



Ashlar Lodge No. 98 Free and Accepted Masons

St. Augustine, FL

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

904 826-4086



February 2017

STATED COMMUNICATIONS
Masonic Temple
105 King Street
St. Augustine, FL
1ST & 3RD Thursdays
Meal – 6:30 p.m.

DEGREE WORK AND PRACTICE
2nd & 4th Thursdays

CHARITY OF THE MONTH
CAMP BOGGY CREEK

From the East

Ashlar Lodge No. 98 F. & A.M. began what I hope will be an outstanding Masonic Year on Tuesday, December 27, 2016, with the Installation of Officers for 2017. R.: W.: John Karroum, Senior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of Florida was our Installing Officer assisted by M.: W.: Robert Harry, P.G.M, as Installing Marshall, and W.: James Davis as Installing Chaplain.

The motto for the year is FOLLOW US and the theme is EXCELLENCE IN FREEMAONRY. We began that effort at the Stated Communication on January 5 with two outstanding presentations. Bro. Matthew Sweeney reviewed our petition process and impressed upon the Brethren that we are to consider what is inside a man not his outward appearance when considering if he is worthy of being made a Mason. I call to your attention the lecture of the Entered Apprentice Degree in which we are admonished to consider the internal not the external and that a principle tenet of Freemasonry is Brotherly Love which “unites men of every country, sect, and opinion, and conciliates true friendship between those who might otherwise remain at a perpetual distance.”

The video presentation on The Grand Lodge of Israel from the Supreme Council of Ancient and

Accepted Scottish Rite of Israel demonstrated that even in that most contentious part of the world, Freemasonry can unite all men when they come to it with an open heart and an open mind.

“The real Freemason is distinguished from the rest of Mankind by the uniform unrestrained rectitude of his conduct. Other men are honest in fear of Punishment which the law might inflict; they are religious in expectation of being rewarded, or in dread of the devil, in the next world. A Freemason would be just if there were no laws, human or divine except those written in his heart by the finger of his Creator.

In every climate, under every system of religion, he is the same. He kneels before the Universal Throne of God in gratitude for the blessings he has received and humble solicitation for his future protection. He venerates the good men of all religions.

He disturbs not the religion of others. He restrains his passions, because they cannot be indulged without injuring his neighbor or himself. He gives no offense, because he does not choose to be offended. He contracts no debts which he is certain he cannot discharge, because he is honest upon principal. *A Farmer’s Almanac*, 1823

Freemasonry has always existed . . . They allow good men and youths whom they consider worthy of their company to divine and guess at their deeds, to see them, in so far as they can be seen. These others find them to their liking, and perform similar deeds. . . And what exactly do they boast about? Only such things as one expects of every good person and every good citizen . . . and deeds speak for themselves. . . Their true deeds are their secrets. The true deeds of Freemasons are aimed at making all that are commonly described as good deeds for the most part superfluous. Gotthold Lessing in *Ernst and Faulk: Dialogues of Freemasons*, 1778.

Oscar Patterson III
 Worshipful Master



February 2017

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

			1 District Instruction Hastings 6pm Rainbow	2 Stated Communication 6:30 pm	3	4 Masonic Ed Workshop Ashlar 9 am
5	6 OES	7	8 Open Book Pineland 6 pm	9 Lodge Practice MM Degree 6 pm	10	11
12	13	14	15	16 Stated Communication 6:30 pm	17	18 Sweethearts' Lunch Ashlar, 12 noon
19	20 OES	21 York Rite Chapter/Council	22 District Association Melrose 6:30 Rainbow	23 Lodge Practice 6 pm at Outdoor Lodge	24	25 Outdoor MM Degree 4 pm
26	27	28 Visit Ribault 271 6:30 pm Commnadery			28	29
30	31					

CALENDAR NOTE

Visit to Ribault Lodge in Jacksonville Beach, Feb. 28th, 6:30 p.m. See you there.

