Bud Roberts Celebrates 50 Years as PM

*by Bruce Frazer, Worshipful Master*

Where were you fifty years ago? Had you been born, yet? Were you yet a Mason? I know where I was in 1959: I was seven years old, growing up in Speedway, Indiana, and I do not think I even had a notion, then, of something called Masonry. But I do know where Bud Roberts was in 1959. . . he was right here, running Millersville Lodge as the Worshipful Master, and raising more brothers per month then we even dream of today.

That’s right—this year is the 50th Anniversary of Arthur “Bud” Roberts’ tenure as Master of this Lodge. That is half a century, my Brothers, and unlike some others, Bud’s service to his lodge did not stop there. He is here almost every week, and is always ready to commit himself to assist in any way he can when asked.

He routinely, with members of his family, works the annual Fish Fry, all three days, and is on his feet for most of it. He is always willing to offer his counsel when asked, and his counsel is timely and good! In short, Bud has demonstrated a lifetime of dedication and devotion to the Lodge and the Craft, and I know that every one of us is grateful for his service.

It is, therefore, with pride, pleasure, honor and humility, that I, on behalf of the officers, trustees, and brethren of Millersville Lodge, hereby declare January 2009 to be “Bud Roberts Month”. Bud, to paraphrase Shakespeare, “We come not to embarrass Bud, but to praise him…” So, My Brother, please accept our gratitude, and know that we value your many years of dedication and devotion. And Brethren, when you see Bud, think about where you were in 1959, where you might be 50 years from now, and ask yourselves how the long service of this brother might inspire you and your Masonic efforts. Then shake his hand, smile, and tell him, “Thank you.” Thanks, Bud.
Mentoring Project

It has for some time, now, been a topic of conversation among the Brethren and officers that, since the "relaxation" of memory requirements by The Grand Lodge, that new brothers are not adequately proficient as they move through the degrees, and hence, are inadequately informed so as to be good master masons. Indeed, many are not educated "so as to be enabled to prove oneself one, or to travel and work as one."

We all know that this relaxation of requirements was made in order to spur membership, avoiding the time lag between degrees, and the possible discouragement of a new member by the daunting task of memorization. But, it has also been argued that the memory work is precisely what challenges the new member, and renders Masonry more meaningful and subsequently more valuable to him. This argument claims that the newly admitted brother who is not required to demonstrate real proficiency comes away from the experience with an attitude of, "Well, is that all this is?" and will then be less inclined to invest himself in the Fraternity. As the old saying goes, "We receive for free only that which is worthless anyway," or, put another way, all things worthwhile come with work and effort.

The officers of Millersville have long sought a solution to this dilemma, and it appears that Worshipful Brother Ian Anderson, P.M. has arrived at a possible solution in his development of The Mentoring Project. This will take the form of a class that will meet every Thursday evening, and will focus on mentoring any and all brothers of any degree who wish to become more proficient, or develop a deeper understanding of The Craft. There will be present at every meeting at least one current officer, and we are encouraging Past Masters to attend and assist with one-on-one instruction. This will focus on crossfires, steps, passes, tokens etc., as well as the meaning associated with various aspects of the work. It is our intention to define "proficiency" in a very general and subjective way at first, then gradually advance the expectations. The mission is to make good Masons better; the more we put in, the more we get out, and this axiom applies as much to the youngest Entered Apprentice in the Northeast Corner as it does to the Worshipful Master who presides in the East.

My Brethren, the more you invest in your Lodge, the more you, and your Lodge, profits. Join with us on Thursday Nights, and help us make this new project a success.

~Worshipful Master Bruce Frazer

Tidings from the West

Expectations are always high this time of year. Especially this year, as our Country enters a new era.

Millersville Lodge is also blessed to have its line of officers continually evolving, like our Government, its personalities blend to work for the good of all. As always, I am excited & proud to be a part of the line of officers and we will all be doing our best to put some extra spark in the time you spend with us. To the Brothers who haven’t been in for some time; I invite you to join us on Tuesday or two, so we can thank you personally for always being there in Spirit.

Let your expectations soar, like the proverbial kite, we will rise to meet them.—Doug Euers, Senior Warden

Chili Dinner

Your Senior Warden, Douglas Euers, is proud to announce that he is single-handedly resurrecting said chili dinner, to be officially referred to as The Blue Lodge Firehouse Chili Special Extravaganza woooohoo! Doug assures us that he does not own stock in the companies that produce Rolaids and Tums, but I do know that he likes to make this stuff, and I hear he is pretty good at it.

So then, Brethren, mark your calendars for Friday, March 27th, at 6 p.m., and prepare yourselves for a culinary treat. Doug plans to offer this up as we do the breakfast, with everyone (neighbors, friends, the Fire Department, whoever) being welcome, and a voluntary donation of $5 is suggested. This is one of those opportunities to invite a friend or two who might be interested in Masonry to come on in and get to know us—please come!

Open House

In our ongoing efforts to reach out to the men of the area and let them know what we, and Masonry, are about, The Lodge will host two open house functions on Friday, Jan. 23 and on Friday, Feb. 20. Both events will commence at 7 pm. Snacks and coffee will be served, and we will have brethren there to conduct tours, talk about the fraternity, and run the media. Anyone is invited to come and help, and as well, this is the perfect time to bring that neighbor, friend, or co-worker who might have expressed an interest in the meaning of that Square and Compass on your ring! See you there!
Sweetheart Dinner

Mark your calendars, Brethren, for Valentine’s Day, Saturday the 14th of February, and put on your dancing shoes! After a two year absence, Millersville Lodge will once again be hosting its annual Sweetheart Dinner Dance, and as the great day of romance falls this year on a Saturday, you are provided a wonderful opportunity to combine an evening with your Sweetie and fellowship with your brothers.

