

February 2021

18th District Light

Journal of the 18th Masonic District

LODGES OF THE 18TH DISTRICT

Audubon-Parkside #218
Campana de Libertad #376
Collingswood-Cloud #101
Laurel #237
Lazarus #303
Merchantville #119
Mozart #121
Rising Sun #15
USS NJ #62

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**The Case for the
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18th District Light: Journal of the 18th Masonic District

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BACK ISSUES OF THE 18TH DISTRICT LIGHT CAN BE FOUND AT:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B1zPsUAMCi4Oc0YxSTBKS18xYUk>

THE 18TH DISTRICT BLUEBOOK CAN BE FOUND AT:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1tQMIPxzmFirdAeFIXabMTZMMB1Sz-ZJk>

FROM THE EDITOR

Brethren,

In my relatively new role as a Grand Chaplain I am coming into more frequent contact with Brothers in our District who are themselves ailing or have close family members who are suffering. And while the 18th District Light is a celebration of the activities of our Lodges, my official duties as Grand Chaplain have impressed upon me a renewed appreciation for the needs of those among us who may be in the grasp of misfortune, even if, GAOTU willing, only temporarily.

As the New Year progresses, I hope all of you who are blessed with good health, in both your person and in your families, will continue to keep in mind Brothers in your lodge who may not be so fortunate. Now, more than ever, with the social limitations placed upon us by the pandemic, we need to remember and practice the fundamental Masonic tenet of Brotherly Love. Talk to your Worshipful Master, or Secretary, or a Sick & Visiting Chairman, and find out who in your lodge would appreciate a friendly call from a Brother. Reach out with a kind word and a reminder that we are always here for one another with a prayer or a helping hand.

May the Supreme Architect grant us all peace and good health in the coming year.

Dave

The world is my country, all mankind are my brethren, and to do good is my religion.

— Thomas Paine



THE COPIALE CIPHER

and the Great Enlightened Society of Oculists

by WB Martin Bogardus, Collingswood-Cloud Lodge No. 101



One by one some of the greatest unsolved ciphers, such as the Voynich manuscript, the fourth passage on the CIA's Kryptos sculpture by Jim Sanborn, and the Beale papers, are being submitted to analysis by modern computer techniques and natural machine language algorithms. One of the latest mysterious ciphers to reveal its secrets is the Copiale cipher, thought to have been written around 1742-1760 by *The Great Enlightened Society of Oculists*, an early Freemasonic society. The Copiale cipher was cracked in 2011¹ by an international team consisting of Kevin Knight, of the University of Southern California Information Sciences Institute and USC Viterbi School of Engineering, Beáta Megyesi, and Christiane Schaefer, both of Uppsala University in Sweden.

Discovered in the East Berlin Academy after the "Cold War," the Copiale cipher consists of an elaborately bound volume of 105 pages of gold and green brocade paper bearing some 75,000 characters comprising 90 distinct symbols — a perplexing mix of Greek and Roman letters, and pictograms. The name of the cipher comes from one of only two non-coded inscriptions in the document.

During the early days of Freemasonry, it was common for secretive societies to encode their

rituals on parchment in order to protect them from the uninitiated. Beyond basic privacy concerns, this was deemed necessary owing to Pope Clement the 12th's 1738 prohibition against Catholics joining secretive orders, religious organizations, and governments. He further discouraged all Europeans from affiliating with such groups by alleging that the followers of these secretive orders were practicing satanic rituals. In response to his edict, secret societies began using encoded documents to protect themselves and their membership from persecution.²

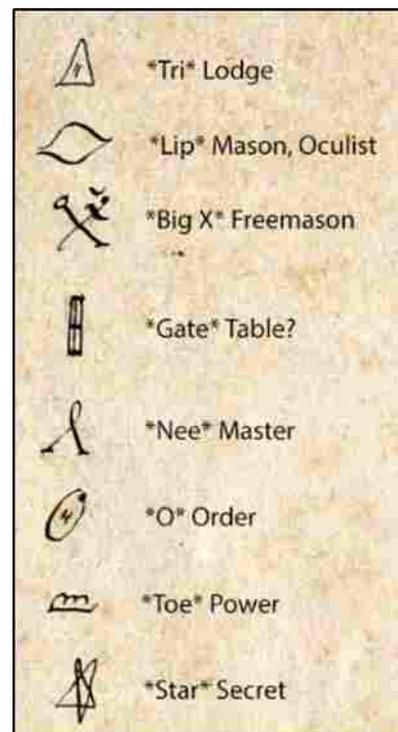
Veiling themselves from the long arm of secular and religious powers, many secret societies took up rites and rituals of their own to pass on their thoughts and ideas in coded language. The ideals thus expressed would eventually challenge monarchies across North America and Europe and usher in more democratic forms of government, a phenomenon best illustrated by the American Declaration of Independence written some 30-40 years later, rendering the encoded beliefs of some secret societies antecedent to enlightenment ideals.

The Great Enlightened Society of Oculists was for centuries misunderstood as a shadowy tribe of optometrists—a strange secret club for those weirdly fascinated by the human eye. But the true mission and ideals of the GESO was passed on in an encrypted text undeciphered for 260 years, buried beneath a sophisticated cipher of symbols and Greco-Roman letters.

