

# Ashlar Lodge No. 98 Free and Accepted Masons

St. Augustine, FL

Chartered January 18, A.D. 1888, A.L. 5888

904-826-4086



March, 2023



## STATED COMMUNICATIONS

Masonic Temple

4 Martin Luther King Blvd.

St. Augustine, FL

1<sup>ST</sup> & 3<sup>RD</sup> Thursdays

Meal – 6:30 p.m.

Stated Communication — 7:30 p.m.

## DEGREE WORK AND PRACTICE

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays

## CHARITY OF THE MONTH

Fraternal Order of Eagles/K9 for  
Warriors

## FROM THE EAST

Hello my Brothers,

I want to start this month by thanking Brother Freddy Touzet, owner of Mr. T's of St Augustine for loaning us mobile refrigerator and freezer trailers to store the meals we distributed to students in need in the St Johns County School District. Brother Freddy is always available when we call him, and helps the lodge with our different needs. You can find him on Facebook at "<https://www.facebook.com/mrtstaug/>" or call him at 904-824-1919 if you need his services.

I'd also like to thank RW Dwight Wilkes and all the Brothers who helped pickup and drop off the food this December. It is a long time coming, but know I appreciate you taking the time to help others.

Five of our Ashlar Brothers visited Cabul Lodge on 2/9 and brought back a prize. Hopefully it will still be at Ashlar for a while, so you can see it.

I plan to recognize First Responders in March for their hard work and dedication. I am also going to be visiting Bunnell Lodge on Tuesday, March 21 and then the District Association Meeting at Ashlar Lodge on Wednesday March 22. I hope you will join me as we continue traveling throughout the District.

In addition, I am looking into opportunities for us to come together as brothers to help an older brother, a widow and/or a local nonprofit in April or May, so stay tuned.

Fraternally,  
Brother Tom Torretta

# March 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 <b>RAIN- BOW 7:00 PM</b>	2 <b>STAT- ED COMM 6:30 PM</b>	3	4
5	6 <b>OES</b>	7	8 District Instruction Palatka No. 34 6:30 pm	9	10	11
12	13	14 <b>Shrine Club 7:00 pm</b>	15 <b>RAIN- BOW 7:00 PM</b>	2 <b>STAT- ED COMM 6:30 PM</b>	17	18 <b>Open Books Pine- land 86 9AM -NOON</b>
19	20	21 <b>York Rite Chap- ter/Council 6:30 pm</b>	22 Dist. Assn. Ashlar No. 98 6:30 pm	23 <b>LODGE INSTRUC- TION TBD</b>	24 <b>Fried Chicken, Shrine Club</b>	25
26	27	28 <b>York Rite Command- ery 6:30 pm</b>	29	30	31	

## FROM THE WEST

Our annual Sweethearts Luncheon for 2023 went very well. There were 21 ladies in attendance and all of them expressed how much they enjoyed it and appreciated the Lodge for continuing to do this and look forward to it again next year. They also gave many compliments how good their meals were, and the desserts, and being served by the Brethren.

I personally want to think the Lodge and the Brothers of Ashlar Lodge No. 98 for their willingness to participate in this long-standing tradition by the Lodge, and to make these ladies feel special and appreciated, especially so close to the Valentine's Day holiday. And thanks to Brothers Kenny Cowperthwaite, Dick Ames, and Mike Marra from the Shrine club and the Brothers from Ashlar Lodge: our Worshipful Master, Tom Torretta, M. W. Bob Harry, R. W. Oscar Patterson, R. W. Dwight Wilkes, W. Jim Carrick, Justin, Buxton, Wayne Lindsey, Patrick McGee, and Dominic Perez. And, of course. Bro. Ed Manfredi and his accordion for the entertainment.

A special thank you also to the young ladies from Rainbow Assembly No. 42 for their assistance.

Looking forward, we will be having a Charity Committee meeting shortly to complete the calendar for this year for our monthly charities and other charity request and a proposed budget.

Terrell W Jones, S. W.

