



# 8<sup>th</sup> Masonic District

## The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania



Bristol Lodge No. 25, Hermann-Humboldt Lodge No. 125,  
Doylestown Lodge No 245, W.K. Bray Lodge No. 410,  
Newtown Lodge No. 427, Southampton Radiant Star Lodge No. 806

Website: [www.pa8thmasonic.com](http://www.pa8thmasonic.com); Facebook: PA 8<sup>th</sup> Masonic District

*Richard H. Bradbury, Sr. – District Deputy Grand Master*

March 2021

### 8th Masonic District School of Instruction

Frey Masonic Center at Masonic Village-Warminster  
850 Norristown Road, Warminster, PA

Meets Monthly on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday at 7:30 pm  
Extra Meeting on the 3rd Friday – If Needed/Called with due  
and timely notice.  
(No Meetings in July and August)

### MARCH CALENDAR

- 01 **Virtual 8th Masonic District School of Instruction**
- 06 **CANCELED-Officer Training Seminar-Region 1 Masonic Village – Lafayette Hill**
- 10 Hermann-Humboldt Lodge Stated Meeting  
*Program: Entered Apprentice Degree-English*
- 10 Newtown Lodge Stated Meeting  
*Program: Examination of Visitor in PA, DE & NJ*
- 12 Doylestown Lodge Stated Meeting  
*Program: The Golden Fleece*
- 16 Southampton Radiant Star Lodge Stated Meeting  
*Program: Scottish Rite Night*
- 17 W.K. Bray Lodge Stated Meeting  
*Program: Bro. Benjamin Franklin: Applying the Teachings of Freemasonry*
- 20 Academy of Masonic Knowledge, Elizabethtown
- 27 **CANCELED-Leadership Seminar, Allentown**
- 27 Bristol Lodge Stated Meeting  
*Program: DeMolay/Five Principle Orders of Architecture*

### ST. PATRICK DAY AND FREEMASONRY

Every school kid learns March 17 is the day we celebrate the life and deeds of Maewyn Succat, the second Bishop of Ireland, who is better known as Ireland's Patron Saint, St. Patrick. Those same school kids also learn Patrick's great triumph was chasing the snakes out of Ireland. It's true, there are no snakes in Ireland; however, that's more likely because there have never been any snakes on the isolated island.

Captured and taken into slavery as a youth, Maewyn, a.k.a. Patrick escaped to the European mainland. While a slave he had converted from paganism to Christianity, and once on the continent, he sought refuge at Marmoutier Abbey, a French monastery. There, he accepted his calling, which was to convert other pagans to Christianity. With that, he returned to Ireland and became very successful at making those

conversions. In a manner of speaking, the "serpents" he figuratively chased from Ireland were the pagan Druids, not actual reptiles.

After a successful ministry, Patrick retired to County Down, where he died on March 17, 461 A.D. Although never officially canonized by the Catholic Church he is, in fact, recognized as a saint; and today we celebrate the Feast of St. Patrick or St. Patrick's Day, on the anniversary of his death.

However, even in Ireland prior to the late 18th century, St. Patrick's Day was not that big of a deal. The same was true in North America, where the churches in Boston, with its large Irish population, didn't recognize the day until 1737.

"So, what," you may ask, "does this have to do with the Freemasons?"

About twenty years later, during the French-Indian War, a young Masonic Colonel recognized the morale among his troops was low and decided they needed what today we would call some "downtime." It was March, at the end of a long, brutal winter and many of the troops were Irish. It didn't take the Colonel long to figure out the best day to declare a general holiday would be St. Patrick's Day.

Several years later, that same Freemason, now a general in the American Revolution, faced a very similar problem. Billeted at Morristown, New Jersey, his troops were discouraged after a long winter of devastating fighting and losses. On top of that, the preceding winter of 1779-80 was brutally cold. That General, George Washington, again had many Irish troops under his command and once again he saw the opportunity of celebrating St. Patrick's Day to boost morale. With that, Washington issued the order giving his troops their first day off in over two years, "The General directs that all fatigue and working parties cease for tomorrow the SEVENTEENTH instant, a day held in particular regard by the people of [Ireland]."

The respite from the ravages of war and winter went over well with the troops, some of whom were said to celebrate with a "hogshead of rum." Washington is credited with establishing the first instances of a secular celebration of St. Patrick's Day, a tradition which caught on and has grown to become a major event today, with the hogshead of rum long replaced by freely flowing green beer.

