

**Hugh Murray Lodge No. 602  
Official Visit / October 15, 2013**

**I am made a Mason...Now What?**

I think back to the time when I was 'Made a Mason' 25 years ago and I can draw many parallels between that event and taking a trip on a train to an unfamiliar destination. First, there is really very little for you to do. After you buy your ticket and board the train, someone else is responsible for getting you to your destination. The trip is generally pleasant and interesting and if all goes well, you stay on the rails. At the conclusion of your journey, you exit the train and stand on the platform as all the other passengers go about their business and fade into what seems like thin air. You are filled with a certain anticipation, but you now find yourself with more questions than answers...and you ask yourself; "Now What?"

'Now What?' indeed. That certainly went through my mind on the evening of my initiation. It was such a special evening and I felt as though I now belonged to an elite group of men with certain 'special' privileges. I had been anointed or rather baptized into a society of great importance.

Wisdom had been imparted and there being more to come was implied. I was given 'reading' materials of the evening's proceedings and I could hardly wait to sit down at home and devour the contents of the 'little yellow book' that contained both secrets and invaluable knowledge. Perhaps it would give me further clues as what I was to do next.

Should I stand in a particular way and give certain signals to get preferential treatment; or perhaps others, who had yet to identify themselves to me in public, would now come to my side because they knew I was 'one of them'?

One thing is for sure; I had a lot more questions than answers. Not only was I trying to process what had just happened at my initiation, but also I now had to face my wife with answers to her questions. Fortunately, one of the brethren offered the following plausible explanation that I shall never forget. He said to explain it this way.

"Honey, on the evening of my initiation, there were three groups of men as far as I could tell; Walkers, Talkers and Holy Men.

The Walkers guided me around a room of elaborate ornaments and furniture; The Talkers spoke to me on moral subjects of great value and importance and those whom sat along the sides of the room, I suspected to be the Holy men, as they just shook their heads and muttered, 'Oh God'."

Seriously though, after the meeting and after several days had passed, I felt I had been given some external qualification; the right to wear certain jewelry and to identify myself to others as a Mason. That might have been so, but so could anyone else if they really had the desire. Masonic Jewelry is readily available and our 'secrets' are explained in books at the local library.

So then, what did I have and what was I to do with it? Well, first of all, I have a Dues Card from a recognized lodge that identifies me as a member. But more importantly...and what I now think, after much reflection, is the most desirable of all my Masonic possessions, is that I am thought worthy enough by those who call themselves my

brethren to be admitted to such an ancient and honourable society. A society that stands for such high ideals of morality and integrity that if the world were run by Masons and subscribed to our ideals for just one day, the world would come to know the true meaning of 'Peace On Earth'.

A day of racial equality; a day of universal acceptance of diverse religious cultures; a day on which the horizon of every nation is not marred by the smoke of warfare; a day of 'do unto your neighbour as you would wish he should do unto you' is not just the theme for a Sunday sermon but is etched on everyone's mind and practiced for eternity. A day of plenty and bellies full. Just imagine, a day of universal benevolence; a day to trample greed and corruption beneath our feet and in its place, plant a tree of generosity and decency.

Is this a little too preachy? I apologize, but in a way, this is my Martin Luther King Jr, 'I have a dream' speech. I truly believe that one day we may share in the joy of such a reality.

Maybe I have just found the 'Now What' I have been looking for. You have just been 'Made a Mason'; now go and 'Be A Mason'.

It takes a very special person, just as everyone in this room has experienced, to join a society and receive at its fundamental core only knowledge and fraternity and nothing more. It takes a special person indeed to uphold the ideals of liberty and equality by modest and persistent efforts; in a manner of speaking, to give and not to count the costs.

Being a Mason involves unwavering faith, hope and charity and the promulgation of the ideals of fraternity, liberty and equality. This, my brethren is the 'Now What'. These are the virtues and ideals we must set in motion at every turn and with everyone we meet. Do you recall the import of the three questions posed during your initiation? In summary, "freely and voluntarily offer yourself", "a sincere wish to render yourself extensively serviceable to your fellow creatures" and finally "steadily persevere".

Our importance in society cannot be underestimated. Just as the flame from a single candle can give light to many, so may the light and radiance of a Mason banish darkness and ignorance from our midst. This requires steady perseverance, no doubt.

In all our efforts of exercising, communicating and upholding the virtues of our craft, the practical efforts cannot be overlooked; a polite gesture, a helping hand, a smile, a sincere compliment and so forth. It is infectious and it is most desirable.

All of this is the 'shampoo effect'; I tell two friends who tell two friends and so on and so on. If you don't get the reference, perhaps you have never seen this TV commercial, so here is one for you, 'rinse and repeat'....often. Even our ritual says 'repeated efforts alone', although I could not find any reference to rinsing.

Just as the human race is continually evolving and hopefully growing, so are Masons. We continually grow and learn. The more we learn, the more we share and the better for it, we all are.

Perhaps Albert Mercier said it best “What we learn with pleasure, we never forget”. The truth in this axiom is so profound and witnessed in Freemasonry. Masonic Teachings are so pleasurable and their messages so memorable that we cannot help but ‘being a Mason’ from the time of our initiation onward.

So my brethren, regardless of what station in Masonry you find yourself, you will never stand on the platform alone and you will never wonder “What Now”.

Thank you for your very kind attention.

Written by:  
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