In places, the Oculist society cipher reads like a revolutionary manifesto, describing the order of rule and governance of monarchies as “*a three-headed monster that deprives man of his natural freedom.*”³

In a social landscape ripe for secret societies offering safe haven to newly developing scientific and political ideas, the GESO was anything but preoccupied with professional endeavors of an ophthalmological nature. Hidden within this social construct, the GESO offered a unique breeding ground for new thoughts and enlightenment ideals, and appears to have had an attitude towards allowing female members that was surprisingly progressive for its time.

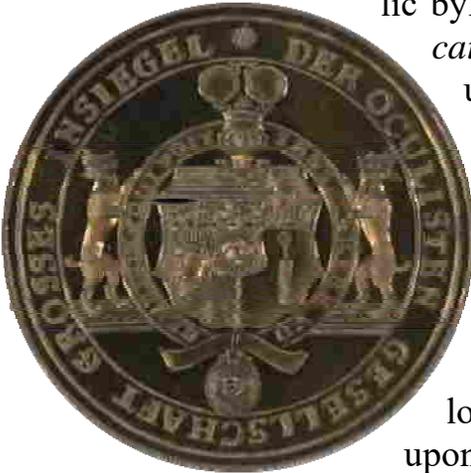
According to Noah Shachtman, former writer for *Wired* magazine, writing on the subject of such secret societies, “*Though they were clandestine, they were often remarkably inclusive. Many welcomed noblemen and merchants alike—a rare egalitarian practice in an era of strict social hierarchies. That made the orders dangerous to the state. They also frequently didn't care about their adherents' Christian denomination, making these orders—especially the biggest of them, Freemasonry—an implicit threat to the authority of the Catholic Church... These societies were the incubators of democracy, modern science, and ecumenical religion. They elected their own leaders and drew up constitutions to govern their operations. It wasn't*



Copiale Cipher Pictograms

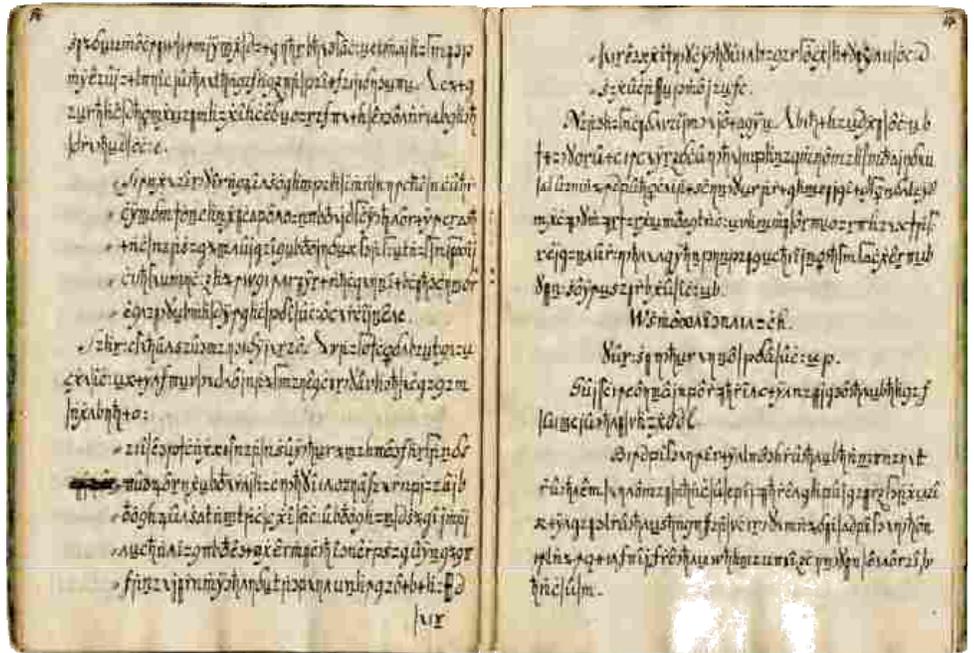
an accident that Voltaire, George Washington, and Ben Franklin were all active members.”⁴

The Great Enlightened Society of Oculist’s coin features a cataract needle, a pince-nez, and two cats watching over mice, perhaps alluding to the oculist belief in sight as a metaphor for knowledge. Publicly, members of the GESO performed eye surgeries, boasting in their public bylaws “that we exceed all other healers by being able to pierce cataracts, only those with a ‘light hand’ need apply,” a phrase used in their public bylaws and also in their secret cipher as a reference to their member’s surgical skills. Describing themselves as gatekeepers to the burgeoning field of ophthalmology, they wished to keep out all charlatans who preyed on unsuspecting patients, as they openly declare in their cipher.



The cipher depicts the initiation ceremony for hopeful apprentices. Surrounded only by candlelight, the candidate has to lower himself onto a taboret (a low stool or small table) and look upon a seemingly blank piece of paper. If, after a while, he answers that he cannot see anything written on the paper, the Master of Ceremonies places a pair of eye glasses on the candidate and again asks him if he is able to read any writing. The candidate replies that he still cannot see. The Master of Ceremonies comforts the candidate, raising his hopes for improvement by washing his eyes with a cloth, stating that if this doesn't help, he will announce to the lodge that they have to proceed with an operation on the candidate’s eyes. The candidate is told not to panic; there is still hope that his vision may improve. The Master wearing an amulet with a blue eye in the center selects a pair of tweezers from the table. The members in attendance take up candles and place themselves around the candidate.

