

# Trestleboard

VOLUME 8 ISSUE 1

March 2010

*NJ Lodge of Masonic Research and Education's purpose is to foster the education of the Craft at large through prepared research and open discussion of the topics concerning Masonic history, symbolism, philosophy, and current events.*

## Next Communication

New Jersey Lodge of Masonic Research and Education meets on the second Saturday in March, June, September and December. Our next communication will be held on **Saturday, March 13, 2010 at 9:30 a.m. at:**

**Trenton Masonic Temple  
100 Barracks Street  
Trenton, New Jersey**

*All Master Masons are Welcome!*



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## From the East

### Bro. Ben Hoff, Worshipful Master

One of the essential ingredients of Masonic Research is the availability of material with which to research. In other words, a library. The good news for us in NJ LORE is that the grand lodge is currently in the process of reestablishing its Masonic library in the ground floor of the Trenton Temple where LORE meets. Several members of LORE including myself are involved in that effort. The general plan is that something like a functioning library should be in place in time for the Conference of Grand Masters, which New Jersey is hosting in July of 2010. There are a number of obstacles to achieving that goal, including having a budget with which to work. At this point the library consists of stacks of books on scrounged shelving in no particular order, along with a large pile of as yet unpacked boxes, which we have no more shelf space to accommodate.

For all that, I am still excited about what we are finding in that library, and what will be available for LORE members who wish to pursue research. There are a number of antique classics of Masonry, some of which I have in my own personal library, and many of which are entirely new to me. There is a large collection of commentaries on Masonry from the golden age of Masonic publishing in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. There is a substantial collection of individual lodge histories, and multiple copies of Masonic reference books – encyclopedias, dictionaries, and multi volume general histories – some of which I never knew existed. There is a smattering of ritual related material, ciphers and ritual books from various places, including a couple of hand written ciphers. What we do not have, unfortunately, are archives and unpublished material, which I assume must be stored elsewhere, if our Grand Lodge retains such records at all. But there are huge piles of annual proceedings from a wide selection of Grand Lodges, including our own, and many appendant bodies. We keep those quarantined in the safe, away from the ‘real’ books.

Those who have spent afternoons unpacking boxes in the library with me know that I am easily diverted by examining books as they are unpacked, and offering excerpts of choice passages and other commentary on the historical value of various volumes as they emerge from the boxes. My own particular area of research, as all of you know, is Masonic ritual. As might be expected, I have found only a very few volumes in the GL library that are directly helpful in that particular field of research. But I have been wondering what sort of original research might be best supported by the huge collection of Masonic books found in the library.

Most of what has been written and published about Freemasonry is not factual material. It is indeed opinion and commentary – sometimes presented as factual – intended for the edification of the brethren at large. What sets Freemasonry apart from other social and charitable fraternal organizations is that it is supposed to mean something. Generations of freemasons, from the very beginning, have spent a great deal of time thinking, discussing, and writing about just what freemasonry means. And because we have been at it for centuries, we have built up a substantial literature with a variety of interpretations. Our Grand Lodge library contains several thousand volumes, most of which are of this sort of commentary, spanning about 200 years of development. Over the course of that time, the many interpretations of Freemasonry’s meaning have undoubtedly been affected by larger social trends, and Freemasonry has been reinterpreted to speak to succeeding generations of brothers. We tend to assume that the fraternity as we know it, both in practice and ideals, has always been what the fraternity was. Our forebears undoubtedly shared that same

*(Continued on page 3)*

assumption. Yet I know of no existing research that attempts to trace the development of trends in Masonic thought and writing, and its relationship to larger societal trends current at the time those interpretations of Freemasonry were proposed.

Our library could easily support dozens of researchers in the pursuit of unraveling that particular line of inquiry. No one researcher could possibly master that entire subject. It could begin as simple book reports identifying particularly intriguing volumes or authors. From there, the inquiry could expand to pointing out the linkages between the various books and authors over time. Finally I envision the integration of those chains of thought with the larger social trends that might have concerned masons of those times. But even if it never gets to that stage, the body of knowledge we developed, if broadly shared with the fraternity at large, could provide a useful foundation and perspective for guiding the fraternity into the future.