From the West

2017 is shaping up nicely at the Lodge. There is going to be a lot of activities the Craft can enjoy. As we look forward to a fun-filled year, there are a few things to remember about Lodge property. Parking Hangtags are required to park in our lot. While the towing company has been told to watch out for Masonic License plates and stickers, please cut the chances of a mistake being made by getting our parking tag from me. The spots marked USPS belong to the Post Office Mon-Sat 6am-6pm excluding holidays. The spots marked USPS supervisor are reserved 24/7. A bed and breakfast rents 26 spots in our gravel lot so please avoid those marked spots in you plan to park in the gravel. For our guest from other Lodges, there will be guest parking passes available during all Lodge functions. Fee free to reach out to me with questions or concerns.

Our Annual Widows Luncheon will held of February 18th at noon. There will be a catere3d meal at the Lodge.

March 2017

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

			1 District In- struction Palat- ka 6:30 pm Rainbow	2 Stated Communica- tion 6:30 p.m.	3	4
5	6 OES	7	8 Townhall Meeting Pineland 6 pm	9 Lodge Practice EA degree 6 pm	10	11
12	13	14	15 Rainbow	15 Stated Communica- tion 6:30 pm	17	18
19	20 OES	21	22 District Association Ashlar 6:30 pm	23 EA De- gree 6:30 pm	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

From the West (Continued)

Also please remember our Outdoor Degree will be on February 25th starting at 4:00 p.m. A group will leave the Lodge at 3:00 p.m. if you need to follow the caravan out to the site. I am thinking we should dress warm again.

Kind Regards,

Bo Bozard, Senior Warden

LODGE INITIATIVE

At our Stated Communication on January 19 we talked about working diligently to improve Lodge attendance and fellowship. Each Brother is asked to contact an absent Member and invite him to come to Lodge with him. Offer him a ride. Sometimes, absent members might think we have forgotten them. They aren't forgotten and are most definitely missed. Let us show they true Masonic Fellowship and care by expressing our interest in their attendance and fellowship.

Think about your Catechism class. Who is attending, who isn't. We were a special Band of Brothers during the class, let us be so again.

Ashlar Lodge Officers

Worshipful Master:	Oscar Patterson III	904 955-9175
Senior Warden:	Bo Bozard	904 501-4370
Junior Warden:	Matthew Sweeney	904 806-0571
Treasurer:	Bob Gagnon P.M.	904 501-7446
Secretary:	David Pierucci	904 460-9477
Senior Deacon:	Ken Shaffner	386 864-9162
Junior Deacon:	James Carrick	904 501-4348
Senior Steward:	Robert Wilson	386 763-8727
Junior Steward:	Brian Iannucci	904 708-9765
Chaplain:	David Braddock, P.M.	904-699-4651
Tyler:	Ron DeRoco	904 599-1584
Marshall:	Tom Torretta	620-1031
Musician:	Steve Hohman	
Lodge Instructor:	Oscar Patterson	904 955-9175
Bob Adair Mentor Program	George Maultsby,P.M.	703-956-0228

In Memoriam

James Selman Davis, Past Master of Ashlar Lodge No. 98 F. & A.M. went to the Celestial Lodge Above at 11:05 a.m. on Wednesday, January 25, 2017. Masonic Grave-side services will be held in his honor and memory on Friday, February 3, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. at Evergreen Cemetery in St. Augustine. Brothers are asked to be at the Cemetery by 1:30 p.m.

W. Bro. Davis is survived by his wife, Judy; son, Jonathan Davis; brothers, Holley Davis and the Rev. Ricky Davis; and grandchildren Brendan Sasse and Kayla Davis.

He served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam and with the Florida National Guard for more than 22 years.

W. Bro. Davis was active in the York Rite Chapter and Council and served Ashlar as Chaplain and Lodge Mentor. He was selected to be District Deputy Grand Master for 2017-18 and would have been installed at Grand Lodge on May 31, 2017.

The Sprig of Acacia.

Intimately connected with the legend of the third degree is the mythical history of the Sprig of Acacia, which we are now to consider.

