



Australian and New Zealand Masonic Research Council

2002 Lecture Tour by Bro David Gray, PM

ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS

plus presentation times

PART ONE—PRINCE HALL FREEMASONRY

1. Origins of Prince Hall Freemasonry

SUBJECT: The first 72 years of Prince Hall Freemasonry (1775–1847)

This paper will discuss the early origins of Prince Hall Freemasonry—from 1775 to 1847. It will trace the development of African Lodge #1 to African Lodge #459, to African Lodge #370, to the early years of the African Grand Lodge. The initiation of fifteen black men into the mysteries of Freemasonry by Lodge #441 of the Grand Lodge of Ireland will be reviewed, along with what we *don't* know about what took place during these early and vital years.

LENGTH 30–40 minutes

2. The Real Prince Hall

SUBJECT: Prince Hall the man, as we know him

The title may lead to the conclusion that there was a false Prince Hall. In some respects, there is truth in this observation. There has been fostered upon us a false image portrayed by those who have not researched Prince Hall as a subject. Some of us have accepted whatever has been spoken and written about him, so that incomplete and at times false information has become generally adopted and fixed into a tradition.

This paper will give a clear picture of who the *real* Prince Hall was, as a man, a Freemason and a warrior of human rights and free education.

EST. LENGTH 25–35 minutes

3. The Great Mistake

SUBJECT: The Prince Hall National Grand Lodge (1847–1874)

On 27 June 1847 a convention was held in the city of Boston, Massachusetts, composed of delegates from the First Independent African Grand Lodge of North America of Pennsylvania, the Hiram Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, the African Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, and Boyer Lodge of New York. They met to discuss the following:

- To resolve the disputes between African Grand Lodge of North America and Hiram Grand Lodge.
- To unify colored Masonic organizations, and
- To secure uniformity of work.

The end result of that convention was the formation of a National Grand Lodge, which asserted authority over state Prince Hall Grand Lodges.

This paper will discuss the events which lead up to this historic meeting, the events which took place during that convention and the very interesting developments which took place during the twenty-seven years of existence of the Most Worshipful National Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Ancient York Masons of Color for the United States of North America, and the Masonic jurisdictions thereunto belonging. We will also examine the lingering affects the National Grand Lodge which continue to haunt Prince Hall Freemasonry today.

EST. LENGTH 40–50 minutes

4. Myths and Legends in Prince Hall Freemasonry

SUBJECT: Masonic Myths, Lies, Inaccuracies, Rumors, etc. about Prince Hall Freemasonry

Unfortunately, when books or articles are published and are later proven to be full of inaccuracies, those books don't go away. They continue to be bought, sold and read and contribute to misinformation being distributed. This distribution of false information has happened to Prince Hall Freemasonry, and the internet had not been a good friend to Prince Hall Freemasonry in this situation. The late Allen E. Roberts of the Philalethes Society wrote, "For more than two centuries Prince Hall Freemasonry has been the most lied about organization in the world..."

This paper will review some of the most popular Myths and Legends and provide clear facts. It will also discuss in some detail the facts of the more important ones.

EST. LENGTH: 25–35 minutes

5. The Christianization of Prince Hall Freemasonry

SUBJECT: The Christian Character of Prince Hall Freemasonry

Masons who are not Prince Hall Freemasons are often caught off guard while visiting Prince Hall Masonic Lodges or their Public Functions and hearing Christian hymns being sung, or the lodge Chaplain ending his opening and closing prayer in the name of Jesus, and other sectarian practices. These practices do occur in the majority of Prince Hall Lodges, but they are not officially endorsed nor part of the Code & Constitution of any Prince Hall Grand Lodge.

This paper will give many excuses why most Prince Hall Lodges are uniquely Christian in character from a historical point of view. It will also discuss whether there will ever be an end to this un-Masonic practice in Prince Hall Freemasonry.

EST. LENGTH: 25–35 minutes

6. The Cultural Impact of Prince Hall Freemasonry

SUBJECT: The Role that the Prince Hall Masonic Order has played, and continues to play in society.

Prince Hall Freemasonry has had a very interesting relationship and role in American society. From the late 1700s until the mid 1900s we find Prince Hall Masonic organizations playing a unique role in the Black communities in which the majority of its Lodges were situated. Until around 1960, in the United States, Blacks really leaned on the Church and the Masonic Lodge for services, support and uplift. It's also no coincidence that from the early 1800s until the early 1900s we notice new Prince Hall Lodges mainly being established along the Underground Railroad (slave escape route from the south to the north of the U.S.A.). After integration things changed, and impacted the traditional role of Prince Hall Freemasonry in society.

This presentation will review the role the Prince Hall Masonic Order has played in American society and analyze what happened to that role after integration. It will also speak to the new role of the Prince Hall Masonic Order in this new millennium.

