

PALIMPSEST

The Monthly Newsletter of The Millennium Lodge No.327, Chennai

Vol. III, No.5 - April 2004

(For Private Circulation Only)

Website: www.lodgemillennium.org

Dear Brethren,

“ACACIA – The Madras Masonic Study Circle” – probably India’s premier Masonic Study Circle – just celebrated its Silver Jubilee on Saturday, 13th March 2004 at Freemasons’ Hall, Chennai under the stewardship of the retiring Chairman of *ACACIA*, our very own **W.Bro. Dr. John Reginald**, PDyGD of C, PDyRGM (and, Honorary Member of our Lodge). More than 200 Masons and their wives attended this function when the eventful record of the last twenty-five years was recalled and all those responsible for its success properly recognised. The classic movie *“The Man Who Would Be King”* based on Rudyard Kipling’s (himself a Mason) novel of the same name and starring Sean Connery and Michael Caine was another attraction for the ladies on that day. The evening’s festivities concluded with some light entertainment followed by a sumptuous spread, the latter organised by our own **W.Bro. Abbas Laila**. We congratulate all the Brethren who toiled over the last twenty-five years to make *ACACIA* what it is today, and, we pray to the GAOTU that it will continue to grow and spread the word of Masonry.

R.W.Bro. Dr. B. Biswakumar, R.W. the RGMM of the RGMLSI (and, Honorary Member of our Lodge) was Installed as the Worshipful Master of **Dakshin Mark Masters Lodge No.100** by the outgoing Worshipful Master, **R.W.Bro. G. K. Selvarajan**, GD of C, PDyRGMM (and, yet another Honorary Member of our Lodge) in an impressive manner at a special Meeting of the Mark Lodge held on Sunday, 7th March 2004 at the Freemasons’ Hall, Bangalore. Also our member, **W.Bro. V. S. Kylas** was Installed as the Worshipful Master of **Mount Mark Lodge No.50** on Thursday, 18th March 2004. Further, our member, **W.Bro. Bharat V. Epur** was Installed as the Worshipful Master of **Lodge Om Vighneswara No.218** on Friday, 19th March 2004. The latter was installed in the Eastern chair by our own member, **W.Bro. T. R. Mohanakrishnan** in his usual facile manner. Further, our member, **W.Bro. N. Suryanarayana Moorthy** was Installed as the M.E.Z. of **Chapter Chennai No.97** on Thursday, 25th March 2004. We wish them all well in their respective terms in office and beyond.

Brethren, it was not all celebration that I can report. We have had a most unfortunate tragedy in our midst. Our own Secretary, **Bro. A. J. Harikrishna Raj** lost his wife, **Nalini** on Tuesday, 9th March 2004 in an unfortunate and sudden manner in a hospital while undergoing routine procedures. This irreplaceable loss is not just Hari’s, but all of ours. Some of our Brethren spontaneously offered their help and their commiseration to our Brother. Those of you who have not, please do so at the earliest. It is at such trying moments that one has to exhibit one’s Masonic teachings; one has to live by one’s Masonic beliefs! We pray to the GAOTU to give the necessary strength to our dear Brother to cope with this unbearable pain and irredeemable loss.

Brethren, now that April has dawned on us, our Lodge goes into the summer holiday phase. No Regular Meetings of the Lodge are scheduled in the upcoming months of April, May and June. However, do look out for special projects, including this year’s edition of The Millennium Lodge Vintage Car Rally, details of which will be communicated separately.

LODGE ACTIVITIES:

I] A Retrospective of what happened in March 2004:

