

The Meeting of the Famous Masons

(A bit of Imagination is required)

INSTALLATION NIGHT AT THE CELESTIAL LODGE

As we are all well aware, and as is pointed out in the North East Angle Lecture in the Canadian Rite Ritual, it cannot be denied that we always had many members of rank and affluence.

Over the centuries many well known men have been members of our Noble Craft.

For a few moments, please allow your imaginations to run wild and consider what may take place at the Installation of The Celestial Lodge, otherwise known as the Grand Lodge Above.

Even though it was late fall, there was a warm breeze blowing and the sun was setting behind the Lodge Hall.

Gathered in the parking lot filled with their works were Bros Henry Ford, Ransom Olds, Walter Chrysler, John Willys and Andre Citroen. The only vehicle missing was Bro Hart Massey's tractor.

Greeting members in the entrance hall was Bro Cliff Arquette of Charley Weaver fame and Bro Ed Wynn.

In the boardroom, a group of senior DeMolays were gathered including Bros Walter Disney, Chet Huntley, Wendell Corey, Van Johnson, Robert Cummings, John Steinbeck, Fred McMurray and John Cameron Swayze.

King Gillette, razor in hand, passed the lodge caretaker who was having a minor problem with his vacuum cleaner, which was quickly cleared up with the help of its inventor, Bro Frank Hoover, while at the other end of the hallway Bros Emmett Kelly, Clyde Beatty and all seven of the Ringling Bros were discussing the Shrine Circus.

Taking a quick look into the Banquet Hall, Bros John Molson, Frederick Pabst and Joseph Schlitz were busy rolling in some kegs of beer for Bros Sam Bronfman, late President of Seagrams Distillers, who was setting up the bar for the Festive Board to follow the Ceremony.

Bro Colonel Harland Sanders was cooking up a storm in the kitchen and it was an easy guess as to what the evening meal would consist of .

The orchestra members for the dance to follow the Banquet were tuning..

Members of this All-Star group included leader Paul Whiteman, WC Hardy, Nat King Cole, Irving Berlin, George M Cohan, Cyril Stapleton, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Count Basie and Al Jolson.

Tonight's performance would be M.C.ed by Bros Arthur Godfrey and Danny Thomas.

Magical Bros Harry Houdini and Harry Blackstone were setting up their props while Bros WC Fields, Oliver Hardy, Bud Abbott, Harpo Marx, and Foster Brooks were fine tuning their comedy routines for tonight's show which was being produced by Bros Cecil B DeMille, Flo Ziegfeld, Louis B Mayer, Hall Wallis and DW Griffiths.

A number of sports celebrities were gathering together, including Bros Abe Saperstein, creator of the Harlem Globetrotters, who was explaining his version of the game to Bro James Naismith, the inventor of the game.

They were joined by baseballers Bros Charles Ebbetts, Ty Cobb, Branch Rickey and Cy Young, the first pitcher to be inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame.

A little further along the hall was an array of masons dressed in knee breeches, lace cuffs and powdered wigs, others in tuxedos, including Bros Kit Carson, Davey Crockett and Buffalo Bill Cody, clad in their familiar buckskins, Chiefs Crazy Bull, Tecumseh and Joseph Brant in their native attire.

Most colourful are the military uniforms of Lord Nelson, Lord Cornwallis, Captain James Cook, the Duke of Wellington and John Paul Jones.

I was gazing in awe at these members of Celestial Lodge, when the Grand Master, MW Bro Harry Truman, appeared from the preparation room accompanied by Bros John Jacob Astor, Luther Burbank, JC Penney, Adlai Stevenson and Jennings Bryan.

Bro John Diefenbaker had just signed the Tyler's Register with one of Bro John Shaeffer's pens.

He was accompanied by Bros Robert Borden and RB Bennett. fellow Canadian Prime Ministers, and by Bro Joe Smallwood of Newfoundland.

At this time, the Tyler, Bro J Edgar Hoover, informed the brethren that the meeting was about to come to order.

On entering the lodge room the brethren were greeted by the Inner Guard, Bro Paul Revere.

Seated already were polar explorers, Robert F Scott of England and Bro Richard E Bird of the United States, together with Matthew G Perky and Canada's Henry Larsen.

Bro Charles Lindbergh could be seen in deep conversation with Bros Hap Arnold, Gus Grissom, Eddie Rickenbaker and Charles Kingsford-Smith.

From the Junior Warden's station came a burst of laughter. Bro Will Rogers had brought broad smiles to the faces of the Royal personages gathered around him, including George I, Frederick the Great, Gustav V of Sweden and George VI.

To the right of the Junior Warden's chair, architect Sir Christopher Wren was joined by Statue of Liberty sculptor, Frederic Bartholdi.

Bros Norman Vincent Peale and Peter Marshall, who would assume the Chaplain's duties this evening, were in conversation with the DuPonts, Peter and Victor, and the Rothschilds, James and Nathan.

Gathered around the Secretary's desk, Bro Rudyard Kipling was discussing the evening's proceedings with Bro Robert Burns, who was to give one of the Charges assisted by Bro Mark Twain.

Also taking part were Bros Conan Doyle, Walter Scott, Samuel Johnson, Alexander Pope and Robert Service.

The Grand Organist, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, was discussing last minute changes with Bros Gilbert and Sullivan.

Bros Clark Gable, Peter Sellers, Wallace Beery, Douglas Fairbanks and Brian Donlevy were discussing boxing with champions Jack Dempsey, Jack Johnson and Sugar Ray Robinson.

Another small group, in the persons of Bros John Wayne, Hoot Gibson and Tom Mix, were listening to Bro William Thaddeus Phillips, also known as Butch Cassidy.

The founding members, Bros George Washington, Sir John A MacDonal, Guiseppe Garibaldi, Benito Jaurez, John Hancock and Ben Franklin were seated in the East.

They have been joined by Sir Stamford Raffles, founder of Singapore.

The Generals, Omar Bradley, Jimmy Doolittle, George C Marshall, John Pershing and Douglas McArthur, take their seats next to Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill.

The Lodge Treasurer, Bro Henry Knox was busy collecting dues from Bros Thomas E Dewey and William McKinley.

The Master, MW Bro HRH The Duke of Connaught, has rapped the gavel to call the Lodge to order and it is now time for us to depart.

With one last look at this brilliant assembly, one wonders what the public's perception of Freemasonry might be if they were able to visit such a lodge.

IN GOD WE TRUST