



Maine Masonic College Board of Regents Meeting

April 19, 2009

With spring in the air but no black flies just yet, the Board of Regents met at Meridian Splendor Lodge #49 in Newport, Maine. Those present were Stephen Nichols as Chairman as well as Richard Bowden, Kelley Carter, Edward King, Gerald Leighton, George Macdougall, Walter Macdougall and Don McDougal. The meeting was called to order at 9:02am. Subsequently Walter introduced Bro. Bradley Maren who is completing studies in Boston towards a Master's in Architecture degree.

The minutes of the preceding meeting were reviewed and accepted as presented. Bro. Carter thanked the College for accommodating the Cub Scouts at the last meeting but it was also noted that they had similarly accommodated us! George indicated Eric requested the Regents approve a transfer of funds from savings to checking to meet expenses from handbook printing and DVD production. Approved.

Bro. Nichols noted an e-mail from John Nickerson averring that he had taken on more than he could chew so he won't be continuing as a Regent. Walter suggested Alan Heath as a possible replacement and the Board agreed with this recommendation. Walter will contact him.

Then Walter, as the Dean of Academic Affairs, presented his report beginning with a mention of the dichotomy between Masonry past and Masonry present/future. He noted that there are a lot of memories but questioned whether they fulfill the Craft.

Ed noted that prior registration for Reggie's upcoming class had been poor but a quick head count revealed that six from our own number would be attending. This course has been a long time in the making and the Board had already seen several incarnations of it evidencing a tremendous amount of effort by Bro. Wing. Surely Masons would benefit from it and the Regents were exhorted to 'talk it up' in their travels this coming week.

The discussion about Reggie's important topic led to the ongoing matter of our mentoring course which, at this point, may be in the form of multiple courses on various aspects of mentoring. We talked about a point within a circle and Richard spoke of his vision of the ultimate goal: peer training. While using Masonic phraseology, the concept of 'setting the Craft to work with proper instruction' can also certainly apply to the anticipated outcome for the course planned for the general public as well. Clearly the goal of positive mentoring in our communities is something that MANY social-oriented agencies attempt to foster.

The Regents also reviewed a comprehensive course proposal submitted by Bro. Chris Readon (Columbia-Doric and Mosaic) titled "Freemasonry as a Society & Culture". This was enthusiastically approved.

Our Chairman then noted that he had just experienced a 'near epiphany' but could not now remember what it involved. Regents exchanged knowing glances.

We discussed the further issues contained in the Dean's report, requesting clarifications and adding our thoughts, all of which were duly noted by Bro. Macdougall.

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Bro. Maren then talked about his plans for a course in architecture, specifically how modern architecture has shaped society and Freemasonry. Regents interacted vigorously and as a result of discussions, a second course involving Freemasonry, architecture, and music could evolve. All of this will be pursued at greater length after our Brother completes his studies with a hopeful first date of the Fall.

Don reported on his trip to the Greenville Historical Society with Bro. Ed Blodgett in conjunction with the logging program being developed. He noted that they had some very good resources there which may well find their way into the program. The development of this is coming along nicely. (Our video producer was seen salivating not-too-discreetly!)

And that led to a discussion by the latter of the 'Building Ethical Confidence' video pricing. Ed suggested that a 'list price' of \$39.95 be established but requested recommendations on pricing for Masons. With the wisdom of Solomon, it was finally agreed, based on a comment by an active Lodge Secretary (who are noted for their uncanny ability to ALWAYS come up with a resolution for every matter!), George Macdougall, that we offer a \$10 discount to non-profit and community-based organizations as well as out-of-state Masons and Masonic groups and a \$30 discount to Maine Masons (making their net price \$9.95). Ed explained how tax would be collected and remitted to the State.

Several other matters were discussed including our presence at the upcoming Grand Lodge meeting for the purpose of distributing Handbooks and selling our two DVDs. Ed mentioned that we are still without a resolution on clothing as only one member has given any interest in choices.

Compilation of ratings for our two recent courses were distributed with high marks. George (*don't Secretaries EVER stop? SHEESH!*) suggested we might compile demographics on town/lodge location in relation to our course to better identify our impact. Ed (*probably just trying to avoid work*) wondered if small numbers would produce any meaningful information but agreed that henceforth he would happily do it and, if the time was found, would work it back retrospectively with the data on hand. **(Secretary's note: the question 'Where did you hear about this course?' has now been added to the evaluation form for future classes.)**

Jerry talked about the relevance of continuing the program of reaching out to new Masons and it was agreed that as we move our activities to different areas, we should replicate this if for no other reason than the potential it creates. We also talked about more community notice so that our many 'open to everyone' meetings would have a higher visibility within the area. Your Secretary notes that with planning of meetings more than 120 days in advance, this becomes a much more viable activity.

The next meeting was set for May 17, 2009 again at the Masonic Hall in Newport at 9am. The meeting was closed at 12:07pm and was followed by a terrific (as usual) lunch.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward L. King

Secretary, Board of Regents, Maine Masonic College

Maine Masonic College

Report of the Dean for Academic Affairs

April 19, 2009

New Mason Classes

As a Masonic College, we can be proud of our attempt to reach new Masons and of the caliber of our four courses designed for them. We have had an increase in attendance and have had a number who returned to take following courses. While the turnout of new Masons has not been what we hoped, there is indication that the reputation of the College as a useful and important part of the Masonic enterprise is growing. Perhaps most importantly, this new endeavor has provided information on the following: (a) levels of interest, (b) problems which new masons face and (c) upon the drain of time and energy experienced by the Craft due to the overburden of Masonic organizations.