- a) The Third Meeting of the **Standing Committee** of the Lodge for the year 2003 – 2004 was held on **Wednesday, 3rd March 2004** at Andhra Social and Cultural Association, T. Nagar, Chennai. Routine matters were discussed at this Meeting, including the formation of a sub-committee to organise and conduct this year's edition of The Millennium Lodge Vintage Car Rally. The meeting was followed by fellowship and dinner hosted by our Senior Deacon, **Bro. Musti Suresh**.
- b) The **43rd Regular Meeting** of our Lodge was held on **Saturday, 20th March 2004** at Freemasons' Hall, Chennai when a **Ceremony of Raising** was conducted for our **Bro. Capt. K. Jayadevan** in the presence of **9** of our Brethren. Our IPM, **W.Bro. M. Govindarraaj** occupied the Eastern Chair due to the unavoidable absence of the Worshipful Master on account of his sudden indisposition. The following Brethren assisted in various capacities: **W.Bro. Bharat V. Epur** (as D of C, Chaplain, SD and Tyler, at various times during the ceremony), **W.Bro. S. Swaminathan** (as SD for some time), **W.Bro. V. A. Ramash** (as Secretary for some time), and, **W.Bro. P. S. K. Chari** (as IPM). **W.Bro. M. Govindarraaj** rendered the following portions: Obligation, Charge to the Brethren, Charge after Raising, Explanation of the Working Tools and Final Charge. **W.Bro. Bharat V. Epur** rendered the following portions: Exhortation, Traditional History Parts 1 & 2, Entrustment and Further Entrustment. **Bro. Dr. C. B. Nanjapa** rendered the Explanation of the Tracing Board. The Meeting was followed by fellowship and dinner.

II] Activities planned for April 2004:

The Lodge is on holiday and no activities are planned for April 2004.

III] New and ongoing Initiatives launched by/in our Lodge:

- a) **Grand Master's Rupee Club:** M.W. the Grand Master, **M.W.Bro. Arun Chintopanth**, OSM has appealed to all the Brethren to consider joining the "**Grand Master's Rupee Club**" by donating a small sum of only Rs.1/- per day, i.e., Rs.365/- per year. He has assured that this entire amount will be earmarked for worthy causes only. We, therefore, appeal to all our Brethren to donate to this noble cause. There is an option of making a one-time donation of Rs.4,000/- and becoming a 'Life Member' of the "Grand Master's Rupee Club". All those who opt for this will receive a lovely jewel from the Grand Lodge of India as a token of appreciation. Please contact the Worshipful Master, Secretary, Treasurer or the undersigned for further details.
- b) "**Square & Compasses**" is a bi-monthly magazine that is regularly published by the Grand Lodge of India. It contains items of Masonic interest as well as news about the various activities of our movement in India. The annual subscription to this magazine is Rs.50/- only. The life subscription for this magazine is Rs.750/-. We recommend to all the other Brethren who have not, to subscribe at the earliest.
- c) "**GLINDIA**" is a new bi-monthly newsletter that will be regularly published by the Grand Lodge of India. It will contain news and information about the various activities of the Masons as well as the various Lodges throughout the length and breadth of the country. We recommend the Brethren to

contribute to it by way of news as well as by way of providing monetary support – ads, sponsorships, etc. All your correspondence may be directed to W.Bro. Bharat V. Epur, Editor, GLINDIA, "Chaitanya", No.11, Third Street, Subba Rao Avenue, Chennai – 600 006. {Tel: (044) – 2820 7279, Email: glindia_editor@rediffmail.com}

- d) **"The Ashmolean Society - The Literary Association of Masons"**, the new association that has been mooted by us will be formally launched soon. Please await further details.
- e) Brethren, we look forward to your continued support for our **"Dhanya Dhan"** programme. We welcome any donations in kind or in money to support this noteworthy programme. Please contact the Worshipful Master, Secretary or Treasurer for further details.
- f) **"The Millennium Lodge No.327 'Suryakiran' Endowment Fund"** is up and functioning now. A number of Brethren have already donated various sums of money on the occasion of their birthdays, wedding anniversaries and other dates of personal significance. We request the other Brethren to kindly do so.

MASONIC EDUCATION:

Brethren, I reproduce for you an article that I downloaded from the Internet. It provides a useful introduction to the subject of Masonic Clothing and Regalia, as is customary in England. We in the Grand Lodge of India have similar customs, albeit with some variations. I trust that this will be of some use to all of you, especially, the younger Brethren.

Masonic Clothing and Regalia

(A chapter from "Freemasonry: Fact Not Fiction")
By Worshipful Brother Joe Granger

When attending formal Lodge meetings brethren wear dark clothing; this may be simply a dark grey or black suit with white shirt, black tie, black socks and black shoes, or more formal wear such as morning suit - even in some Lodges evening dress - all including white gloves. The regalia worn falls into two categories.

First is the "apron" which every Mason wears. In the case of an Entered Apprentice it is a plain white soft leather apron, usually property of the Lodge, as the brother only needs it for the limited period of his being in the First Degree. A Fellow Craft wears a similar white apron, with the addition of two blue rosettes.