The master starts plucking hairs from the candidate's eyebrow. This is a ritualistic procedure; no flesh is cut, but the master assures the candidate that these are "symbolic actions out of which none are without meaning," The candidate then places his hand on the master's amulet with the master telling the candidate to try reading the paper once again while surreptitiously replacing the blank page with another filled with



Two pages from the Copiale cipher.

handwritten text. “*Congratulations, brother!*” the members say, “*Now you can see!*” The candidate can now read the text of the oculist society pledging allegiance and completing this secret initiation.

Dr. Andreas Önnorfors, Worshipful Master of Quatuor Coronati No. 2076 in 2020, is Professor in the *History of Sciences and Ideas at University of Gothenburg, Sweden*. In his paper, *Unveiling the Copiale-manuscript: layers of fraternalism, ritual and politics in eighteenth century Germany*,⁵ Önnorfors breaks the Copiale Cipher into five sections:

- Oculist-Order, p. 1-27
- Masonic degrees I-III, p. 27-68
- Scottish Master, p. 68-99
- “Key lodge”, p. 100-104
- Alchemical lodge, s. 104-105

The first section describes the initiation and degree ceremonies of the “*Highly Illuminated Order of Oculists*.” The other four sections declare that the “*most secret intention*” (p. 25) of the Oculist Society is actually to expose the secrets of Freemasonry, and are dedicated to providing a thorough description of various “mainstream” Masonic degrees (Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason) (p. 27-68) as well as the Scottish Master degree (p. 68-99), the so-called “Key lodge” (apparently a deviation from or different variety of the Scottish Master degree) (p.100-104) and a so-called (“Consolation lodge”) practicing alchemical workings on the last two pages.

As Masons, we are well acquainted with the first three degrees, so no explanation is required. The Scottish Master degree is considered the original fourth degree, similar to the Royal Arch in Britain, and is a narrative continuation of the Third degree. The first theme of the Scottish Master degree is the rediscovery of the lost Master’s word found in the debris of Solomon’s Temple (during Christian mediaeval times). The second theme is Hiram’s identity as a priest with access to the Holy of Holies. The candidate is purged with water as a Levite and is granted access. Hiram is, according to different versions of the legend, buried in the Sanctum Sanctorum.

Around roughly the same time another degree is developed, “*Maître élu*” - Selected Master. This degree centers on the discovery and punishment of Adoniram’s murderers. Adoniram was the tax collector in the Kingdom of Israel for over forty years, from the late years of King David's reign until the reign of Rehoboam. According to the biblical narrative, he was stoned to death by the people of Israel when Rehoboam sent him in an attempt to collect taxes (1 Kings 12:18).⁶

The Selected Master degree is later placed in between section three and the original fourth as an intermediate theme. Section four turns into degree five or six, thematically demonstrating clear chivalric and sacerdotal (priestly) motifs.

The main theme of the *Schlüsselloge* (Key lodge) is that tyranny has taken natural liberty from

man; the Freemasons/Oculist Order are called to arms to regain it. (p. 104)

Q: How were you accepted into the Key-lodge?

A: As I was born from my mother's womb, that is free, not a servant and subjected to no human law, but obedient only to that of God.

The last two pages (p. 104-105) talk about alchemical workings in a lodge (Konsolutions-Loge) with a separate tracing board where their ceremonies and signs are described. Their main purpose is the “fixation of Mercury,” (the process of making mercury solid).

A complete English transcript of the Copiales Cipher can be found at:

<https://cl.lingfil.uu.se/~bea/copiale/copiale-translation.pdf>.⁷

For those interested in learning more about how the Copiale Cipher was finally decrypted, a copy of the report, courtesy of the USC Information Sciences Institute, may be found here:

<https://www.isi.edu/natural-language/people/copiale-11.pdf>.⁸ 

Endnotes

1. Wikipedia, ed. Copiale cipher. Wikipedia, May 20, 2020.

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2. Wikipedia, ed. In eminenti apostolatus. Wikipedia, December 28, 2020.

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<https://freemasonlifestyle.com/masonic-articles/2017/12/21/copiales-3>.

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<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/secret-societies-you-might-not-know-180958294/>

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7. Knight, K., 2011. Copiale Cipher English Translation. [online] Cl.lingfil.uu.se. Available at: <<https://cl.lingfil.uu.se/~bea/copiale/copiale-translation.pdf>>.

8. Kevin Knight, Beáta Megyesi and Christiane Schaefer, The Copiale Cipher, USC Information Sciences Institute, Wednesday, May 11, 2011.

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THE CASE FOR THE “OXFORD” COMMA

Little Things Mean a Lot

by RW David A. Frankel, Rising Sun Lodge No. 15

These days it’s almost politically incorrect to ask people to care about proper grammar. The advent of texts, tweets, and emogis has ushered in an era of faceless, rapid-fire interpersonal communication in which content has been largely reduced to acronymical miniaturization and a seemingly infinite variety of emojis, i.e.,



pictographs.

Pictographs, by the way, represent the earliest form of written communication known to man, with some examples from ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia dating back beyond 3000 years BCE.

We have come full circle, it seems, effectively regressing to the earliest concept of writing conceived by the ancients. Emojis are the 21st century’s hieroglyphics! Five thousand years worth of advancement in the precision of written language is being cast upon the trash heap of history by a trendy approach to writing foisted upon us by arbitrary character limits and lazy literacy.