# April 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 OES	4	5 RAIN-BOW 7 PM	6 STAT-ED COMM 6:30 PM	7	8
9	10	11 SHRINE CLUB 7:00 pm	12 District In- struction Lake No. 72 6:30 pm	13	14	15
16	17 OES	18 YORK RITE CHAP- TER/ COUNCIL 6:30 PM	19 RAIN- BOW 7 pm Open Books Pineland No. 86 6-9pm	20 Dark Visit to Pine- land No. 86 6:30 pm	21	22
23/30	24	25 YORK RITE COM- MANDERY 6:30 PM	26 Dist. Assn. Middleburg No. 107 6:30 pm 6: 30 pm	27 Lodge Instruc- tion TBA	28 Fried Chicken Shrine Club	

## From the South J.W. G. Maultsby COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Community involvement by the Masonic Fraternity is one of the best ways to practice the teachings of our Craft. It not only will reinforce the integrity of our Fraternity, but it will also lend credibility to the fact that the members of the Masonic Fraternity are caring and productive members within their respective communities.

There are many and varied ways in which our Craft does and can get involved in our respective communities for the betterment of mankind. A few ways we as Masons can become involved:

**CHARITY** - Such charities may include: distributing clothing to underprivileged children; providing monetary contributions to a worthy community project; working closely with a church/churches to stay informed of destitute persons in the community who need assistance and by giving attention to the sick, aged, and shut-ins in our community, etc.

**COMMUNITY PROJECTS** - Much good can be realized for the Masonic Fraternity through involvement in various community projects such as promotion of cultural events like concerts, rodeos, fairs, flower shows, festivals, band promotions, homecoming celebrations, 4-H projects. By sponsorship of a community-wide Americanism program, and through the use of various patriotic groups to emphasize the importance of our American heritage.

**AID TO THE HANDICAPPED** - By providing financial assistance for eye examinations, reading materials to shut-ins, radios, typewriters, transportation, etc.

**YOUTH ACTIVITIES** - Sponsor, recognize and/or support the youth groups in your community such as DeMolay, Rainbow Girls, Job's Daughters, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, YMCA, YWCA, 4-H Groups, Future Farmers, Future Homemakers, Juvenile Bands, Athletic Teams, Camps, group contests, handicraft and hobbies. Hold a Father and Son, Mother and Daughter Meeting; observe Youth Week, Boys Week, Boy Scout/Girl Scout Anniversary Week, etc.

## **LODGE OFFICERS 2022**

### **Worshipful Master**

**Thomas Torretta      602-881-3206**

### **Senior Warden**

**Terrell Jones      904-669-5249**

### **Junior Warden**

**George Maulsby      703-956-0228**

### **Secretary**

**Troy Usina      904-451-5283**

### **Treasurer**

**Oscar Patterson III      904-955-9175**

### **Senior Deacon**

**Mark Williams      904-669-9694**

### **Junior Deacon**

**Darrell Lindsey      904-814-7158**

### **Chaplain**

**Robert Harry, Jr.      904-806-1255**

### **Tyler**

**Russell Sellers      512-801-7831**

## **OTHER 11th MASONIC DISTRICT LODGES**

### **Palatka No. 34**

Palatka—2nd & 4th Mondays

### **Lake No. 72**

Crescent City—1st & 3rd Mondays

### **Pineland No. 86**

Peniel—1st & 3rd Thursdays

### **Melrose No 89**

Keystone Heights—2nd & 4th Tuesdays

### **Middleburg No. 107**

Middleburg—1st & 3rd Tuesdays

### **Cabul No. 116**

Green Cove Springs—2nd & 4th Thursdays

### **Hastings No. 183**

Hastings—2nd & 4th Tuesdays

### **Bunnell No. 200**

Bunnell—1st and 3rd Tuesdays

## **FRATERNAL NOTICES AND DATES**

O.E.S. Chapter #12.....1st & 3rd  
Mondays

Rainbow Assembly #42.....1st & 3rd  
Wednesdays

York Rite Bodies.....3rd & 4th  
Tuesdays

## Making a Mason

Elias Ashmole was born in 1617. He was an antiquary, politician, soldier, astrologer, and alchemist. He was also a founding fellow of the British Royal Society. He studied and worked at Oxford University. He was admitted to the Middle Temple (the bar) in London in 1657, but having married a rich widow, he didn't practiced law. On 16 October 1646 he wrote in his diary: "4:30 p.m., I was made a Free-Mason at Warrington in Lancashire with Col. Henry Mainwaring of Karincham in Cheshire." He then gives the names of those in attendance. The earliest record of the initiation of a non-operative Mason is found in the minutes of the Lodge of Edinburgh at St. Mary's Chapel dated July 1634 when Lord Alexander and his brother, Anthony, were admitted. Typical of Masonic minutes, there is no other information provided.

