



Welcome to the “Lucerna”, Research Lodge of Colorado’s new Trestleboard! Our hope is this renewed mode of communication will increase attendance at our meetings by sharing the light we experience and reaching all our members. There is no doubt that Masonry in Colorado is undergoing a renaissance. It’s an exciting time to be a member of the Craft!

Our goal is to offer excerpts of research papers presented at RLC in these pages as well as additional content of relevance and interest to Masons. “Lucerna” is Latin for “Lamp”, and we hope this publication lives up to its name, rekindling the fire of Masonry in your heart to scatter shadows of apathy and ignorance.

If you would like to submit something for inclusion in these pages, please submit articles to the Secretary, whose contact information is listed along with the Officer Line herein. This is an effective tool for reaching nearly 300 Masons from all across Colorado, each of whom holds memberships in another Lodge. This is a powerful way to reach Masons, then, throughout the state.

NEWS

At the April meeting, a motto was adopted for RLC. The Brethren voted unanimously in favor of the Latin motto *Nosce Te Ipsum* – “Know Thyself”, the motto allegedly carved into the lintel at the oracle at Delphi in the ancient world. We think this is a fitting motto, one that well describes RLC’s role in our Fraternity. For the introspection RLC engenders regarding the formation and propagation of Colorado Masonry certainly assists us in knowing our origins and, thus by extension, our future. Moreover, RLC acts as a discussion forum for additional topics of interest to Masons, including the various philosophical systems that underpin our Craft. In exploring these topics, and sharing our insights as Brothers upon the level, we necessarily gain insights into ourselves. The rest of

the motto at Delphi is purported to have read, “Know Thyself... and Thou Shalt Know the Universe and the Gods”. We might surmise this is appropriate for our endeavors here.

A secondary motto was also adopted. You will see this on the front of this mailing:

LVX IN TENEBRIS ET LUCET
ET TENEBRAE EAM NON
COMPERHENDERUNT

The author respectfully solicits that, should you be agreeable to the challenge, you determine the meaning of this secondary motto on your own. At our next meeting, should you choose to attend, perhaps you would share with the brethren present where you found the translation, what the motto means, and why, in your mind, it is (or is not) relevant to RLC.

It was also decided at our last meeting to update our web presence. Your Secretary has been working on a temporary website until such time as a better option becomes available. You might be able to check out the site by the time this mailing arrives. Please let us know your thoughts. The address is www.rlc Colo.org.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Don’t forget to sign up For the Colorado Masonic Symposium, Oct. 8 and 9, at the Denver Consistory. Reservations made before June 30 are subject to a discount and include a free tour of the Capitol!

Speakers include:

Chic Cicero, Piers Vaughn, Terry Tipton,
Scott Wolter, & Ben Williams

Sign up at:

www.coloradamasonicsymposium.org

UNDERSTANDING MUSLIM SECTS

by W.Bro. Ben Williams

For those of you who were able to attend the last meeting in April, who heard W.Bro. Brad Pollard's excellent talk on Islam and Freemasonry, the below article may provide some interesting background. Originally published in January, 2010, in Telluride Lodge No. 56's Trestleboard.

Understanding the Islamic religion requires a careful look at its history. Islam has been fraught with conflict since the death of its prophet some 1,378 years ago. The problems began when Muhammad (may Allah love and bless him!) passed in 632 CE and didn't indicate his successor.

On the one hand, his father-in-law and good friend, Abu Bakr, claimed the position of Caliph, and was elected by the faithful. However, many believed that Ali ibn Abi Talib, the prophet's cousin and son-in-law, should naturally fulfill the role. Ali had been raised in Muhammad's household since the age of 5, and was the very first convert to Islam. Ali had served the prophet in all capacities, proving himself a wise religious leader and tenacious warrior for the cause.

This early split formed the two major branches of Islam, the *Sunnis*, (from the Arabic word *Sunnah*, meaning 'example') and the *Shiites* (from the Arabic *Shi'atu Ali*, meaning 'the party of Ali').

Broadly speaking, the Sunnis believed, and continue so to do, that Muslims should elect their spiritual leaders. Islam is a Theocracy, giving complete spiritual and practical leadership to one person. Whereas the Shiites believe that a direct descendent of the prophet must fill the role. This they call *Imam*, the spiritual leader who alone has the wisdom to interpret the Divine law.

The Sunnis and Shiites have a common history, and agree on the first four *Rashidan*, or "Righteously appointed Caliphs". Whereas the

Sunnis recognize Ali as the fourth *Rahsidan*, the Shiites recognize him as the first Imam, and the other three Caliphs as imposters. This has created tension between Muslims for a millennium. This was exacerbated in 680 CE when the Sunni Caliph Yazid marched with 4,000 troops into Karbala and massacred Ali's younger son, Husayn, and all his family, wives, children, and 71 closest companions. This drama is reenacted annually by devout Shiites and has come to represent the resistance of truth to materialistic tyranny.