Alas, if vocabulary and grammar are riding to oblivion in the lounge car of the Emoji Express, then punctuation is no doubt in the baggage car, going along for the ride. Ergo, it stands to reason that trying to engage most folks with the technical minutiae of something so un-emoji-like as a simple comma, will likely produce more glazed eyeballs than the number of glazed doughnuts one might find at Dunkin’ or Krispy Kreme.

Nevertheless, *grammar* heads the list of the seven liberal arts and sciences which we, as Freemasons, are exhorted to study. If we can’t pay due respect to the tiny flick of the pen that is the comma, then we deserve the same fate as the employer whose comma-carelessness cost them a cool FIVE MILLION clams!

Enter stage right — the debate on the use of the “Oxford” comma, alternatively known as the “serial” comma. Of the several different commas, this baby is the one that has produced a pro and con chasm as deep and wide as the divide between conservatives and liberals!

First things first. If you look up the definition of “comma” in various sources, you will find variations on a theme, but



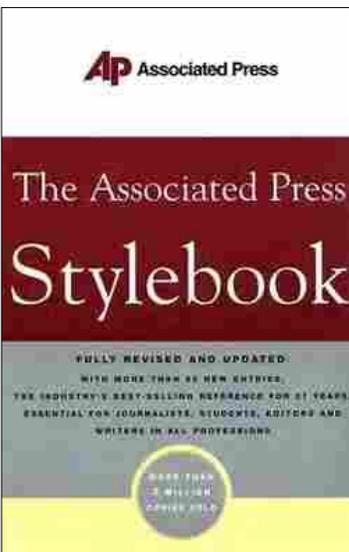
a comma, essentially, is a punctuation mark that (a) indicates a pause in a sentence, (b) is used before the words *and* or *but* to join two independent clauses, (c) separates items in a list, and (d) marks the divisions between thousands, millions, billions, etcetera, in large numerals. If you delve deeper, you may find that the comma is second only to the period in frequency of appearance among punctuation marks, and that punctuation technophiles identify at least four different *kinds* of commas — the listing comma, the joining comma, the gapping comma, and the bracketing comma.

We shall eschew that level of technical pigeonholing, as our primary focus here is only item (c) in the foregoing definition, specifically, the use of the comma when separating items in a list, especially the final item.

For anyone who started school before (approximately) 1960, you were probably trained to use a comma to separate all the items in a list, including placing a comma before either the *and* or the *or*, which tend to appear before the final item in a list. As in: “We studied math, history, geography, *and* science in school today.”

While at first blush that last comma may seem unnecessary, it becomes very necessary if the sentence is more like: “I owe my success to my parents, Professor Smith and God.” Without the final comma, the sentence implies that it isn’t a list of three items at all, but that the speaker’s parents are Professor Smith and God! Another example involves compound items in the list. For example: “Some colors and color combinations that I don’t like are blue, red and green, orange, yellow and purple, and brown.” Awkwardness of the structure aside, it’s a perfectly legitimate sentence, and without the final comma it would imply that the three-color combo of yellow-purple-brown is what offends the writer, when in fact it is a two-color combo and the individual color brown that are in question.

The use of the comma to separate the final item in the list has been attributed to Horace Hart, printer and controller of the Oxford University Press from 1893 to 1915, who immortalized it in his own style guide, *Hart’s Rules for Compositors and Readers*, written in 1905 for O.U.P. employees. It wasn’t called the Oxford comma at the time; that came later. But it made sense. It avoided ambiguity. There was no debate, nor any reason to debate that simple rule. And so it spread and became the acceptable way of doing things for many years.



But in 1953 the AP (Associated Press) Stylebook burst upon the scene recommending that the final comma — the one before *and* or *or* — be dropped unless it was absolutely necessary to avoid ambiguity. Whether the true impetus behind the AP approach was, as many argue, simply to reduce the number of typographical characters in news stories, thereby theoretically saving paper, or was simply someone’s whim or rampant laziness, it was, this author argues, a really bad idea.

Still, in the heyday of the newspaper, the AP stylebook carried a lot of weight. It became adopted as a standard by many businesses, and ultimately found its way into schools, muddying the waters around what had been a simple, effective, and for all practical purposes universally accepted rule. New generations of students were trained to reject the Oxford comma, and that early training, predictably, became entrenched and vigorously defended by its adherents.

So, what’s the big deal, you say. The big deal is the difference between a simple absolute rule, that everyone can follow to avoid ambiguity, and a rule which leaves it up to the individual writer to decide what may or may not be ambiguous to a reader. There’s a good idea — relying on the individual idiosyncrasies of millions of individual writers. What could possibly go wrong?!

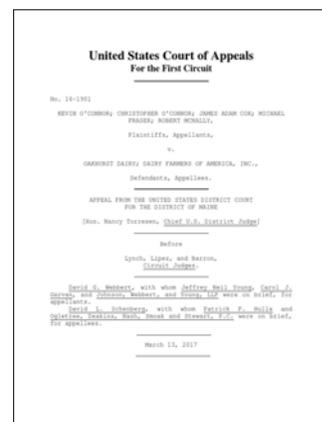
Let’s pose that question to the proprietors of Oakhurst Dairy, in Portland, Maine. The dairy company was happily doing business, paying (or not) its employees overtime in compliance (they thought) with a Maine state law, which said, in part, that overtime rules **do not** apply to:

. . . the canning, processing, preserving, freezing, drying, marketing, storing, packing for shipment or distribution of:

- (1) Agricultural produce;*
- (2) Meat and fish products; and*
- (3) Perishable foods.*

So, do the overtime rules **not** apply to “packing for shipment” and “distribution” as separate tasks? Or, do they not apply to “packing” when it is for either shipment or distribution? Careful, your answer could cost you a lot of money. And if you jump to a conclusion because **you** think it’s clear, you’ll have to explain why it took a law suit that rose to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit and a 29-page written decision to resolve the matter.