LENGTH 30–40 minutes

7. Prince Hall Freemasonry in Ohio (USA)

SUBJECT: Prince Hall Freemasonry in Ohio (1849–2002)

The M.W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Ohio is the Mother and Grandmother of more Prince Hall Grand Lodges than any other Prince Hall Grand Lodge in the United States of America. The Order of Eastern Star, Royal Arch, Royal & Select Masters and Knights Templar Prince Hall Grand Bodies of Ohio also were very aggressive in establishing chapters and commanderies in other jurisdictions. Ohio was the first Prince Hall Jurisdiction to work the Royal & Select Degrees. It is because of Ohio's aggressive tradition in spreading Masonic light that it has been considered a leader in Prince Hall Freemasonry for most of its history.

This presentation will highlight and discuss the proud history, present position and likely future path of Prince Hall Freemasonry in Ohio.

EST. LENGTH 35–40 minutes

8. The Structure of Prince Hall Freemasonry

SUBJECT: Grand Lodge Structure, Lodge Structure and Affiliated Bodies Structure

There are some interesting differences in the way Prince Hall Freemasonry is structured compared with its Masonic counterparts throughout the world. These differences range from the layout of the Prince Hall Lodge to the government of the Grand Lodge, to many Masonic bodies that have been affiliated with or adopted by the Prince Hall Grand Lodges. [Including an overview of the concordant bodies]

This paper will primarily focus on the differences between the structures of Grand Lodges and Lodges of Australia and the Prince Hall Grand Lodge and Lodges of Ohio. It will discuss a range of topics and will provide a unique perspective into the inner workings of Prince Hall Grand Lodges.

EST. LENGTH: 30–40 minutes

9. History and Development of the Prince Hall York Rite

SUBJECT: Development and Structure of the Prince Hall York Rite

The Prince Hall York Rite is an interesting story of development and design. These Masonic Houses consist of the Royal Arch Chapter or Capitular Grades (Mark Master, Past Master, Excellent Master and Royal Arch Mason), Royal & Select Master or Cryptic Grades (Royal Master, Select Master and Super Excellent Master) and Knights Templar (Knight of Malta, Knight of the Red Cross, and Knight Templar).

This paper will trace the origin of each of these bodies, and review the general York Rite structure in Prince Hall Freemasonry, along with the role of the General Conferences. It will also discuss the basic teachings and symbolic story revealed in each degree and any unique similarities or differences they have with other grades of the same name.

EST. LENGTH: 30–40 minutes

10. The Scottish Rite in Prince Hall Freemasonry

SUBJECT: Development and Structure of the Prince Hall Scottish Rite

Other than the Ancient Egyptian Arabic Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, the Prince Hall Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite is the only other national body in Prince Hall Freemasonry which confers degrees. In the 1800s there were five Prince Hall Supreme Councils working in the United States, that were later consolidated into two. These two Supreme Councils today combine hundreds of consistories and thousands of members all over the world.

This paper will trace the origin and structure of the Scottish Rite in Prince Hall Freemasonry, and discuss some of the more interesting details of the management and philanthropies of the Supreme Council as they differ from other Scottish Rite bodies.

EST. LENGTH: 30–40 minutes

11. The Women of the Prince Hall Masonic Order

SUBJECT: The Women of the Prince Hall Masonic Order

The wives, mothers, daughters and sisters of Prince Hall Masons have been able to become members of the Prince Hall Order of Eastern Star since the late 1870s, by authority of the late Illustrious Robert McCoy, who established the Order. In recent decades some Prince Hall Jurisdictions have abolished the bloodline requirement and have allowed women who were not related to Prince Hall Masons to join the OES.

This paper will review the history of the Order of Eastern Star and gauge its future, in relation to the continuing bloodline requirement in some Prince Hall Jurisdictions; the impact that Female and Co-Masonic Lodges may have upon the Prince Hall OES; and the past, present and future role of the Prince Hall OES in American society.

EST. LENGTH: 30–40 minutes.

12. Recognition of Prince Hall Freemasonry

SUBJECT: The Official Recognition of Prince Hall Freemasonry

Since 1989 thirty-two Grand Lodges in the United States have recognized Prince Hall Freemasonry as a Regular Masonic body, but the issue of recognition of Prince Hall Grand Lodges is not new at all. In the late 1800s and far into the 20th century, Prince Hall Grand Lodges were being denied recognition at home, while enjoying it abroad, as well as from South American Grand Lodges. Some of the difficulty that Prince Hall Grand Lodges have faced and continue to face today concerning recognition, are ignorance about its history, human prejudices, fear and politics.

This paper will discuss what is meant by regularity, what is recognition, exclusive jurisdiction, the history of recognition of Prince Hall Grand Lodges, and its future battles in this arena. It will also review whether the Mason-Dixon Line (old border for slavery) still exist today in this regards, and recent recognition events.

LENGTH 30–40 minutes

13. The Greatest Threat to Prince Hall Freemasonry

SUBJECT: Bogus Black Masonic Groups

Probably the most dangerous threat to Prince Hall Freemasonry has been that threat which Bogus Black Masonic Groups has presented over the past two centuries. There are hundreds of these Bogus Black Masonic Grand Lodges, who are found either posing as Regular Prince Hall Masons or demonizing Prince Hall Freemasonry.

This presentation will highlight activity of these groups and focus on some of the more influential ones and their history. We will examine the many court litigations brought against these groups by Prince Hall Freemasonry and vice versa. Some remedies to this continuing threat will be discussed and some of the progressive action being done in some Prince Hall Grand Lodges will be highlighted.

