

Celebrate our past....To build our future

More than a third of all U.S. Presidents have been Masons. A large number of signers of the Constitution were Masons. Throughout the wars of our history, many famous Generals and military leaders were Masons. Countless numbers of Masons have gained fame and notoriety for their achievements and accomplishments in the field of arts, business, and science and industry.

This is part of our rich legacy we have inherited as Masons. Should we cast this aside and only concentrate on what lurks in the future? Of course not! We should never lose sight of Fraternal's glorious past, but we can ill afford to live in the past...of those golden days of yesteryear. As is often said in today's business environment, "Don't tell me about the storms you've weathered. Did you bring the ship in safely?" In other words, "What have you done for Masonry lately?"

Masonry in Virginia extends back to 1778 when times were simpler, but yet more difficult in contrast to the conveniences we enjoy today. It took a dedicated effort on the part of loyal and committed Masons to establish a Masonic presence. That presence, in large part, we enjoy today. Masons literally traveled along little more than foot paths by the light of the moon to attend lodge. By their service to the community and to their members, the impact made by those Masons, was indeed extensive.

It's interesting to reminisce and recollect our long and rich history in Fraternal Lodge. But, I have a concern. My concern is that too many symbolic lodges and too many Virginia Masons have for too long not merely reflected upon our past, but some have perhaps been living in the past. Those brethren have been resting upon the laurels and accomplishments made by our Masonic forefathers.

When this occurs, lethargy and apathy begin to set in. Attendance falters; the line of dedicated officers grows thin. We perhaps stop doing the things that once earned us the admiration and respect of the public. We assume the public will always know who Masons are, what they do, and the good they perform. It's simply is not so. As an organization, we have already missed out on at least one generation of men, and could be about to lose another.

Our Masonic forefathers had to adapt, overcome, and innovate in establishing a rich legacy, that we have inherited. As Masons of today, what are we doing with our inheritance? In order for us to continue this heritage, we must not only accept change, but welcome change and embrace it, without sacrificing our principles of Faith, Hope, and Charity. Someone once said, "Change is the law of life, and those who look only to the past are certain to miss the future." From the Book of Proverbs we read, "He who is without vision is lost."

My brethren, this Lodge must set our vision for the future, while keeping our glorious past in sight. We must begin immediately to consider the road ahead, and how we can navigate it safely, and remain a part of this gentle Craft. We can't change yesterday, but we can build for tomorrow. For our continued success, join with me as we "Celebrate Our Past...and Build Our Future!"

Living Stones - Masonic Thoughts for Today's Mason

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