The dairy’s delivery drivers sued for four years’ worth of overtime pay arguing that they while they indeed distributed perishable foods, they were not involved in the activity of “packing for distribution.” Although the court below found against the drivers, the Court of Appeals ruled that had there been a comma after “shipment,” it might have been clear that the law exempted mere distribution from overtime eligibility. But the absence of the Oxford comma, the court said, produced enough uncertainty to rule in favor of the drivers. It reversed the lower court decision and awarded the drivers a TEN MILLION dollar verdict.



It appears that the judgment was reduced to five million dollars on a subsequent appeal, but that was probably cold comfort to Oakhurst. Perhaps they should have brought the Maine state legislature into the suit as an additional defendant! The language in the law followed guidelines in the Maine Legislative Drafting Manual, which specifically instructs lawmakers to not use the Oxford comma — a really bad idea! ❖

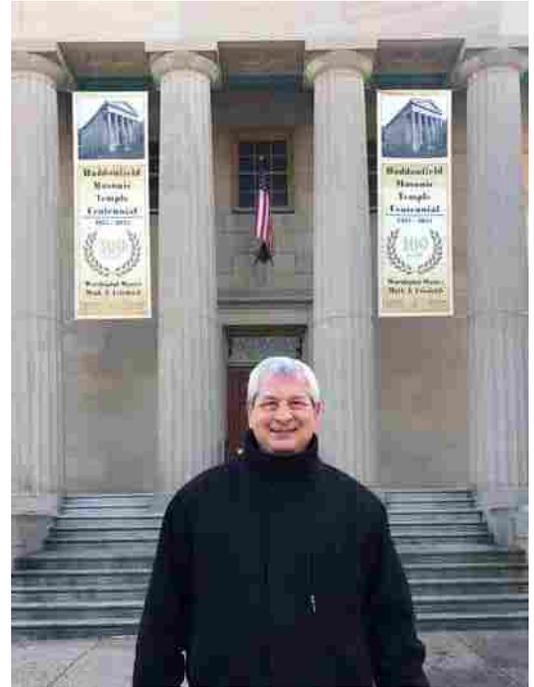
HADDONFIELD TEMPLE TURNS 100!

Every now and then we are fortunate to celebrate a true milestone in 18th District Masonry. 2021 will be a landmark year for the brothers of Rising Sun Lodge, the 18th District, and all of the affiliated Masonic bodies that meet in Haddonfield Masonic Temple, for this year marks the 100th anniversary of the beautiful Greek Revival style Temple that graces Kings Highway in downtown Haddonfield.



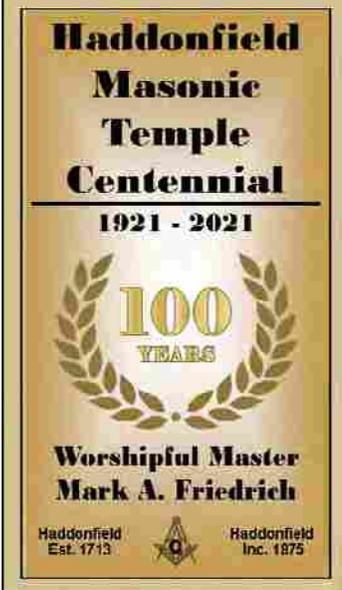
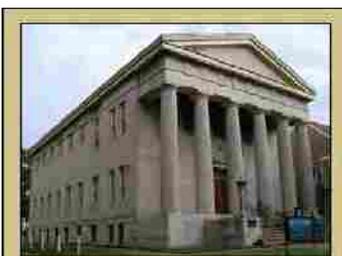
The SignPros “cherry-picker” lifts a workman into position to hang the centennial banners.

In the photo at right, Worshipful Master Mark Friedrich beams with understandable pride after witnessing the hanging of twin centennial banners that will adorn the Temple’s façade for Mark’s year in the East. The banners were WB Mark’s brainchild to serve as a focal point for the various centennial activities he



Worshipful Master Mark Friedrich, of Rising Sun Lodge No. 15, smiles joyfully at seeing his vision for Rising Sun’s year-long Centennial Celebration begin to come to fruition.

has planned for the year, all leading up to the rededication of the building’s cornerstone in September. The banners were designed by RW Brother David Frankel, the logistics of obtaining them were handled by Brother Al Burger SW, and they were produced and hung for Rising Sun Lodge by SignPros of Glendora.

