

FREEMASONRY IS FUN

I recall that whenever Most Reverend Bill Archer, Past Grand Chaplain closed a talk, he asked: "When is the last time YOU told someone, Masonry Is Fun!?" Indeed, FUN is a prerequisite for anything in life: work, games, home, family. The two-time Olympic Gold Medalist in hurdling put it rather well when he said, "If a man can work his own hours and make a living out of doing something he loves to do, don't you think he would go out and be the best he could be at it!"¹ So, to me Masonry and Fun are synonymous. In fact, there are three components of FUN that are embodied in Masonry: Fellowship, Unity, and Necessity.

FELLOWSHIP is perhaps the most important part of every Masonic meeting. Sure, the business is important, the ritual is important, but how can you replace the contact, Brother to Brother, that you gain in fellowship? The friendly faces, the smiles that brighten the remainder of the day, the warm handshakes and backslapping and often a few new jokes to add to the repertoire. Suppose, for example, you do a superb job in one of part of the ritual, you really don't learn about it until the fellowship part of the meeting. Likewise, if you really goofed the lecture and you get down on yourself because you know it better than that, as soon as you get to fellowship, some good Brother (who probably went through the same feelings at some point) says, "Don't worry, I know you'll get it next time!" Fellowship!!! that is the first key component of FUN.

UNITY: where else do you feel most secure, most happy and most at ease but in a place where the underlying principles and thoughts are the same as yours. Sure, you don't all agree on whether to have a Ladies' Night or what to spend or who the next speaker ought to be, but the underlying, fundamental beliefs are the same. We believe in that one true God although we may know him by different names. We believe in the Brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God. We believe in our country, loyalty, morality, etc..

Having the opportunity of representing the Grand Lodge of Delaware on several occasions in other Grand Jurisdictions, I am even further convinced of our Unity and common purpose. And this is deeper than just within the United States; I have been in meetings with the Dep. G. M. of Yugoslavia, the Provincial G.M. of France, the Provincial G.M. of the Grand Lodge of Iran in Exile. Truly, there is a unity or universality to Masonry the world over.

NECESSITY is more than the Mother of Invention! John Robinson told a group of us at the Conference of Grand Masters in 1992 that Masonry IS the last great hope of civilization in this time of immorality, greed and temptation; that our fraternity actually rises above the petty arguments and religious issues that breed contention, intolerance and even sheds blood. Along this line, one of the best explanations of what Masonry is comes from an answer given by a character I have played in one of the Scottish Rite degree dramas. Being asked by a profane what Masonry is, Zerubbabel replies:

What our belief and what our mission is nor words nor time suffice. Enough to say should it occur [which God forbid!] that ere from the alter of our faith the hand of hate should sweep the sacred fire quenching in darkness belief in God and hope of immortality, in our Fraternity a shrine would still be found, and thousands thence of worshippers would haste to raise the overturned altar of their God.

My Brothers, the Great Light in Masonry will never go out, as long as we have Fellowship, Unity and Necessity, FUN. So in keeping with the theme of this talk, "When is the last time YOU told someone that Masonry is Fun?"

¹ Ferguson, Howard E., *The Edge*, Getting the Edge Company; Cleveland, OH; 1990; p 4-35.