Each stage in such a research program could provide value. Even the first stage summarization of what authors write on what topics and what they generally have to say could be of great help. The value of a Masonic author is often not to be judged by whether his works are currently in print and likely to be read by most brothers. Masonic books generally have short print runs and limited distribution. The majority of the most influential Masonic books I know of are no longer in print, and are quite hard to come by. But our library has many, if not most of them. They may be widely quoted, most often misquoted, but are rarely read because they are no longer generally available. I have found it intriguing to read what an author actually wrote and compare it to what others say was written. Most brothers, even most members of LORE – myself included – have not read or may not even be aware of works once widely read and appreciated by brothers in decades past. I have serendipitously stumbled across several instances of long out of print authors who have inspired innovations which we take for granted as what masonry has always been. And I am sure that there are many other instances to be discovered if we keep our eyes open for them.

Many brothers of LORE feel inhibited about writing papers because they don't know what to write about. The beauty of this project is that we do not have to know what we will find if we just pick up an old book from the library, digest it, and share with our research brothers what we have found. Who knows where the trail might lead? Anything we do will add perspective. As I see it, the whole purpose of this, or any research lodge, is simply to add perspective to what we do as Masons.



## From the West

**Bro. Raymond C. Thorne, Senior Warden**

Suppose you decide that you want a bookcase. You have thought about it and now you have decided the time is right to get a bookcase.

You get in your car and drive to the store. At the store, you get out of your car and go inside. You find to the right aisle and choose the bookcase kit you want. You pick up the kit and take it to the checkout counter. You pay for the bookcase kit. Then you take the kit you just bought to your car. You drive home.

Back home, you take the kit out of your car and manage to carry it into the house. Once inside the house maybe you take the kit to the room where you want it, or maybe you take the kit somewhere else to be assembled.

Maybe you made room for the bookcase before you left the house. Maybe you made space for the bookcase based on a measurement of the box the bookcase kit is in. Or maybe you decide to make room for the bookcase once it is finished.

Perhaps you open the box and take out the contents. You examine the top piece, the shelves, the sides, the back or shelf supports. You inventory the hardware. Everything is there, the right size, the right shape, sufficient screws, etc.

Maybe you look at the instructions. Or maybe you just glance at them and decide you do not need them.

Perhaps you decide you do not have enough time to assemble the kit at that moment. Or perhaps you cannot find the right screwdriver. Or maybe you need additional space to assemble the bookcase. Perhaps you decide the bookcase should go somewhere else. Or maybe there is something good on TV.

You put everything back in the box the way you found it, including the instructions.

Maybe you then put the box in some out-of-the-way place. Or maybe when you brought the kit into the house it was first placed in an out-of-the-way place.



Or maybe you just left it where it was, visible but not really in the way.

Wherever you put it, you know where it is and you intend to assemble the kit, someday.

You have decided you wanted a bookcase. You made the effort to go to the store and get a kit, you paid good money for it and you brought it home. You now have all you need for a bookcase, and it is all in good condition.

After all that time, money, and effort do you actually have a bookcase?

After answering that question, answer this one: does Masonry have secrets?

Brethren,

You are cordially and fraternally invited to an Regular Communication of NJ Lodge of Masonic Research and Education No. 1786 to meet on Saturday, March 13, 2010 at the Trenton Masonic Temple, 100 Barracks St., Trenton, NJ at 9:30 a.m.

### **Order of Business**

- Continental Breakfast (served 9:00 a.m.)
- Opening Lodge (9:30 a.m.)
- Short Business Meeting
- Presentations by members
- Closing

Officer's Dress – Business Attire

### **LODGE HAPPENINGS...**

NJ LORE No. 1786's next meeting will be held at the Trenton Temple on Saturday December 13, at 9:30 a.m.

On the Agenda:

- A discussion on The Traveling Lodge of Research
- Brother Hoff's Paper— "Music in Masonic Assemblies"
- Brother Avanti's Paper on Brother Jack Kemp

Coffee and Danish will be served prior to our meeting and Lunch will be served after. Members should make every effort to attend.

