

# Peripatos

## LODGE NEWSLETTER



Raphael's "School of Athens", featuring Plato and Aristotle, the founders of the Academy & Lyceum.

Why "Peripatos"? What does a walkabout have to do with research and scholarship?

The original Peripatos was a pillared walkway around the Acropolis. Aristotle's Lyceum was held there, and Aristotle's teaching habit involved walking around as he expounded his ideas. He was thus the original Peripatetic philosopher.

### CONTACT US

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Or you can get involved with Lyceum and attend meetings.

### LYCEUM LODGE OF RESEARCH

#### REGULAR PROGRAMME

We tile at 19:00, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of March, June and October.

Our Installation is in November.



## District blanket drive

The annual blanket drive by our District is on, and Lyceum needs to come to the party.

Brethren, you are all actively involved in your Mother Lodges' benevolence. If, however, you have the resources to make an additional contribution on behalf of Lyceum, please do so. All you have to do is make an EFT in the usual way, with the note "blanket" where you would normally write in "subs".

## The Master's Voice

Autumn greetings, Brethren.

The next paper to be presented at Lyceum calls my first paper to Lyceum members in 2012. It was in a packed Lodge room #1. MWBro Dave Duncan first presented his insights, and I was next.

The DGM, RWBro Prof Charlesworth was in the audience, as were dignitaries from other Constitutions (inter-constitutional evening) and I was still an EA.

Talk about sweating bullets!

In June, we continue our South African Masonic theme – also giving new Brethren a voice. I have invited Bro Eric Cleaver from Kensington Lodge to be the speaker. He will present *Freemasons in the Great War*, a paper which was well received in his Mother Lodge.

Our podcast preparations continue. Are there any suggestions for a suitable name?



**If you have a presentation and would like to present it under Lyceum's banner - we are willing to attend the presentation done at your Lodge and add it to the Lyceum online library. - just reach out to us.**



## Lyceum down under

There has been news from Clan Stewart. Bro Bruce is making a regal progress through parts of Australia. Pictured left are Bruce and his grandson – a potential Lewis. The photo was taken by our other Stewart member, Bro Graeme.

Here, Bruce tells junior about his career as a naval warrant officer, perhaps selling the idea of a life at sea – after all, Graeme is only a surfer because he doesn't want to get in water above his head 🤔.

Other highlights have included visits to museums on Anzac Day, an Aussie rules football match at the SCG and, of course, the beach.



## EDITORIAL:

### THE HALLMARKS OF A THRIVING LODGE

A couple of weeks ago I had the unbelievably wonderful privilege of attending a Third Degree. I can say without reservation that it was the best Degree working I have ever seen in a quarter of a century of being a Mason. The Lodge shall remain nameless, to protect the guilty.

I had never visited this Lodge before, so I had no particular expectations one way or the other. It was a learning experience.

What a learning experience!

The Working was as close to word perfect as made no difference – on the one occasion a Brother stood up to do a Working for the first time, what was obvious was not his comparative lack of fluency, but the manner in which every Lodge member was *willing* him to succeed.

Indeed, the entire evening was characterized by a Brotherly love I do not recall seeing recently in any other Lodge - there was clear Fraternal respect and love, not just for the Candidate, but between the Brethren.

There was also a great deal of love for the Ritual. So much so, that it was clear that the Brethren were not just reciting the text (you can always tell mere recitation – the reciter has a look on his face and in his eyes that says he is reading the text off a blackboard just behind his eyes). These guys were relating to the ritual as if it was alive. Moreover, they were relating to the Candidate. He wasn't a stranger, he was *one of them*.

So what has that to do with a research Lodge?

As I mentioned last month, I had been reading WBro Rodney's reminiscences and immersing myself in the papers written by our founders. My experience of the Third Degree gave me a glimpse of what had to be the culture in Lyceum's early years.

In contrast, I was reminded of the dying days of a very beautiful Lodge in my Mother Constitution. Although there were sufficient Brethren in Lodge to do the floor Workings, the RWM did them all – it was too much hassle for him to beg and cajole the others to shift their stumps. But they religiously turned up to Lodge

to enjoy their RWM's efforts. He told me that they just *came to lodge to be entertained*.

When his dad suffered a stroke, that RWM used the opportunity to resign – in exhaustion. Barely 18 months later, the Lodge had faded into the sunset. There were other factors, but that Lodge was effectively maintained by the dedication and enthusiasm of just two Brethren, the RWM and the Secretary.