It is unfortunate that our final class in this series has been scheduled on a day which has proven to be a busy one. We shall need to make additional effort to contact brethren.

Update on Course Planning and Building

GF09 Therapeutic Music Intervention. Report by R.W. Brother Eric. Claire has found a place for us to hold this course in the Portland area.

ELM 01 and ELM 02 Mentoring Courses As you will note this important endeavor has been divided into the “Methods of” and the “Subject Matter of” mentoring.

ELM 01 I shall consider the method aspect first. A great deal of effort has been put into this offering including several committee meetings and two explorative sessions in adult education led by a professional from the University of Maine. R.W. Brother Richard Bowden has brought to our attention a large amount material from other jurisdictions and from the commercial world. We have found that Sam McKeeman has created a mentoring course which he presents to employees of the State.

All of this information, though a rich resource, has been somewhat overpowering.

It is evident that there are differing of opinions on the nature of the mentoring process as well as how deeply a Mason or particular officer needs to understand the processes involved.

*It is also apparent that is a large sense Freemasonry is about **mentoring** as an informed process of concerned assistance and cooperative growth involving understanding and caring.*

It seems that one can divide most mentoring programs into two categories: (a) the creation of checklists and (b) attempts to understand the art of mentoring in behavioral terms as an endeavor to better understand ourselves and others in regards to our common and particular needs and aspirations.

It is also apparent that much of what other Masonic jurisdiction are using has been borrowed from commercial and industrial models or from popular books on the subject. There is a tendency toward the check list approach. While much can be adapted from such sources, we already have much going for our own training endeavor. We have a previously developed schema based upon Masonic philosophy, we have a solid base in adult education practice; we have taken into account concepts in communication and mental processes, and Brother Tim Martel has begun to utilize this background in actual presentations to District Educational Officers.

As a whole the committee commissioned to build a Masonic course in mentoring methods, feels we can present a pilot course next fall in cooperation with the MEALS Committee. The District Educational Officers will be the target group. However, the resulting course should be open to all brothers.

ELM 02 Masonic Background for Mentors. Mentors in any filed need to have a fund of fundamental and basic subject knowledge. R.W. Richard Bowden, who has spent many dedicated years addressing this need, has been assigned the course experience.

Astronomy: LAS 01. Contact was initially made through the planetarium at the University of Maine. We were advised to make use of the several astronomy clubs around the state which have both the equipment and the expertise to conduct an “Evening with the Stars Event.” M.W. Brother Claire has made contact with one of the clubs and will report to us.

Leadership Training Event, October 27th Bangor at the Shrine Temple in Bangor. Professor Gordon Donaldson has agreed to plan and lead this seminar. I have had preliminary meetings with Dr. Donaldson and planning is underway. Dr. Donaldson mentioned that he would like to have a small team to assist in the session and that he would meet with this group in a pre-session. The Shrine accommodations have been arranged, but we will need to write a letter as a matter of form. No arrangements have been made for lunch, but it has been suggested that we engage a caterer. This is a joint venture with the Grand Master and the target group is composed of the District Deputies and the District Education Officers.

GF01 Architecture, Fall or Winter, Brother Bradley Maren who will graduate this spring with a masters in architecture is interested in instructing this course. He plans to be with us and to discuss this opportunity. His present intentions are for an interactive course exploring metaphors from architecture which provide philosophical, Masonic and ethical understanding for dealing with present day issues,

Freemasonry as a Society and Culture: Brother Chris Reardon who has considerable teaching experience and subject expertise has presented to the Board a professional course description.

LAS 05 Music and Freemasonry, Fall While this course was intended as a “music appreciation course,” it was decided that a beginning course in music itself would be useful. Search for a qualified Instructor was initiated through the University of Maine. Mr. Ben Aldridge who has his master’s degree in music and is presently teaching at Hamden Academy responded and expressed his interest in teaching this course. Mr. Aldridge would like to receive questions which would help him plan this opportunity.

Fall and Winter 2010 Schedule

Presentations

Light in Freemasonry: This presentation was very well received in Houlton and will be presented on April 27th. in Machias with an Eastern Star Chapter’s participation.

Vitruvius: A Masonic View of Classical Architecture, Ingenuity and Engineering. Target date for completion is the Fall of 2009.

Industry in the Maine Woods. This developing presentation will be reported on by Brother Don McDougal

Other Considerations

We need to consider what if any activity we should plan for the **Summer** ?

Orientation Meetings with Friends of the Masonic College: Two meetings are being planned by R.W. Brother Jim Ross. These will be dinner meetings and be held on May 19th in Augusta and on May 21st in Bangor. We should have at least a tentative listing of Fall courses to put in the hands of the friends.

Pollard Documentary: Brother Jim Green of Ralph J. Pollard Lodge has spoken to me involving a project of producing CDs of M.W. Brother Pollard's speeches. He wondered if the Maine Masonic College would be interested in being part of a celebration of M.W. Brothers Pollard's contribution. I believe that Most Worshipful Brother Gerald had also spoken with Brother Green. I suggested that the Maine Lodge of Research might also be interested in participating and introduced Brother Green to R.W. Brother Richard Rhoda who was present at the meeting.