Things are further complicated in that the passing of the *nass*, or the spiritual authority to rule the religion, is often contested. Thus we have Caliphs suppressing Shiite movements, murdering Imams to protect their rule, and the splitting of the Shiite sect into a number of sub-branches as different Shiites rallied around different descendents of the prophet, each recognizing their own as the righteous inheritor of the faith, and the others as imposters. So it is that the Shiite sect split into Twelver and Sevens Shiites, the former recognizing twelve Imams, all of which were killed (mostly poisoned) by rival Caliphs excepting the last Imam, Muhammad ibn al-Hasan who went into hiding in the 9th century awaiting his reappearance at the end of the world with the Christ during the second coming. Whereas the Sevens believe that the seventh Imam was Ja'far al-Sadiq's elder son, Ismail, not his younger son, Musal al-Kazim. (It is argued that Ja'far

had apparently disinherited his elder son at some point.)

This gave rise to the Ismailis, of which the Nazari Ismailis are familiar to Masonic history as the order of the Assassins who had interactions, both positive and negative, with the Templars.

Shi'a Islam has long been suppressed, and often forced into hiding. The Imam is not a ruler in the overt sense, but a master in the esoteric, occult sense. So it is that Shi'a Islam generated the doctrine of *Taqiyya*, the use of deceit and cunning to hide one's faith within the mainstream. Shi'a syncretized and absorbed mystical parts of other religions, practiced in secret. They proselytized in secret, requiring complex initiation rites to protect their *dias*, or messengers. Deep, spiritual resistance and martyrdom are thusly integral to many forms of Islam, and although not required of its followers, such acts of suffering are celebrated historically. Thus, as a breeding ground for fundamental ideals which presage terrorism, Islam presents a system honed through the centuries, able to touch people in secret, brandishing a message of freedom from material excesses – even if the religion itself is not ultimately intended as such a tool.



The Ismaili Lion

FROM THE EAST



Brethren, thank you for the confidence you have bestowed in me by electing me to serve Research lodge of Colorado. It is an honor and a privilege to serve as Worshipful Master of such a prestigious group of men and Masons.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Byers. Join us for a barbeque lunch followed by discussion and fellowship.

Your officer line is working diligently to reinvigorate RLC. RLC is a prestigious Lodge. Comprising only plural members we reach around the Jurisdiction. With Colorado occupying a visible position in the reemergence of Masonry in the 21st Century, we hope to see RLC productive of viable material for Masonic research and edification. We hope to work closer with the Grand Lodge Education Committee in this endeavor. How can you help? By showing up to our meetings and taking an active role in the discussion! The heartbeat of RLC is the exposition of its members.

On that note, we will have at least one paper presented for the attention of the assembly. Please come prepared to actively listen and to share your insights:

The Progressive Line: The Leadership School of Freemasonry, Observations Learned on a Sever Year Journey to the East, by Eric Lowry, PM of Fidelity Lodge No. 192.

Renaissance Emblems and Freemasonry, by Bro. Eric Weddington of Enlightenment Lodge No. 198.

FROM THE SEC'Y



First, thank you for electing me to serve RLC from the Secretary's desk. This is quite a responsibility, and one I promise not to take lightly.

We are continuing to update our database, so if you know of any member who should be receiving this newsletter and hasn't, please contact me forthwith. Same with dues cards – every member should now have a dues card. If you don't, please contact me. Please also let me know if we have your membership information incorrect. Perhaps befitting of Masonic symbolism, our membership records remain a work in progress....

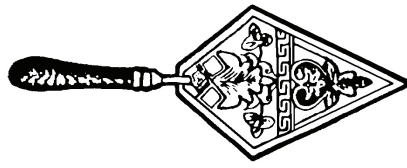
We have begun the task of updating the eSecretary program at Grand Lodge, so when that gets completed we will transition out of the Excel Spreadsheet model to one more consonant with 21st Century data management. Much thanks is due to Bro. Ashley Bus in assisting us in this endeavor.



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MASONIC EVENTS CALENDAR

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION	FOR MORE INFORMATION
Masonic Putty Club	June 24	Delaney's Cigar Bar, Denver	ssworts@gmail.com
Angel of Shavano	July 9	Blanchard Ranch, Salida	
Alchemy Conference	July 23 & 24	Denver	www.alchemyguild.org
Research Lodge of Colorado	July 30	Byers	www.rcolo.org
Colorado Masonic Symposium	October 8 & 9	Denver Consistory	www.coloradomasonicsymposium.org
Research Lodge of Colorado	October 29	TBA	www.rcolo.org


Laughing Lion Press 

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Under the Jurisdiction of the Most Worshipful
Grand Lodge of Colorado

Mors et Vita



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Est. 1953