Prior to the second decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, there is not a single reference to three separate degrees in Freemasonry in any minutes of any lodge in existence. "Making a brother" or "Making a Free Mason," as Ashmole notes, were the only designations provided. All candidates were simply "entered." The ritual for making a Mason consisted, based upon available records, of what we would think of today as parts of the first and second degrees accompanied with a charge and some type of lecture.

### The Process

A man asked a Masonic friend to join the lodge. His qualifications were debated in open lodge at length and his name put to a vote. If he was approved, he was sent a summons, usually written, to appear with is proposer at a specified place on a given date. There was no waiting for investigation. It was assumed that, if a Brother of a lodge recommended a man for membership, he knew the candidate well and personally, and was positive that his record would survive the test of open debate in the lodge. Brethren at that time would never have considered proposing someone whom they did not know and know well.

At the initiation, the candidate first took an obligation on the Volume of Sacred Law to preserve the **MYSTERIES** not the secrets of the craft. The words and signs were communicated to him, possibly, by his proposer who then asked him to demonstrate his proficiency for all present. A charge was given informing the new Mason of his duty to God, his master and his fellow men. A history of the craft was generally read. This history could be found in one of several ancient documents such as the *Regius Manuscript* or poem, the Cooke Manuscript or *Grande Lodge Manuscript No. 1*. It may even have been taken from an early form of the Graham manuscript. Each of these ancient charges varied markedly in its account the craft's history with the Legend of Hiram virtually absent. Instead, we find the Legend of Noah as used by Antediluvium or Noachida Masons. While Noah is mentioned in passing in the Regius poem (abt. 1390), a longer version of the story is found in the Cooke Manuscript of 1410 and the Graham manuscript of the early 1700s.

### The Legend of Noah

Lamech, the great, great, great, grandson (6<sup>th</sup> generation) of Adam had two wives and four children: sons **Jabal**, founder of geometry and builder of the first stone house; **Jubal**, a musician and founder of music; **Tubal**, the first blacksmith and worker in brass; and a daughter, **Naamah**, the founder of weaving. Knowing that God would destroy the world, these four erected a pillar of marble and a pillar of brick on which they inscribed the mysteries of their crafts and sciences. After the flood, Noah's great grandson, **Nimrod**, finds the pillars and the knowledge thereon contained is imparted to making.

The Graham manuscript, dated to 1726, adds more to the legend. After Noah's death, **Shem**, **Ham** and **Japheth**, the sons of Noah, go to their father's grave in search of a valuable secret. They find nothing but a "dead body all most consumed." Shem, taking the body by a finger and the finger coming off, says "here is yet marrow in this bone." Ham, taking the body by the hand, which also comes off, says "but a dry bone." Japheth then says "it stinketh." Then then raise the body by the elbow supporting it foot-to-foot, knee-to-knee, breast-to-breast, cheek-to-cheek and hand to back and cry out "Help O Father." As so, states the manuscript, "They agreed for to give it a name that is known to freemasonry to this day."

These Masonic versions of the Legend of Noah may have originated in the Noah mystery plays produced by the various craft guilds in England from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries but suppressed during the Reformation (mid 1500s to early 1600s) and virtually eradicated during the Commonwealth under Cromwell (1649-1660). There are eight extant and different versions of the Noah mystery plays.

### The Ritual

The process of making a mason or the ritual was simple. The lodge was opened and the Master asked if anyone was in waiting to be "made a Mason." The wardens and proposer (there were not deacons) retired to prepare the candidate—divested of minerals and metals and so forth—and he was asked some basic questions similar to the modern Senior Deacon's anteroom lecture. The wardens returned to the lodge while the candidate and his proposer waited in complete silence in the dark anteroom for at least thirty minutes.

