

# Unity Lodge #58, A.F. & A.M. Thorndike, Maine



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August 29, 2020

Brethren

Our pie sales August 7<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> were successful (more details are in the minutes). We will continue every other Friday with next being Sept. 4.

Unity Lodge will hold a Stated Communication on September 16<sup>th</sup>. Face coverings are required along with staying 6 feet apart etc. No supper.

<<Raised this month wording>>

Upcoming events:

The other lodges in the 12th district will resume Stated Communications in Sept.  
Star in the West, Unity 1st Monday; Central, China 1st Wednesday; Siloam, Fairfield 1st Thursday; Waterville 2nd Monday; Vassalboro, 2nd Tuesday; Messalonskee, Oakland 3rd Tuesday; Sebecook, Clinton 3rd Thursday.

Sept. 16 Unity Lodge Stated Communication.  
Sept. 29 District Meeting at Oakland.

*Thank you to those who have paid their dues.*

Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1998256393798057/>  
Grand Lodge has started "Our Lodge Page™": <https://58-me.ourlodgepage.com/>  
Please notify the secretary if your address changes.

Stated meetings are on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:30 with a 6:30 supper  
Bruce Hutchins, Secretary, 1053 Halldale Rd, Montville ME 04941. tel/fax 382-6226, email [bruce@hutchinsbrothers.com](mailto:bruce@hutchinsbrothers.com)  
District Calendar <http://east.our.calendars.net/glme/glmedist12>  
<http://unitylodge.hutchinsbrothers.com/>

## Communicating Masonry or Some Things I Never Heard in Lodge, But Wish I Had

*MW Conrad Hahn (PGM-CT), Executive Secretary of MSA 1964-1977, authored many Short Talk Bulletins. This is a digest of a paper recently found in the archives that he wrote May 22, 1971.*

In the last two decades, we have frequently been told that one of the reasons for poor attendance in lodges is television. Q.E.D The “boob tube” has captured the average Mason’s mind; you can’t expect to see him in lodge. “Telly” knows that allurements result from a combination of excitement and satisfaction. Stir the blood, but never the intellect.

But television communicates with no doubt about that! Some Masonic leaders and organizers are fully aware of that, too. So they find extravaganzas, colorful parades, etc., the answer to Masonry’s problem of poor attendance.

But what does it do for the brother with a serious modern malaise, the feeling of a loss of individuality? The assumption, of course, is that the average Mason is a boob who needs the tube. But what consideration is given to the individual brother’s need for Masonic communication? Treat him the way the siren Television treats him. Seduce him with excitement, but for heaven’s sake, don’t stimulate his intellect.

If Freemasonry is truly a speculative art, it must challenge such an adversary with its principal tools, philosophic examination and illumination. First, we should challenge the denigrating assumption that the average brother is a “tube addict” with no higher interest in life than to be sold things.

But when have you heard of a Masonic lodge offering as a counter-attraction a discussion of the “price you pay for television viewing”? The mere act of telly-watching is a passive act. Such passivity and its resultant powerlessness are among the most dangerous epidemics in our society today. This is one of the things against which many young people are protesting today. They sense the fact that if a man or woman is to develop the rich individuality and full potential of which a human being is capable, he needs more than the hollow values and perishable products of “consumerism,” the basic mode of behavior which television teaches and inculcates.

So what has Masonry had to say about this crassly materialistic means of communication? Not much - except to blame it for poor attendance. Yet Masons know - or should know - that the individual needs not only meaningful productive work but also love, beauty, creativity, contemplation, contact with nature, and participation in support of his own lifestyle.

In that list of words I can see a whole year’s program of Masonic education for “good and wholesome instruction” but I have heard of very few Masonic lodges which have tried to meet the challenge of the salesman’s medium of communication with that kind of Masonic communication. Communicating Freemasonry is communicating ideas. Masonic lodges should communicate ideas, especially ideas about the world in which they exist.

Another idea about which Freemasonry could have something to say, but rarely does, has been introduced by a phrase which I used a moment ago - one’s lifestyle, which results from one’s values and aspirations.

One of the insidious cancers of our American way of life is the competitive urge which drives too many men to an early grave. They call it “the rat race,” but what is the prize they strain to attain?