LENGTH 30–40 minutes

14. Taking Stock of Prince Hall Freemasonry

SUBJECT: Review the Past, Presenting the Present and Analyzing the Future of Prince Hall Freemasonry

Over two centuries ago, fifteen men of color were initiated into Freemasonry. One has to wonder if Prince Hall or any of those fourteen other men even had an inkling of a thought about what they had just become the birth fathers to. Prince Hall Freemasonry has had many faces during these two centuries. Its role in American Society has changed dramatically from times of slavery to times of segregation to now.

This paper will discuss the roles that Prince Hall Freemasonry has held and championed throughout history and analyze what role it plays to today, and what role it should play in world in the future.

EST. LENGTH: 30–40 minutes

PART TWO—EXEMPLIFICATIONS OF PRINCE HALL RITUAL

15. Entered Apprentice Lecture 2nd and 3rd Sections

SUBJECT: Official Ritual of the M.W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Ohio (1974)

In the 2nd Section of this Lecture we review the manner and reasons why the newly initiated EA was thus prepared and conducted throughout the Lodge. During the 2nd Section, I take the form of the Candidate—Dressed in similar manner as he would be, I present most of this Section while being hoodwinked, somewhat barefoot and etc.

In the 3rd Section we introduce the Constituting, Form, Support, Coverings, Furniture, Ornaments, Lights and Jewels of a Lodge, How Situated and to Whom Dedicated. My manner of presenting the 3rd Section includes using all the actual items being discussed (i.e. clay, coal, rough ashlar, etc).

EST. LENGTH: 30 minutes

16. Fellow Craft Middle Chamber Lecture

SUBJECT: Official Ritual of the M.W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Ohio (1974)

This Lecture refers to the origins of the institution and views Freemasonry under two denominations—Operative and Speculative. It is presented by the Speaker meeting a Fellow Craft outside King Solomon's Temple, where he explains to him what it means to be a Speculative Freemason and introduces him to two pillars outside the temple. He then conducts him down a flight of winding stairs explaining their significance and finally to a place representing the middle chamber of King Solomon's Temple where the significance of Letter G and Geometry is fully explained.

I present this Lecture with the necessary props of: seven steps, the particular item of each step sitting next to it; a pomegranate; two pillars; an ear of corn; wine and oil. Also needed is one Brother able to read four lines.

EST. LENGTH: 40 minutes

17. Master Mason Funeral Service

SUBJECT: Revised Masonic Funeral Service of the M.W. Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Ohio (1970)

The Funeral Service can be given either during memorial services or near the graveside of the departed Brother. It is strictly a Master Mason only service, as the words in the ritual couldn't apply to any other Craft degree.

I would present this Ceremony reciting the parts of the Worshipful Master and Chaplain. I would need two other participants to read the parts of the Senior and Junior Warden, and a Brother to act as Marshall. The whole assemble could participate, as every Brother in attendance at one of these Masonic Funeral Services assists in giving Funeral Honors (something like a grand hailing or grand honors sign). The only other prop needed would be enough evergreen leaves for all participating Brethren.

EST. LENGTH: 35 minutes

PART THREE—OTHER PAPERS

18. Exactly what is Freemasonry?

SUBJECT: Defining Freemasonry

To some, ‘Defining Freemasonry’ might seem a trivial subject to ponder, but how mistaken that would be. Many of the problems that afflict the Masonic Order today stem from a failure to identify what Freemasonry is. What it is to Brother A, often times is the total opposite to what Freemasonry is to Brother B.

This paper will explore what Freemasonry may actually be and try to define it, and link its identity crisis with its inability to market itself to those men it wishes to attract.

EST LENGTH 25–30 minutes.

19. Who’s Scared of Freemasons?

SUBJECT: Is Freemasonry a Religion?

Probably the most repeated phrase in the Masonic Order is ‘Freemasonry is not a Religion’, but how accurate or true is that statement? Have Freemasons invented their own definition of the word ‘Religion’ out of fear of Anti-Masons?

This paper will examine the history of the word *Religion* and whether Freemasons have made up their own definition to fit their own use. It will discuss if Freemasonry *is* some sort of Religion and, if so, what type it is. It will also discuss the probable repercussions if Freemasonry were to be labeled a Religion by Freemasons.

LENGTH 25–35 minutes

20. The Masonic Marketing Scam

SUBJECT: What are we selling?

In several parts of the world, the Masonic Order has remodeled itself so much that often one can barely distinguish whether he is sitting in a Rotary Club Meeting or a Masonic Lodge. Masonic Billboards with toll-free numbers, along with television and radio commercial advertisements, are being used to solicit new members. Being able to receive all the Craft degrees in one day is also being used to add more members to our rosters. Has Freemasonry become too cheap and watered down?

From a product marketing perspective, this paper will discuss why some Grand Lodges break the most basic rule in product marketing. It will also look at the extreme difficulty in changing the perception of a product in the eye of the general public, and how that relates to some Grand Lodges trying to re-invent Freemasonry for the sake of more members.

LENGTH 40–50 minutes