There is no symbol more interesting to the masonic student than the Sprig of Acacia, not only on account of its own peculiar import, but also because it introduces us to an extensive and delightful field of research; that, namely, which embraces the symbolism of sacred plants. In all the ancient systems of religion, and Mysteries of initiation, there was always some one plant consecrated, in the minds of the worshippers and participants, by a peculiar symbolism, and therefore held in extraordinary veneration as a sacred emblem. Thus the ivy was used in the Mysteries of Dionysus, the myrtle in those of Ceres, the erica in the Osirian, and the lettuce in the Adonian. But to this subject I shall have occasion to refer more fully in a subsequent part of the present investigation.

Before entering upon an examination of the symbolism of the *Acacia*, it will be, perhaps, as well to identify the true plant which occupies so important a place in the ritual of Freemasonry.

And here, in passing, I may be permitted to say that it is a very great error to designate the symbolic plant of Masonry by the name of "Cassia"--an error which undoubtedly arose, originally, from the very common habit among illiterate people of sinking the sound of the letter *a* in the pronunciation of any word of which it constitutes the initial syllable. Just, for instance, as we constantly hear, in the conversation of the uneducated, the words *pothecary* and *prentice* for *apothecary* and *apprentice*, shall we also find *cassia* used for *acacia*. [177](#) Unfortunately, however, this corruption of *acacia* into *cassia* has not always been confined to the illiterate: but the long employment of the corrupted form has at length introduced it, in some instances, among a few of our writers. Even the venerable Oliver, although well acquainted with the symbolism of the acacia, and having written most learnedly upon it, has, at times, allowed himself to use the objectionable corruption, unwittingly influenced, in all probability, by the too frequent adoption of the latter word in the English lodges. In America, but few Masons fall into the error of speaking of the *Cassia*. The proper teaching of the *Acacia* is here well understood. [178](#)

The *cassia* of the ancients was, in fact, an ignoble plant having no mystic meaning and no sacred character, and was never elevated to a higher function than that of being united, as Virgil informs us, with other odorous herbs in the formation of a garland:--

"...violets pale,
The poppy's flush, and dill which scents the gale,
Cassia, and hyacinth, and daffodil,
With yellow marigold the chaplet fill." [179](#)

Alston says that the "Cassia lignea of the ancients was the larger branches of the cinnamon tree, cut off with their bark and sent together to the druggists; their Cassia fistula, or Syrinx, was the same cinnamon in the bark only;" but Ruæus says that it also sometimes denoted the lavender, and sometimes the rosemary.

In Scripture the cassia is only three times mentioned, [180](#) twice as the translation of the Hebrew word *kiddak*, and once as the rendering of *ketziath*, but always as referring to an aromatic plant which formed a constituent portion of some perfume. There is, indeed, strong reason for believing that the cassia is only another name for a coarser preparation of cinnamon, and it is also to be remarked that it did not grow in Palestine, but was imported from the East.

The *acacia*, on the contrary, was esteemed a sacred tree. It is the *acacia vera* of Tournefort, and the *mimosa nilotica* of Linnæus. It grew abundantly in the vicinity of Jerusalem, [181](#) where it is still to be found, and is familiar to us all, in its modern uses at least, as the tree from which the gum arabic of commerce is obtained.

The acacia, which, in Scripture, is always called *shittah* [182](#) and in the plural *shittim*, was esteemed a sacred wood among the Hebrews. Of it Moses was ordered to make the tabernacle, the ark of the covenant, the table for the showbread, and the rest of the sacred furniture. Isaiah, in recounting the promises of God's mercy to the Israelites on their return from the captivity, tells them, that, among other things, he will plant in the wilderness, for their relief and refreshment, the cedar, the acacia (or, as it is rendered in our common version, the *shittah*), the fir, and other trees.

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In the East

Far out beyond those misty clouds,
that veil the heaven blue,
the Master sits within the East,
and checks on what you do.

