



Scottish News

***From the Clan of the
Georgia Highlands Association
Royal Order of Scotland***



ANNUAL BANQUET WILL BE ON THE 4TH DECEMBER, 2010, MACON, GA.

Clan Happenings

Sir Knights, our new year is off to a good start. We have elected a new slate of Officers and are off to a good start. The new Officers for this year are as follows:

President - Harry Allen
 Vice President - Gary Lemmons
 Chaplain - C Danny Wofford
 Screening Chair - Carl Hyde
 Secretary/Treasurer - Rick Conn
 Webmaster - Richard Gibson

Nominations Committee consist of;

Kenny White, Gordon Smith & Larry Hoff

Our new President, Sir Knight Harry Allen, called and held our first meeting at the Atlanta Masonic Temple on the 19th of January with 4 Officers and 2 quests present. Our Annual Banquet is planned for the first Saturday in December, 2010, at the Idle Hour Country Club in Macon again this year. For all that did not or could not attend this past years Banquet you missed some good fellowship, a great speaker, a great meal, and maybe a wee dram of Scotch (or two). Hope that more can attend this years Banquet. We always have a good crowd for our Banquet with more than 60% of our membership attending. Thanks to Ladies Sandy Copelan, Ann Hyde, and Leng Conn for their help in the decorations. It all looked terrific.

You should have received your letters by now from the Provincial Grand Lodge of the USA informing all of the dates for the meeting in 2010. If you have anyone that you think might be desirous of this Honor, please get an application, nominate them and get it to our Screening Chairman Sir Knight Carl Hyde for approval. For a recap, the meetings will be

held as follows:

Grand Rapids, MI - July 17th
 Des Moines, IA - August 21st
 Philadelphia, PA - September 1st
 Tampa, FL - October 16th

Our little Clan is growing some, slow but growing and I am still in hopes that some day soon that it will be a viable part of our Georgia Masonic family events. More family and fun than business and you all know that some fun is always a pleasure for a break from our 'Labours'.

Chaplains Corner

The Door

Holman Hunt's great picture, "The Light of the World," shows the Christ at midnight, with a lantern in his upraised left hand, while in his right hand He is knocking on a heavily paneled door. When the picture was unveiled, a critic is said to have exclaimed, "Mr. Hunt, you haven't finished your picture, there is no handle on that door!" Mr. Hunt responded, "That is the door to the human heart, it can only be opened from the inside."

Doesn't that teach us something in Freemasonry? All of us have often heard that passage of Scripture, "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." Have you noted that the important words, "Ask," "seek," "knock" are composed of a progressive number of letters, three in "ask," four in "seek," and five in "knock," giving us three of the mysterious and sacred numbers of Masonry. Also the initials of the three words, "A," "S" and "K" give a repetition of the first word, "Ask."

We use this passage of Scripture to point out that the one wishing to become a Mason can't rush up to the door, open it, and crash in. He must wait for it to be opened from the inside. Symbolically there is no handle on the outside of our preparation door.

Then, after we have received the degrees, we have to open our hearts to the Lessons and Teachings of Freemasonry. They can't be pumped into us through our ears. We have to open our hearts and invite inside what Freemasonry has to offer; what it is ready to give.

There is no handle on the outside. Open your hearts, Brethren, to our beautiful Symbols, our beautiful Allegories, and our beautiful Teachings.

C. Danny Wofford, PGM
Chaplain

Screening Committee

Sir Knights, the closest 2010 meeting is October 16th in Tampa, FL. If you have any candidates you want in this class, you need to get an application to me as soon as possible.

Fraternally, Carl Hyde,
Screening Committee Chairman

Scottish Trivia

Sir Knights, have you ever wondered why there is no "Masonic" Tartan? Here is one reason that I learned in my research.

Why no Masonic Tartan?

When the Grand Lodge of Scotland was founded in 1736 there were approximately 100 Lodges in existence, scattered across Scotland. These were mainly stonemasons' lodges, although there were a few with a mixed membership and at least one that had no stonemasons at all as members. Scottish Freemasonry in the form of The Grand Lodge of Scotland was confronted with difficulty from the outset as it attempted to regulate the affairs of so many independent Lodges. Indeed, support for the new body appeared to be lukewarm at best. All known Lodges were invited to attend the inaugural meeting held on 30 November 1736 in Edinburgh. Only 33 attended or sent representatives to that meeting. Of those, 12 decided not to pursue membership of the new body any further and never became part of the Scottish Grand Lodge 'system'

It was not until 1891 that the last of these independent Lodges became a Daughter Lodge of the Grand Lodge of Scotland. In order to be accepted as

the governing body, the Grand Lodge of Scotland had to compromise on many issues, and it is those compromises which make Scottish Freemasonry unique in world Freemasonry. The new Grand Lodge of Scotland 'granted' a great deal of power to existing Lodges - it could not do otherwise, as such lodges preceded it by many years and already had such powers. For this reason, Lodges under the Scottish Constitution are independent, sovereign, bodies in their own right, and Grand Lodge has quite a different relationship with its daughter Lodges than other Constitutions have with theirs. That relationship, together with the culture and history of the Scottish people, has ensured that Scottish Freemasonry has a very different character from other forms of Freemasonry. Perhaps these are some of the reasons why Scottish Freemasonry is so attractive to men outside Scotland.