A set of figures were drawn on the floor with charcoal or chalk within an oblong square. Symbols were added and a tracking board put in place. When all was in order, the proposer brought the candidate into the lodge "upon the point of a sword or spear." Prayer may or may not have been offered based on the tradition of that lodge. Moderns tended to omit the prayer upon admission while Ancients included it. The candidate was then presented to the lodge through the circumambulation. He was then led to the altar and given the obligation which, since it was only one degree, included most of the penalties in our full ritual. The candidate then kissed the Volume of Sacred Law and said "*fune merum genio*" which is Latin for "pour out the good wine for our pleasure." Since the trestle board (not to be confused with the tracing board) was already in place, the brothers drank a toast given by the Master to the "heart that conceals and to the tongue that never reveals." After which everyone drew their glass, now empty, across their throat.

After the pattern on the floor and the emblems on the tracing board were explained, the new brother was instructed to "wash away" the figures on the floor, retire to the preparation room, recover his valuables and return to the lodge.

Upon his return, he was presented with a white leather apron. The craft then assembled in a circle, hands joined crossways to form a chain, and the ceremony was ended. After the ceremony of "making a Mason" was concluded, the members set around the trestle board feasting, toasting and reciting the Apprentice lecture which was given in the form of a catechism with the Master usually asking the questions. Each brother could propose a toast as he desired upon answering a question. If a brother did not know the answer to the Master's question, he would stand, clap his hands, place his right hand on his left breast, give a very low bow, usually take a drink, and pass the question to the next brother in line.

The lodge was finally closed with the Senior Warden simply saying "Our Master's will and pleasure is that this lodge stands closed till" after which he would give the date and time of the next meeting.

The Master Mason Degree within the symbolic lodges appears to have been an innovation of the Grand Lodge system sometime after 1725. Most Freemasons remained Fellow Crafts all of their days. It is not until 1777 that the first and second degrees are noted as having been given on different evenings and, if the third degree was worked with any regularity between 1725 and 1760, few brothers knew about it and even fewer participated. It is possible that the third or Master Mason degree was worked in a separate or Master's Lodge and by invitation only. Bro. George Bell, for example, was a Fellow Craft when he served as Deputy Grand Master in 1751.

## Conclusion

Considering all available information and research, the precise origin of the three degree system remains a true Masonic Mystery. Was there any formally authorized work prior to 1717 or did individual Lodges establish and promulgate their particular work? Who authorized and wrote the first degrees after 1717? Did the Grand Lodge of England derive its ritual from operative lodges then in existence in London or elsewhere? Were the original rituals derived from or, even, part of the mystery play tradition of the operative crafts which had been suppressed? How much did the French have to do with English lodge practices, and the English with the French? Who wrote the story or Hiram and why? Does the Hiram Legend relate to the Jacobean Rebellion or the restoration of the English Monarchy after the Commonwealth? Is the Hiram Legend a retelling of the Noah mystery or does it symbolize something else—politically, morally or historically.

The ancient and honorable Fraternity of Freemasons never ceases to challenge us. But that is the way of our time-honored institution.

### The Legend of Noah According to Graham 1725

Shem ham and jepheth ffor to go their father  
noahs grave for to try if they could find anything about him ffor to lead them  
to the valuable secret which this famieous preacher had for I hop all will  
allow that all things needful for the new world was in the ark with noah  
Now these 3 men had already agreed that if they did not find the very thing  
If self that the first thing what they found was to be to them as a secret they not  
doubting but did most ffirmly believe than God was able and would also prove  
willing through their faith prayer and obedience for to cause what they did  
find for to prove as vertuable to them as if they had received the secret at  
ffirst from God himself at its head spring so came to the Grave finding  
nothing save the dead body all most consumed away takeing a  
greip at a ffinger  
it came away so from Joynt to Joynt so to the wrest so to the Elbow so they  
Reared up the dead body and supported it setting ffoot to ffoot knee to knee  
Breast to breast Cheeck to check and hand to back and cryed out  
help o ffather as if they had said o fathter of heaven helpo us no Earthly ffather  
cannot so Laid down the dead body again and now knowing what  
to do – so one said is et marrow in this bone and the second said but a  
dry bone and the third said it stinteckth so they agreed for to give it a name  
as is known to free masonry to this day so went to their undertakings  
and afterwards works stood: et it is to believen and allso understood that  
the virtue did not proceed from what they ffound or how it was called but  
ffrom ffaith and prayer o thu it continued the will pass for the deed. . . .