Steven L. Harrison, 33°, PM, FMLR  
Midnight Freemason Contributor  
Annawon Lodge No. 115, West Haven, CT website

## THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

March 25, 1306

Robert the Bruce was chosen to be King of Scots and to lead the fight for Scottish independence against Edward I of England assisted by fugitive Knights Templar, escaped from France's Philip IV. His reign did not begin well. He was defeated by the English at Methven in Perthshire; his wife, daughter and sisters were imprisoned; and three of his brothers were executed by the English. Robert fled westward to the Antrim coast. However, he possessed real military genius and he was helped by the fact that in 1307 Edward I, the self-styled 'Hammer of the Scots', died and was succeeded by his less effective son Edward II. From 1307 onwards, with energy and determination, and later, with the help of the Templars, forerunners of modern Masonry, Robert waged highly successful guerrilla warfare against the English occupiers, establishing control north of the Forth, and gradually won back his kingdom. His campaign culminated in resounding victory over Edward II (whose larger army of 20,000 outnumbered Robert's forces by three to one) at the Battle of Bannockburn, near Stirling on 24 June 1314. Bannockburn confirmed the re-establishment of an independent Scottish monarchy.

### WHEN IS A MAN A MASON?

Joseph Fort Newton answers this question in the last paragraph of "The Builders," [1914] probably the most popular of all Masonic books, in these words:--"Then he can look out over the rivers, the hills and the far horizon with a profound sense of his own littleness in the vast scheme of things and yet have faith, hope and courage, which is the root of every virtue. When he knows that down in his heart every man is as noble, as vile, as divine, as diabolic and as lonely as himself; and seeks to know, to forgive and to love his fellow man. When he knows how to sympathize with men in their sorrows, yea, even in their sins-knowing that each man fights a hard fight against many odds. When he has learned how to make friends and to keep them and above all, how to keep friends with himself. When he loves flowers, can hunt birds without a gun and feels the thrill of an old forgotten joy when he hears the laugh of a little child. When he can be happy and high-minded amid the meaner drudgeries of life. When star-crowned trees and the glint of sunlight on flowing waters subdue him like the thought of one much loved and long dead. When no voice of distress reaches his ears in vain, and no hand seeks his aid without response. When he finds good in every faith that helps and man to lay hold of divine things and sees majestic meanings in life, whatever the name of that faith may be. When he can look into a wayside puddle and see something beyond mud, and into the face of the most forlorn fellow mortal and see something beyond sin. When he knows how to pray, how to love, how to hope. When he has kept faith with himself, with his God; in his hand a sword for evil, in his heart a bit of a song; glad to live, but not afraid to die! Such a man has found the only secret of Freemasonry, and the one which it is trying to give to all the world."

*Masonic Questions and Answers*, Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania

*Stay Safe and Healthy* - Follow the 3 "W's": wear a mask, wash your hands and watch your distance.

## THE CLOCK OF LIFE

The clock of life is wound but once,  
And no man has the power  
To tell just where the hands will stop,  
At late or early hour.  
Now is the only time you own  
Live, love, toil with a will,  
Place no faith in tomorrow,  
For the clock may then be still.

Author Unknown

### A MASONIC PRESIDENT OF THE U.S. FOR ONE DAY?

In the courthouse of Plattsburg, Missouri, there is a statue, bearing the inscription, "David Rice Atchison, 1807-1886, President of the United States for One Day."

The circumstances were the transition of office from President James Polk to Zachary Taylor. According to the law at that time, President Polk stepped down a President on Sunday, March 4, 1849. Zachary Taylor was a deeply religious man and refused to be inaugurated on a Sunday.

Thus, according to ascension laws, the office falls to Vice President George M. Dallas. However, his term also ended on March 4. Thus the Presidential line then falls to the President Pro Tem of the Senate, who was Brother David Rice Atchison.

The problem was debated in the Congress for several hours and it was agreed that Brother Atchison, although never inaugurated, was legally and by the Constitution, President of the United States from noon on March 4, 1849, until noon on March 5, 1849.

Brother Atchison was a member of Platte Lodge, No. 56, in Platte City, Missouri.

From an article in *Masonic Temple Topics*, February, 2014, and in the *Southern California Research Lodge Fraternal Review*, June, 1914, *Emessay Notes*, September 2014

"Growing old is no more than a bad habit which a busy man has no time to form." – Andre Maurois

### GLOSSARY – BALDACHIN

The canopy which is placed over the oriental chair in the Master's Lodge, and also denotes the covering of the Lodge itself, which is a symbol of the star-decked heavens, and a sign of the universality of Freemasonry. In Pritchard's catechism we meet with the following: "What has the Lodge for covering? Answer: "The vaulted skies of various colors, or the clouds."

Some think that the primitive Lodge was not covered above, and that the skies were literally its covering; hence the ceiling of a Lodge room is generally made to represent the celestial planisphere." The Baldachin, in this sense, is also a symbol of the extent of Freemasonry; for as the skies with their troops of stars, spread over all regions of the earth, so Freemasonry holds in its embrace all the world, and reaches through all time.

*A Dictionary of Freemasonry*, Robert Macoy