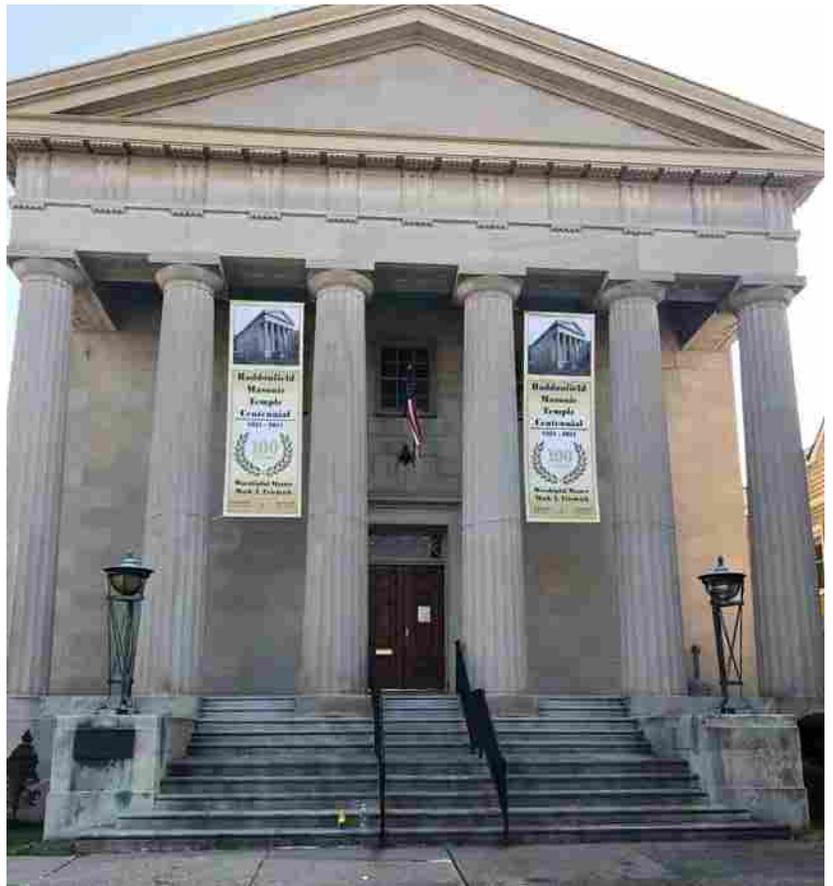


Rising Sun’s 2021 year will be punctuated by a variety of centennial-themed occasions and major events, including the completion of a dining hall renovation, which began in 2020 under Worshipful Master Michael Supnick. 2021 will also see an updated written history of the building and its many occupants over the years. The written history is being prepared by Brother David Thompson, and we hope to present it in the 18th District Light when it is completed. We talked to WB Friedrich and asked him to elaborate on his vision for the year:

“**E**very new Masonic year, the Worshipful Master of the Lodge lays his plans upon the trestle board. This year is no different with a few minor exceptions — a pandemic, CDC guidelines, Grand Master’s edicts, masks, social distancing, limited attendance — you know, the usual stuff. My vision for 2021 centers on Rising Sun’s Masonic Temple reaching the century ‘Mark.’ (See what I did there?)

When you think about the lessons of the ‘G’ lecture — *the lapse of time, the ruthless hand of ignorance, and the devastations of war* laying waste to so many monuments of antiquity — a centennial anniversary for a Masonic building is an occasion of great historic significance. I can’t help but feel that we owe it both to ourselves and to our Masonic forebears to celebrate what has been so graciously given to us.

“**I**n many ways, everything Rising Sun has accomplished with the building since its inception has been in preparation for this momentous year, although we could not have foreseen the pandemic that has so complicated everything. We have made the building more accessible to everyone with the addition of the elevator, a ramp entrance into the main floor of the Temple, and ADA-compliant bathrooms. We repainted our parlor and breathed new life into its long-cold hearth with the addition of a gas fireplace. Owing to the herculean efforts of DB William Dennis, we have refreshed our lodge room and adorned the East with the trademark sunburst of Rising Sun Lodge. We have added new artwork, and now we are nearly finished with a complete renovation of our dining hall. All of this has been to follow that part of our mission statement which says ‘we will provide a comfortable, attractive, accessible, user-friendly haven to serve as the focal point for Masonic, social, and community activities and functions.’



“**P**lans are in the works for a live virtual tour of the Temple, to be “zoomed” in March to display the many improvements. We will be using technology and logistics to bring our communications to as many brothers as possible. A comedy night in April or May will be available for viewing via internet video conferencing to all our members and Masonic brethren who wish to attend. Brother Frank Rosi is heading up the effort to produce a Covid-friendly Ladies Night, and Rising Sun’s traditional “first-Friday” happy hours continue — outdoors on the front portico and compliant with all pandemic guidelines. Bundle up and join us!

“All this is leading to a rededication ceremony for the Temple’s cornerstone planned for September, which we hope will involve the whole community, and at which the Grand Master or Deputy Grand Master will preside. I want to make Rising Sun the place to be in 2021!”

NEW GROTTO CHAPTER

by WB Mark L. Mason, Liberty Lodge #412, Bradenton, Florida

The GROTTO is a branch of Masonry designed for the fun, frolic, and friendship of Master Masons and their Families, but it is not without its humanitarian and charitable interests. The Grotto's humanitarian foundation provides dental care for special needs children — children with cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, intellectual disabilities, Down's syndrome, and autism, who usually need to be sedated to receive dental treatment. Some chapters also support battered women and children shelters. Chapters provide a place for Masons to associate with brothers from many lodges and have fun, while also working for the common good. The full name of the organization is the *Mystic Order of Veiled Prophets of the Enchanted Realm* and members are recognized by their trademark black fez. Since 1890, the Grotto has been led by a Supreme Council to carry out its mission of bringing fun and frolic to Masons everywhere. At present, there are chapters in 35 states.