How do you help a man to be wiser and happier if he struggles incessantly to accomplish too many things in too little time developing within himself a frantic sense of the urgency of time; or if he struggles too competitively with other individuals all the time?.

Perhaps the approach for Masons to communicate with such men is through the little-used tool of enlightenment - education, and philosophy, to be specific.

Style of life? The values by which men live? The enduring satisfactions? These are certainly subjects by which we can communicate Freemasonry, but the trouble is, we have not maintained our Masonry as a school of life. Masonic lodges should communicate ideas, especially ideas about the world in which they exist.

Freemasons have always prided themselves on the way in which they have practiced the second great tenet of their profession - that of Charity. In the simpler, bygone eras that virtue was exemplified directly and effectively by the relief of distress of unfortunate individuals within the local community. When a brother’s widow and children were in want, the members of the lodge flew to their assistance with practical gifts of cash, food, and clothing.

But with the tremendous increase in Masonic membership in the 20th century, and with the universal urbanization and mobility of our population, the modern Mason is no longer oriented to a single community or

to one local lodge. Masonic Charity, to continue its effectiveness, had to be organized on a wider basis, like the Grand Lodge; and in the process, it was necessary to institutionalize Masonic benevolence.

While I acknowledge gratefully all the Masonic generosity which maintains these benevolent institutions and programs, I must also point out that something of great value to Masonry has been lost in the institutionalization of so much Masonic charity. The simple, direct involvement of the individual Mason flying to the relief of a distressed brother, his widow, or orphans, has largely disappeared, because the average Mason now makes his contribution for Masonic benevolence in the form of either an annual per capita, or a contribution solicited by the distant governing body of his Lodge, his chapter, his commandery, or his consistory. Usually, he merely writes a check; rarely does he know who or what is benefitted by his contribution. Too often a brother never makes a contribution at all; he doesn't see a specific need or the result of the charity he is asked to give to, in line with his commitment as an Entered Apprentice. His imagination hasn't been stimulated; Masonry hasn't communicated effectively enough with such a member.

In conclusion, I have really given you just three words or phrases; television, lifestyle, and private institutions. On these, I have hung some ideas which I believe concern our Fraternity; and which can be of use in communicating Freemasonry both to our members and to those outside. Once more, I suspect, I have revealed one of my basic prejudices, that Freemasonry is fundamentally an educational institution. As such, it should be seeking the truth of life in every sphere of human activity, and because of the disparity of men's experiences and the clash of their opinions, it should be trying to harmonize their points of view. As such, it has to appeal to the intellect, not to the blood, where passions that a civilized man must learn to subdue.

If you would communicate Freemasonry, in the broadest sense of that word, you must be like Chaucer's scholar: "For gladly would he learn, and gladly teach."

A new initiate returns home to his wife who is naturally curious to know what went on. The conversation goes something like this.

She) Well how'd it go ?

He) Very well - most interesting

She) What did go on ?

He) I'm not really sure if I can tell you about it.

She) Well is there anything you \*can\* tell me ?

He) well it seems there are 3 classes of men in the Lodge -walkers, talkers and Holy men.

She) What do they do - if you can tell me ?

He) The walkers walked me around the lodge. The Talkers talked to me and to the walkers as I was led around ....

She) and the Holy men ? what of them ?

He) They seem to be a special class of men - all in dark blue and gold aprons.. They just sit on the benches around the lodge with their heads in their hands chanting repeatedly - "Oh My God Oh My God !"

### **Fall Reunion**

Arthur R. Herrmann

Now that the summer days are past,  
The call to Labor comes at last,  
And parted brothers, in the Fall,  
Assemble for the Lodge roll-call.  
Once more the gavel sounds the cue  
For friends and brothers, tried and true,  
To meet on Level, Plumb and Square –  
Their joys and sorrows each to share.  
O, brothers of the Mystic Tic,  
So many tasks before us lie  
Ere war and strife on earth doth cease  
And Brotherhood brings joy and peace.  
So let us labor-let us strive  
To keep our Mason's way alive  
Ours is the duty-ours the right  
To help shed darkness, spread the Light!