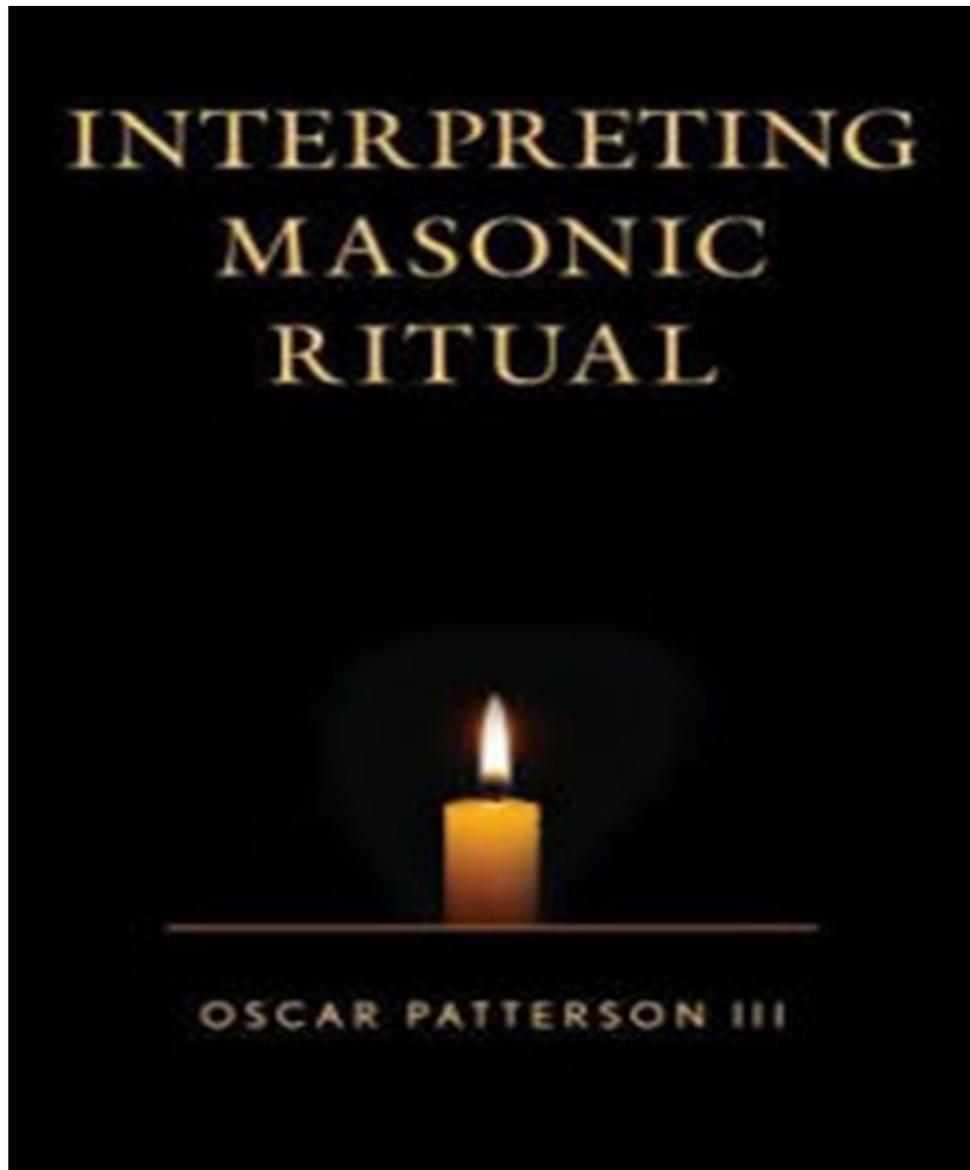
So, as your daily tasks you do,
prosaic though they be,
the rule of plumb and square observe for all the world to see.

For when at last your day must end,
your tools you lay away,
'twill be how well your work was done
on which he'll base your pay.

For when you rap upon that door,
and seek to enter in,
'tis only He can vouch for you,
and free you from your sin.

No ritual learned can earn that place,
or trappings rich and rare,
'tis heart and mind and love of man
that grants you welcome there.

James F. Sullivan, P.M. 1969



***Interpreting Masonic Ritual* By Oscar Patterson III, Worshipful Master of Ashlar Lodge No. 98 in St. Augustine is now available.**

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THE MASONIC HOME OF FLORIDA
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The full \$30.00 goes to our Home and the Brother receive full tax credit.**

**Copies are also available through Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Mccoys Masonic,
and Lewis Masonic in the United Kingdom.**

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