Entertainment will be provided by Rob Swaynie of Indigo Music. Rob is, in addition to being my guitar mentor for many years, an Indianapolis music scene fixture, and is highly skilled in a variety of musical genres. He has played for concerts, nightclubs, and restaurants, and was the house musician for The New Orleans House for over a decade. You’re gonna like it!

And, of course, there will be provided the always delicious Millersville dinner. I promise you: you will not go away hungry!

The price for this evening of entertainment, food, fun, and fellowship will be $15 per couple, and $10 for singles (yes, you can come “stag”!). And folks, for dinner, dancing and a show, that’s cheap! See an officer for tickets, and let us know that you are coming to join us.

Masonic Prayer Origins

Prayer, from the earliest times, was an integral part of Masonry. Today, a Lodge in America is not opened or closed without prayer.

The earliest prayer, that I’ve found, is from Mackey’s revised Encyclopedia of Freemasonry volume 2. This prayer was reportedly used during the reign of Edward IV about 1461 – 1483. “The might of God, the Father of Heaven, with the wisdom of his Glorious Son through the goodness of the Holy Ghost, that hath been three persons in one Godhead, he with us in our beginning, gave us grace to govern in our living here that we may only come to his bliss that shall never have an end.” Amen.

~Tom Easterday, Chaplain

Endowments, Bequests

This message is merely an encouragement for you to remember Millersville Lodge as you prede-termine the disposition of personal funds and other properties. If you want to keep the future of this Lodge as a viable and attractive fraternal option for interested men of quality, then include us in your financial considerations. Please contact the Worshipful Master, Secretary, Treasurer, Senior or Junior Warden if you have questions.

Tidings from the South

Did you know that in every regular and well governed lodge, there are three principal officers, specifically, a Master, a Senior Warden, and a Junior Warden? In the various jurisdictions of the world, the positions of these officers differ. In American lodges, the Senior Warden sits in the West and the Junior Warden sits in the South. In the French and Scottish jurisdictions, both Wardens are in the West, the Senior Warden in the Northwest and the Junior Warden in the Southwest. The three principal officers of a lodge are fundamental as no lodge can legally exist without these officers.

The Warden’s duties and responsibilities are great. In most jurisdictions, the Wardens and Master represent the lodge at all communications of the Grand Lodge. While only the Master is the only one entitled to vote, this experience will prove invaluable for the warden when he is Master.

Prior to the creation of the Grand Lodge of England, in 1717, it was the right of every Mason to be present at the General Assembly and to have his voice heard in its dealings. When the Grand Lodge of England was conceived, this voice was delegated to the Masters and Wardens.

I would like to invite all our brothers to join us for some wonderful fellowship. It will be a great time to catch up with old friends and make some new ones. The doors of Millersville Lodge are always open and my hand is ready to greet you. ~Tom Smith, Junior Warden
As we move into the year of 2009, I wish first to say how grateful I am for the support, the guidance, and the trust that all of you have provided me in my ‘journey to the East’. It will be my first duty and care to see to it that I do my best to live up to ‘the honor that you have bestowed upon, and merit the confidence you have reposed in’ me. It is no small matter to be entrusted with the governance of a Lodge so steeped in tradition, high reputation, and continuity of service; I am aware of the responsibility and do not take it lightly—I will endeavor to approach that duty with humility and strength.

In reflecting upon what the practice of Masonry is about, I find myself coming back again and again to just a few particularly important anchors: a body of ritual that conveys moral and ethical meaning, borne by tradition that transcends individual and temporal limitations, and accomplishes the building of character through communal sharing of that ritual and tradition. So, Masonry is bigger than our individual selves, and deeper than any particular time period, Lodge, or setting. If we, as Masons, take care of those three charges—ritual, tradition, and community—we will have accomplished the goals to which The Craft is called.

To these ends, I, as Master, hope to establish as a goal, accurate ritual. All too often we say to ourselves and one another, “Well, the candidate doesn’t know the difference,” and that is true—the candidate doesn’t know. And the candidate is the true audience of the ritual. But, we know the difference, don’t we? And, the depth of meaning and the value of the work is contained within the body of the Ritual. As such, the standards of Millersville have always been high with reference to good Ritual, and with good reason. I propose that this year be dedicated to a focus on accuracy and solid confidence in the performance of our Craft. Let our motto be: “Let’s get it right!” This can be accomplished by remembering that this team is part of a long and proud tradition that transcends place and time, laying foundation blocks for a building that was being, and is today being built to carry on a Truth across the ages.

All of that sounds so high and mighty, but the fact of the matter is that this noble work is accomplished, my Brethren, by having a community that is having fun! That’s right: we make happen the building of this work through playful toil, sharing, and the enjoyment of one another’s company. So, in addition to making Craft Practice a fun thing to attend, I also hope to plan some activities that remind us all that being together, doing together, experiencing together is the practice of brotherly love, that cement which unites us into one sacred band… So, we are having various group functions—please come! We will try this year to do some Lodge visitations. Please come! We will attempt, as has been suggested so often, a field trip or two. Please come.

Working, and playing together, I know that we can make this a wonderful year at Millersville Lodge. I thank you again, and look forward to serving you.

~Bruce Frazer, Worshipful Master