The word “Lodge” means, by definition, more than one [active] member. Otherwise, the word should be replaced by “cabaret”.

## Another myth about Masonry – a “false god” called TGAOTU.

This part of the newsletter was earmarked for a short piece by WBro Vernon van Wyk, one of my role models in Freemasonry. But I put it in a safe place . . .

When I find it, I will publish it. In the meantime, I hope he will accept my apologies...

Instead, I want to comment on an idea, that Freemasonry is a heretical cult whose deity is “The Great Architect of the Universe.” I even have a book entitled *The dark secret of GAOTU*. Not compelling reading.

When it comes to opposing Masonry, our critics suffer from a “dangerous thing” – too little knowledge.



Figure 1: Wien ca. 1250

The concept of the Great Architect was first enunciated by Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologica*. The illustration here, dates from the period in which St Thomas Aquinas's ideas were becoming mainstream in the then Catholic Church.

Not to be out done, the great intellectual of the Reformation, John Calvin refers to G-d as the Great Architect in his commentary on Psalm 19, and passim in his Institutes of 1536.

Freemasonry, as the handmaiden of religion is merely following the lead given by both sides in the great Reformation schism.

## The final word (hopefully) on an old controversy . . .

There is a myth that The United States government is a Masonic construct, and therefore sinister, evil and inimical to ordinary citizens.

By extension, a lie has also grown up around Freemasonry that it seeks to create a “One World Government.”



The circumstantial evidence offered for this conspiracy theory is the reverse of the Great Seal of the United States, as portrayed on American bank notes – specifically the “All-seeing Eye” in the ben-ben stone of the pyramid, and the motto: “Novus ordo seclorum.” (A new order for the ages).



But that eye is *not* a Masonic symbol; we did not create it and had no hand in its adoption by the Congress of the United States of America. But we have, since its inclusion in the symbols of American government, adopted it in some of our own

symboly, as it is a beautiful icon for G-d's omniscience and providence.

Because of the almost universal superstition in Western society that the Supreme Being is only interested in judgement and damnation (the Angry Old Man With a Beard), this so-called Masonic symbol is interpreted as "Big Brother is watching you" (Orwell: 1984: passim).



It is all a distortion!

The original name for the All-Seeing Eye was "The Eye of Providence", a most beneficent idea, derived *inter alia* from Psalm 32,

verse 8: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." (King James version). The Biblical image is one of loving care, without the implied hostile scrutiny, à la George Orwell, a great comfort. The Eye is placed in a triangle, a clear reference to the Holy Trinity.

There isn't even a design-reference or connection with pre-Christian ideas, such as the Eye of Horus.

It rather calls to mind the words of a beautiful hymn (Psalm-based) "Father like he tends and spares us,| well our feeble frame He knows. | In his hands He gently bears us, | rescues us from all our foes."

So where does this symbol come from? An artist, Pantormo by name, depicted one of the most joyous incidents in the post-Passiontide story – the supper at Emmaus (1525).

If the idea of an eye in a triangle is from Renaissance art, and is not Orwellian, how did it come to be in the American Great Seal? Blame a Frenchman.

No less than three Congressional committees worked on the design of the Great Seal until it was finally accepted by Congress in 1782.

The inclusion of the Eye of Providence was suggested by a consultant to the committee, Du Simitière, who was not a Mason, but clearly an educated man.

The only known Freemason who served on any of the three committees was Benjamin Franklin. He only served on the first committee.

Freemasons began to use the Eye of Providence after 1797 (the Constitution of the United States was adopted in 1787). It first appeared in Webb's *Masonic monitor*: (see Wikipedia).



#### Summary:

It was not originally a Masonic symbol; we adopted it *after* it was adopted by the American Founding Fathers, to whom it was suggested in 1782 by a French artistic consultant. (Note that the American War of Independence ended in 1783...)

Our version is not a spectacularly beautiful image. Note that it did not even include the triangle. It is nothing like the image on the Great Seal, nor ought it be used to suggest that Masons use too much eye shadow . . .

So. No angry Divine judgement, no Masonic political influence, no conspiracy to rule the world. Nothing sinister at all. Just a source of solace to Masonic Believers. What a let down for those who want to believe ill of us!

May the GAOTU continue to look on us with compassion, and aid us in our endeavours to bring solace and relief to each other and the world at large.