Lodges which had existed prior to the formation of the Grand Lodge retained many of their local practices and traditions, which nearly always differed from place to place. This is one reason why Scottish Lodges have the right to devise their own ritual — within reason, of course! There is no such thing as a 'standard' Scottish Masonic ritual, and in theory there could be as many rituals as there are Lodges, although in practice Lodges adopt an existing ritual and adapt it to suit their aspirations. Given that all Scottish Lodges had this amount of independence before Grand Lodge, then Lodges founded after 1736 expected - and gained - the same degree of independence. This applied not only to Lodges in Scotland but also to those in other parts of the world such as the United States of America and Canada where many Scottish Lodges were established.

This local autonomy manifested itself not only in wide variations of ritual but also had an effect on many other aspects of Lodge organisation and practice. The most obvious difference is Scottish regalia, particularly aprons. A Lodge in one part of the country may have used red for its aprons and other regalia, whereas a Lodge on the other side of the country may have used blue or green or a combination of colours. With no standard colours imposed on daughter Lodges, they continued with existing designs. For this reason, all Scottish Lodges can choose which colour(s) to use for their regalia.

The reasons for the choice of colour might be

obscure, but more often than not there is a conscious decision taken by the founder members when choosing a particular colour or combination of colours. For instance: Lodge Tullibardine-in-the-East, No.1118 (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia) chose Murray Tartan as this was the clan tartan of the Dukes of Atholl, and John George Murray, Marquis of Tullibardine, was Grand Master Mason at the time the lodge was founded (1913). Lodge Celtic No 291, founded in 1821, uses Royal Stewart tartan, and one of the Lodge's avowed intentions was to 'promote the wearing of tartan within the Scottish Craft'. This was a romantic - and late - reaction to the repeal of the Act of Proscription of 1746, which, among other things, had banned the wearing of tartan and the playing of bagpipes.

The choice of a tartan for Scottish Masonic regalia can, like other colours, be for a number of reasons but, because tartan is uniquely Scottish, several specific reasons for their selection can be identified:

- (1)The use of a clan tartan by a Lodge which is located in the clan's area.
- (2)The use of the tartan of a particular Freemason, e.g. the Grand Master Mason at the time a Lodge was founded,
- (3)The clan tartan of the Founding Master.
- (4)The Tartan used by the majority of members, e.g. a Lodge founded by members of the Black Watch
- (5)The selection of a tartan for 'romantic' reasons; e.g. one associated with Bonnie Prince Charlie - the Royal Stewart tartan.
- (6)The Founder Members of the lodge simply liked the colours!

What becomes clear from this very brief investigation of the use of tartan by Masonic Lodges is that Scottish Lodges have never thought, nor wanted, to have a 'common' Masonic tartan. Instead, they have deliberately chosen to use existing tartans as this permits enormous choice. This is entirely in accordance with the Scottish mentality of 'non-standardization' - a peculiar concept in this world of ever-increasing conformity and standardization. The Scottish Masonic mentality abhors this process of standardization - certainly within Freemasonry. That is not a criticism of other Constitutions, but simply an observation of the differences between Scottish Masonic practice and that which pertains elsewhere. Scottish Lodges revel in their differences, one from another, and this is

manifested visually by the 'colour' of regalia. The choice of colours, combinations of colours, and the use of tartan is sufficient evidence of this independence of mind. This independence in terms of Ritual, Regalia, Colours, Officers, and Symbolism does not mean that there is a fundamental difference between Scottish Freemasonry and other forms of Freemasonry. (14) As a colloquial Scottish saying has it: 'It's the same but different'. In other words, the whole world is out of step with Scotland - and we are okay with that!

Given that Scottish Lodges, not only in Scotland, enjoy the ability to express their individuality at Lodge (rather than state or country level) in terms of Regalia, Ritual and Regulation (the three Scottish Masonic R's), the reader might well understand the Scottish Masonic 'shudder' at the thought of the 'invention' of a Universal Masonic tartan, for that would herald the introduction of the kind of Masonic standardisation alien to Scottish Freemasons and this is why, ultimately, there can be no such thing as a standard, universal, Masonic, Tartan.

Robert L. D. Cooper, Curator,

The Grand Lodge of Scotland
Museum and Library

From the Secretary's Desk

Sir Knights, along with this newsletter I send to you, the dues notices for 2010 for those that have not paid yet. Please remit to me: Rick Conn, 2683 Brocklin Drive, Grayson, GA. 30017. Make checks out to Ga Highland Assoc. ROS. Thank you. For those that have paid their dues, your dues card should be included with this mailing. Again, Thank you.

We had a good year last year and am looking forward to another one this year.

Thanks for all the support that you have given to your Clan in the past and I am looking forward to seeing you all again at our Annual Banquet. For those with a computer, please email me your email address so I can add you to the ROS group list and also visit our beautiful website at:

<http://gahighlandsros.org/default.aspx>

May God Bless, Yours Aye
Rick Conn, Editor/Publisher