# Travelling Lodge of Research!!

New Jersey Lodge of Masonic Research and Education No. 1786 F&AM is contemplating taking its show on the road to various lodges around the state.

It is hoped that by meeting in various locations in a variety of state districts, NJ LORE will be exposed to more active Freemasons. This will reveal to potential members the virtues of our lodge.

This subject and the particulars of the program will be discussed at our March Communication. Please come out with questions and comments on this idea. The more discussion the better the plan will be!!



## It Came From the Internet

**Bro. Matt Korang, Secretary/Editor**

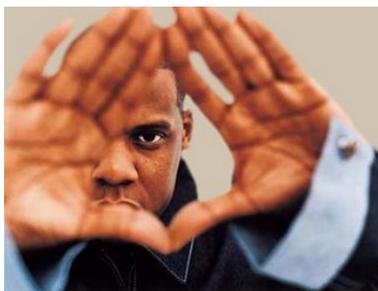
Following some of the Freemason news reports from the Internet over the last several months, I have happened upon a trend that is rather amusing. Current music superstars with supposed secret ties to Freemasonry. Here is a sampling of these “news” reports.

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### **Jay Z, Rihanna, Kanye West, Illuminati Free Mason Rumors!**

Sat, Jan 2, 2010—  
NewsTrendsToday.com

It has been widely talked about that rappers Jay Z, Rihanna & Kanye West are all part of the secret society of the Illuminati or of the freemasons. Imagery in Jay Z’s Rocafella clothing line and verses from the song “Run this Town” by Jay Z, Kanye West and Rihanna all seem to hint at an occult affiliation.



Jay Z has neither confirmed nor denied the allegations that he is influenced or otherwise affiliated with the Free Mason society or the Illuminati, but he sure has enjoyed a burst of publicity because of the rumors.

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### **Illuminati Having a Pop Cultural Moment**

12:31 pm Monday Jan 11, 2010 by Kelsey Keith  
<http://flavorwire.com>

What do Sherlock Holmes, Gaga, Jay-Z, and the New York Times have in common? If the past few weeks are any indication, it’s a vested interest in occultish secret societies: the Masonic order and Illuminati, to be exact. Hold up: what’s an Illuminati? Adam Weishaupt founded the secretive group of “free thinkers,” an offshoot of the Enlightenment movement, in Bavaria in 1776. Because of its cloak-and-dagger pretense, the sect has since gained a much more sinister reputation in the canon of pop culture. Is the group of “ruling elite” a New World Order conspiracy? Probably not. But it sure is fun to speculate.



Rihanna



Lady Gaga

Paranoid blogger The Vigilant Citizen claims that "hiding one's eye can be traced back to the 'eye of Horus' of Egyptian mythology. This symbolism seems to have evolved into a kind of signal flashed by artists who have been initiated into the select circle of Illuminati pop stars." Evidence? Lady Gaga and Rihanna.

In fact, Our Lady of No Pants might even be an Illuminati puppet. Here she is posing in what appears to be a Masonic temple.

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### **Beyoncé Is An Illuminati Puppet—But One Man Knows the Truth**

by Tara Ariano posted @3:30 PM February 15, 2010 <http://www.theawl.com>

The first VC post I read was a look at Lady Gaga's "Bad Romance" video, presented to me by the tireless content "recyclers" at Oh No They Didn't. I'd seen the video and already thought it was a fairly dark depiction of human sex trafficking (plus dance routines); little did I know it's actually about "the dark and ritualistic inner-workings of the entertainment industry."

*Lady Gaga in the East.....*

In the first paragraph, the author refers to previous posts describing Lady Gaga as an "Illuminati Puppet," so for VC, this video fits that narrative perfectly. Gaga begins in a sensory-deprivation tank (of the sort used on victims of mind-control techniques). She's drugged (ditto). She's eventually delivered to a room in which a bed is flanked by taxidermied gazelle heads (which "symbolically refer to Baphomet, the horned idol of Western occultism"). And she doesn't set her master on fire to escape her fate as a sex slave, as it might have appeared to me: she presents him as a burnt offering to Baphomet in exchange for her fame.

