second thing that they had in common was, of course, that they were all Freemasons.



Then said they unto him, Say now Shibboleth: and he said Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan: and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand."

For a long time, I was puzzled as to why this story would be included in our ritual. After reading more about Jephthah, I began to see the moral lesson that the story alludes to. To me, this story teaches me to be patient and tolerant in times of adversity and difficulty. It also tells me that there comes a time when a problem has to be dealt with, and dealt with thoroughly.

Jephthah gives us another moral lesson, similar to that of Hiram Abif, regarding the keeping of an oath, no matter what it costs us. In Judges 11, Jephthah vowed to God that if the Lord would grant him victory over the evil Ammonites, the first thing that came out to meet him upon his return home, would be Jehovah's, and/or it would be offered as a burnt sacrifice. When he arrived home, his daughter came out to greet him. He was devastated, but eventually he fulfilled the vow.

Let us now look at the word *Shibboleth* mentioned in the passage above.

The term originates from the Hebrew word "shibólet" (שִׁבּוֹלֵת), which, according to Wikipedia, literally means the part of a plant containing grains, such as an ear of corn or a stalk of grain or, in different contexts, "stream, torrent". Fellowcraft Masons will know the significance of both meanings.

The modern usage of this word derives from the account above.

A **shibboleth**, according to Wikipedia, is a custom, principle, or belief, distinguishing a particular class or group of people, especially a long-standing one regarded as outmoded or no longer important. It usually refers to features of language, and particularly to a word whose pronunciation identifies its speaker as being a member or *not* a member, of a particular group.

In numerous cases of conflict between groups speaking different languages or dialects, one side used shibboleths in a way similar to the above-mentioned Biblical use, i.e., to discover hiding members of the opposing group. Modern researchers use the term "shibboleth" for all such usages, whether or not the people involved were using it themselves.

Today, in the (American) English language, a shibboleth also has a wider meaning, referring to any insider word or phrase that can be used to distinguish members of a group from outsiders - even when not used by a hostile other group. The word is less well

recognized in British English. It is also sometimes used in a broader sense to mean jargon, the proper use of which identifies speakers as members of a particular group or subculture.

"Cultural touchstones and shared experience can also be shibboleths of a sort. For example, people about the same age who are from the same nation tend to have the same memories of popular songs, television shows, and events from their formative years. One-hit wonders prove particularly effective. Much the same is true of alumni of a particular school, veterans of military service, and other groups. Discussing such memories is a common way of bonding. Insider-jokes can be a similar type of shared-experience shibboleth."

Shibboleths have been used by different subcultures throughout the world at different times. Regional differences, levels of expertise, and computer programming are several forms that shibboleths have taken. For example, during the Battle of the Bulge, American soldiers used knowledge of baseball to determine if others were fellow Americans or if they were German infiltrators in American uniform. The Dutch used the name of the port town Scheveningen as a shibboleth to tell Germans from the Dutch

("Sch" in Dutch is the sound "sk", while in German it is "sh").

Also during World War II, some US soldiers in the Pacific theatre used the word "lollapalooza" as a shibboleth to verbally test people who were hiding and unidentified, on the premise that Japanese people often pronounce the letter R as L because the rolling R sound is considered rude in Japan, and that the word is an American colloquialism that even a foreign person fairly well-versed in American English would probably mispronounce and/or be unfamiliar with. Japanese spies would often approach



JEPHTHAH MEETS HIS DAUGHTER.

checkpoints posing as American or Filipino military personnel. A shibboleth such as "lollapalooza" would be used by the sentry, who, if the first two syllables come back as *rorra*, would "open fire without waiting to hear the remainder".

The Hebrew origin of the word *shibboleth*, meaning "ear of corn", provides us with an allusion to growth. Of course, in Masonry this would indicate intellectual growth and spiritual growth, nurtured by the waters of intellectual and spiritual enlightenment, and should always be borne in mind during the Fellowcraft degree.

References:

- King James Bible
- Wikipedia



Links

Lodge Website: torontofreemasons.com

District Website: www.torontowestmasons.com

Grand Lodge: www.grandlodge.on.ca

Electric Lighting in ancient Times?

Article by W. Bro. Rob Lund

We know that electricity was used in ancient times – at least 2000 years ago. This has been evidenced by the discovery of ancient batteries- notably the Baghdad batteries (picture below), discovered in the 1930's in what is now Iraq. What were these electric batteries used for? The general consensus is that they were used for electroplating, and there is some evidence to support this conclusion. But, could these batteries have been used for anything else, such as lighting? Possibly. While there is no hard evidence to support the idea, there are some things to consider.



Interestingly, ancient Egyptian paintings, which show articles used in everyday life, seldom illustrate torches or lamps. In addition, freshly discovered tombs and other monuments which are richly illustrated with pictures and writing, and

were cut off from natural light, showed no traces of soot or other combustible materials, which would be the residue from lamps or torches. Good light would have been required to work in the deep passages where intricate work could not have been carried out in the feeble light of lamps or torches. The use of lamps or torches would also have created problems with the supply of fresh air for the workers, who would have had to spend long hours in these recesses. Using critically aligned mirrors to direct the light of the constantly moving sun into these areas would have been impractical.

We know that there were recipes for creating glass in ancient times, which could have been used to create light bulbs. The mysterious carvings in the Temple of Hathor, in the Dendera Temple complex (see picture) strongly suggests some kind of light-producing device, connected by cable to some energy source. See a reconstructed working model:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7eggMMiqL0o>

The historian Lucian reported on an ancient Syrian goddess who wore a “stone” on her head, called a lamp, which shone at night, enabling the whole temple to be filled with light. The “stone” could be some sort of carbon which could be used to create an arc light.

St. Augustine, in the 3rd century AD, reported that in Egypt there



was at that time, and before, “a Temple of Venus, in which a lamp burns so strongly in the open air that no storm or rain extinguishes it”, and that the “asbestos stone, which has no fire of its own, and yet, when it has received fire, blazes so fiercely with a fire not its own that it cannot be quenched”. A couple of centuries later, Arculfus reported that, in the Church of the Ascension, on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem, eight lamps shone out of the windows that were so bright as to not only illuminate the area around the summit of the mount but also the steps which led up to Jerusalem on the opposite side of the Valley Josaphat. Candles or oil lamps could never have created this kind of brightness, and the priests who looked after them kept their technology a secret.

We should consider the words of H. P Blavatsky, as written in *Isis Unveiled*: “Whenever, in the pride of some new discovery, we throw a look into the past, we find, to our dismay, certain vestiges which indicate the possibility, if not the certainty, that the alleged discovery was not totally unknown to the ancients. It is generally asserted that neither the early inhabitants of the Mosaic times, nor even the more civilized nations of the Ptolemaic period were acquainted with electricity. If we remain undisturbed in this opinion, it is not for the lack of proofs to the contrary”.



Upcoming Events

- Sat. 14th—Wardens Association-Peel Lodge
- Sat. 14th—Connaught Lodge 100 anniversary
- Mon. 23rd—Official Visit—Chinquacousy 738
- Mon. 30—District Meeting –Brampton
- May 6th—Sankey Lecture Series—Brock University
- May 17th—Scottish Rite-Master Masons night