The name of the organization derives from the history of the Veiled Prophet. Hashim was a chemist and the prophet leader of an anti-Islamic revolt who founded a religion mixed of Zoroastrianism and Islam. One of his chemical experiments went awry and the resultant explosion burned part of his face.



Ever after he wore a veil and thus became known as *al-Muqanna* (the Veiled One). In *Lalla-Rookh*, the Irish poet, Thomas Moore, popularized a version of the history from which M.O.V.P.E.R. takes its name in the character of Al Mokanna, the Veiled Prophet of Khorassan.

Both the Grotto and its female auxiliary, the Daughters of Mokanna, take their names from Moore's work.

Brothers in the 18th, 19th, and 21st districts interested in joining a new chapter of the Grotto should write to WB Mark L. Mason at sirmase53@aol.com. Please include your name, address, phone number, lodge name and number, and indicate whether you might also be interested in leadership positions. Memberships will be set at \$50 a year and will meet at a central location convenient to all three districts. ♦



UNDERSELLING THE VACCINE

abridged and adapted from a New York Times article by David Leonhardt, January 18, 2021

Early in the pandemic, many health experts — in the U.S. and around the world — spread a misleading message discouraging the use of masks. Their motivation (mostly good) sprang from a concern that people would rush to buy high-grade medical masks, leaving too few for doctors and nurses. At that time experts were also still unsure how much ordinary masks would help.

But the message was a huge mistake. It confused people — if masks weren't effective, why did doctors and nurses need them? It delayed the widespread use of masks when there was good reason to believe they could help and it damaged the credibility of public health experts.

Now a version of the mask story is repeating itself — this time involving the vaccines.

Right now, public discussion of the vaccines is full of warnings about their limitations: *They're not 100 percent effective. Even vaccinated people may be able to spread the virus. And people shouldn't change their behavior once they get their shots.*

These warnings have a basis in truth, just as it's true that masks are imperfect. But the sum total of the warnings is misleading, according to multiple doctors and epidemiologists.

"We're underselling the vaccine," says Dr. Aaron Richterman, an infectious-disease specialist at the University of Pennsylvania.



David Leonhardt



"It's going to save your life — that's where the emphasis has to be right now," Dr. Peter Hotez of the Baylor College of Medicine said.

The Moderna and Pfizer vaccines are "essentially 100 percent effective against serious disease," according to Dr. Paul Offit, the director of the Vaccine Education Center at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, "it's ridiculously encouraging."

Find information on eligibility for receiving the vaccine in New Jersey here:

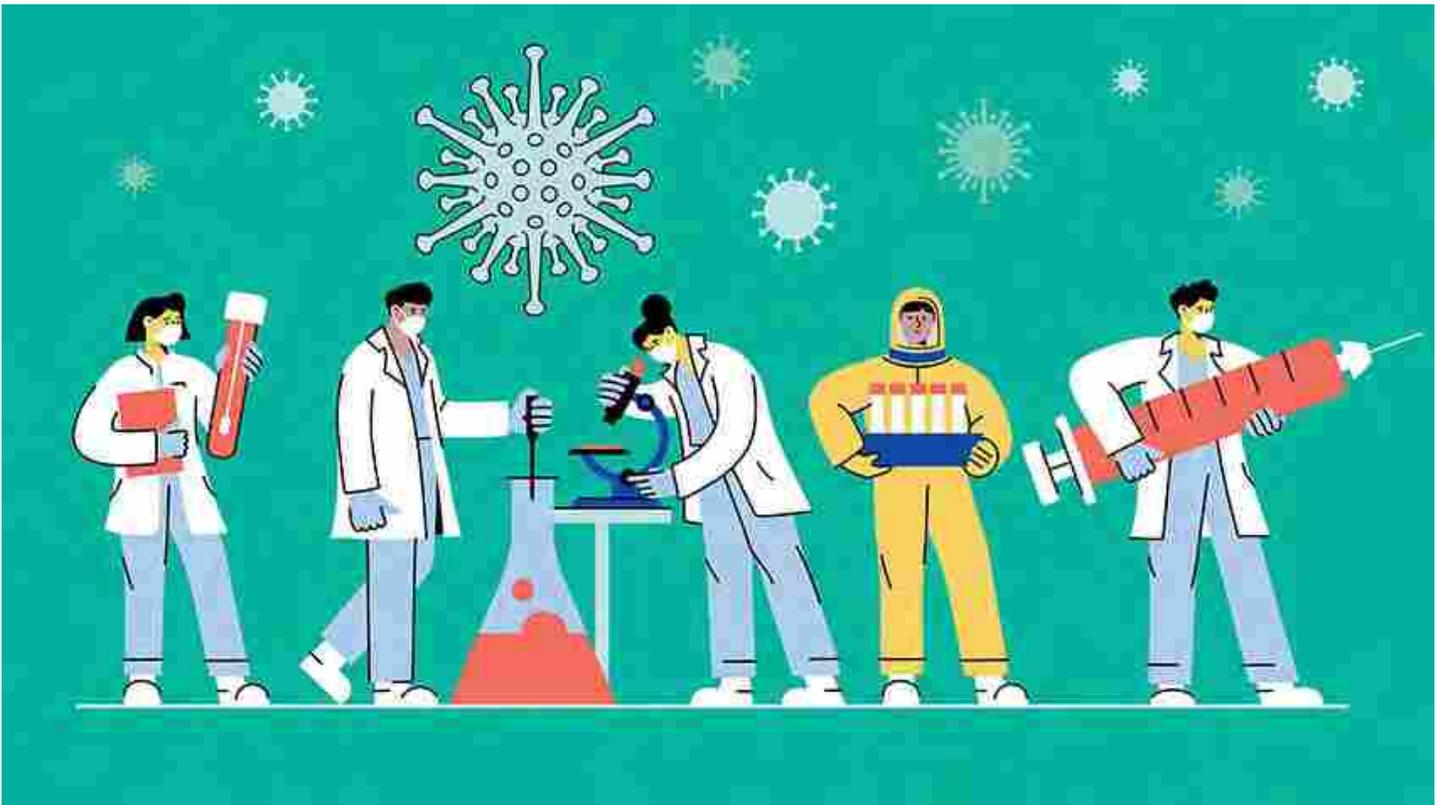
<https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/nj-information/slowing-the-spread/who-is-eligible-for-vaccination-in-new-jersey-who-is-included-in-the-vaccination-phases>