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It did not take long to find out that many of these stories had a common point of origin (ground-zero), a blogger known as The Vigilant Citizen. This anonymous blogger takes his very valuable time to report to the world all the hidden symbolism in popular culture today. Visit his website for a thoroughly entertaining (but not enlightening) experience. <http://vigilantcitizen.com/>

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When your mind is thoroughly bent by the thoughts and ideas of the Vigilant Citizen, surf over the [www.peoplemagazinedaily.com](http://www.peoplemagazinedaily.com) to see how the Masonic Order was involved in the death of Michael Jackson.

You see it is a tawdry story of millionaire record moguls, all Freemasons running the record industry, and a newly initiated Brother named Conrad Murray, Michael Jackson's confidant and personal doctor.

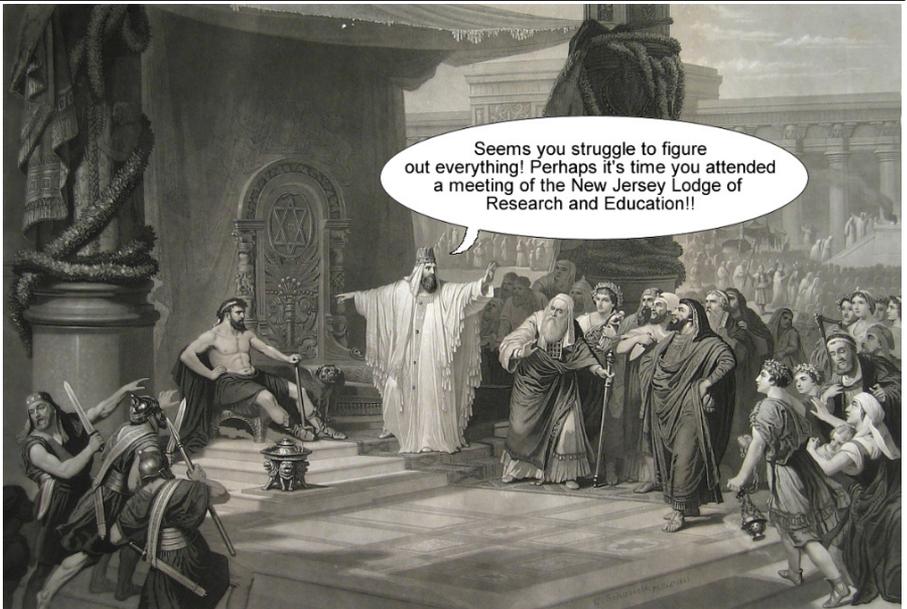
Seems that the millionaire Freemason record moguls needed Michael Jackson to sign with their record label. He refused, so the conspirators enlisted Mr. Murray to get Michael hooked on pain killers and narcotics.

We know the unfortunate results of this. Was our gentle craft involved? You will have to be the judge.



## **MASONIC TRIVIA AND FACTS**

There are 140,000 Freemasons in France, according to the Grand Orient de France. Unlike the Anglo-American tradition, French Freemasonry allows women to join some of its organizations, and belief in God is not a prerequisite. By spreading ideas of liberty and democracy during the Enlightenment period, the Freemasons played an influential role in the French Revolution. Their motto, like that of the French Republic, is "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity."



*Finding it tough to figure out the meaning of all those symbols and allegories?*

*Hit a wall in your search for Masonic Knowledge??*

*Just frustrated with the same-ole, same-ole boring meetings???*

**Then it's time you gave NJ LORE No. 1786 a try!!!**

Come out to our next meeting on Saturday March 13, 2010 at 9:30 a.m.

We guarantee you will not leave a meeting without learning something new.

***Stop being frustrated and start enjoying Freemasonry again!!!***

**Grand Master of Masons of the State of New Jersey**

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### *From the Editor's Desk.....*

*Next Trestleboard will be published on or about June 1, 2010. We are always looking for articles. All articles must be submitted by May 15, 2010.*

*Matthew Korang, Secretary*  
*mkorang@comcast.net*



New Jersey Lodge of Masonic  
Research and Education No. 1786

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*Bringing Light to New  
Jersey Freemasonry!*

**We're On the  
Web!!  
[njlore1786.org](http://njlore1786.org)**