The Moderna and Pfizer vaccines — the only two approved in the U.S. — are among the best vaccines ever created, with effectiveness rates of about 95 percent after two doses. That’s on par with the vaccines for chickenpox and measles. And a vaccine doesn’t even need to be so effective to reduce cases sharply and crush a pandemic.

If anything, the 95 percent number understates the effectiveness, because it counts anyone who came down with a mild case of Covid-19 as a failure. But turning Covid into a typical flu — as the vaccines evidently did for most of the remaining 5 percent — is actually a success. Of the 32,000 people who received the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine in a research trial, do you want to guess how many contracted a severe Covid case? One.

Although no rigorous study has yet analyzed whether vaccinated people can spread the virus, it would be surprising if they did. “If there is an example of a vaccine in widespread clinical use that has this selective effect — prevents disease but not infection — I can’t think of one!” Dr. Paul Sax of Harvard has written in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, and exclamation points are not common in medical journals. On Twitter, Dr. Monica Gandhi of the University of California, San Francisco, argued: “Please be assured that **YOU ARE SAFE** after vaccine from what matters — disease and spreading.”

The risks for vaccinated people are still not zero, because almost nothing in the real world is zero risk. A tiny percentage of people may have allergic reactions. And I’ll be eager to see what the studies on post-vaccination spread eventually show. But the evidence so far suggests that the vaccines are akin to a cure. Offit told me we should be greeting them with the same enthusiasm that greeted the polio vaccine, saying *that* should be the rallying cry. 📌



18TH DISTRICT LODGE COMMUNICATIONS

AUDUBON-PARKSIDE No. 218
3rd Monday @ Audubon Temple
305 East Atlantic Avenue
Audubon, NJ 08106

CAMPANA DE LIBERTAD No. 376
4th Tuesday @ Merchantville
6926 Park Avenue
Merchantville, NJ 08109

COLLINGSWOOD-CLOUD No. 101
2nd Tuesday @ Audubon Temple
305 East Atlantic Avenue
Audubon, NJ 08106

LAUREL No. 237
1st & 3rd Friday @ Laurel Temple
Atlantic Avenue and Stone Road
Laurel Springs, NJ 08021

LAZARUS No. 303
1st Monday @ Haddonfield Temple
16 East Kings Highway
Haddonfield, NJ 08033

MERCHANTVILLE No. 119
2nd & 3rd Friday @ Merchantville Temple
6926 Park Avenue
Merchantville, NJ 08109

MOZART No. 121
1st Tuesday @ Audubon Temple
305 East Atlantic Avenue
Audubon, NJ 08106

RISING SUN No. 15
1st & 3rd Wednesday @ Haddonfield Temple
16 East Kings Highway
Haddonfield, NJ 08033

USS NEW JERSEY No. 62
3rd Monday @ Merchantville Temple
6926 Park Avenue
Merchantville, NJ 08109

2021 OFFICIAL VISITS

Due to continuing pandemic restrictions and uncertainty regarding future restrictions, Official Visit work will be handled as follows.

The DDGM will schedule visits for the administrative review portion with the appropriate officers.

The ritual review portion will be held at either a lodge practice or lodge meeting per instructions issued to the lodges by the DRI.

TENTATIVE 2021 DLI/GLI Schedule

18th District MW&PM Association at 6:45pm before DLI at 7:30pm

Wednesday

Lodge/Location

January 13

Audubon-Parkside No. 218
(@ Audubon Temple)

February 10

Campana de Libertad No. 376
(@ Merchantville)

March 10

Coltswood-Cloud No. 101
(@ Audubon Temple)

April 14

Laurel No. 237
(@ Laurel Temple)

May 12

Lazarus No. 303
(@ Haddonfield Temple)

June 3

GLI v19th District
(@ Burlington Lodge)

June 9

Mozart No. 121
(@ Audubon Temple)

September 8

Rising Sun No. 15
(@ Haddonfield Temple)

October 13

USS New Jersey No. 62
(@ Merchantville Temple)

November 10

Qualification Teams
(@ Merchantville Temple)

All DLIs will be virtual,
via Zoom, until further notice.

MASONIC HOME VISITATIONS

SUNDAY

LODGE

*Suspended
Until
Further
Notice*