And on reaching the Third Degree this becomes a white apron with light blue edging, having three rosettes and silver tassels. This Master Mason's apron is presented to the brother on his being Raised to the Third Degree. Sometimes the Lodge presents it, occasionally the brother's proposer or other friend.

It remains his property and is worn until such time as he may be promoted to higher rank. The officers of the Lodge usually wear similar Master Masons' aprons, sometimes with the insignia of their office on the apron, a form of a double circle in which is usually the Lodge number and name, having the emblem of office central in white or silver. The Master and Past Masters wear similar aprons, but in place of rosettes are three sets of perpendicular lines on horizontal lines.

Provincial and Grand Lodge officers have different aprons again, but this is not information necessary here. In addition to aprons, each officer wears a collar from which is suspended the emblem of his particular office. Collars are of standardised design, but the Master's collar is usually rather different, often being embellished with small plates bearing the names of past holders of the office.

Usually the Master's apron, like his collar, is Lodge property, being handed on to his successor in due time. The Master and his two Wardens wear cuffs which also carry insignia of office. The collars of officers of private Lodges can only be worn in their own Lodge, or if officially representing their Lodge as Master or Wardens in Provincial or Grand

Lodge meetings. Each officer of the Lodge has his particular emblem or jewel of office suspended from his collar.

The so-called jewels are to some extent self-explanatory and are as listed below. However, a Past Master's jewel is rather more intriguing, being the representation of the forty-seventh proposition of Euclid, engraved on silver plate suspended within a square. There are a number of theories, some quite fanciful, why this theorem of Euclid, attributed to Pythagoras, should be the emblem of a Past Master. The description by Dr James Anderson, who produced the first Constitutions, is probably as satisfactory as any: "The foundation of all Masonry, sacred, civil and military". The other officers' jewels are:

Master of the Lodge: The Square

Senior Warden: The Level

Junior Warden: The Plumb Rule

Chaplain: A Book on Triangle surmounting a Glory

Treasurer: A Key

Secretary Two Pens in Saltire tied with a Ribbon

Director of Ceremonies: Two Rods in Saltire tied with a Ribbon

Deacons: A Dove bearing an Olive Branch

Charity Steward: A Trowel

Almoner: A Scrip-Purse on which is a Heart

Organist: A Lyre

Inner Guard: Two Swords in Saltire

Tyler: A Sword

Stewards: A Cornucopia between extended legs of Compasses

Assistant DC & Secretary: As their counterparts above, but in simpler design.

Most of these are the property of the Lodge. It is a pleasant custom when a Lodge is first formed for the Founders to present the jewels as gifts, sometimes each of the first officers presenting the jewel of his office.

One final item, very important, is the Lodge "banner" which stands near the Master's place when the Lodge is open. It is literally a banner, usually measuring three or four feet wide by five or six feet deep, suspended from a staff by silken cords. The banner carries a design relative to the Lodge, woven in silks, and including usually the name, number and date of original formation of the Lodge.

Many banners are quite magnificent, with most complex pictorial details including Masonic figuring. When not in use banners are often hung round the walls of the Temple or dining room, making a splendidly colourful backcloth.

From the book: **Freemasonry: Fact Not Fiction** by W.Bro Joe Granger

The author wishes to express his thanks and appreciation for the support and encouragement he has received from R.W. Bro. B.M. Cooper, J.P., Provincial Grand Master for this Masonic Province of Worcestershire, England and W. Bro. R.G.H. Goddard, M.A., P.S.G.D., Assistant Provincial Grand Master. Without their patience and guidance this book simply could not have been produced. He also wishes to thank the printer, W. Bro. R.F. Hall-Jones of First Paige, Malvern, for his help and generous support. A full copy of this very useful booklet can be obtained by contacting The Provincial Grand Lodge of Worcestershire UK. www.worcestershire-freemasons.org.uk .

All proceeds go to charity.

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KNOW YOUR BRETHREN:

In this section of the newsletter, I would like the Brethren to write in their own words, or, in those of their 'near and dear', about themselves, their families, their occupations, their achievements, their goals, and whatever, else they feel will be of interest to the other Brethren. In this edition, I present to you a write-up about **W.Bro. Mani Sundar Gopal**, Founder of our Lodge and currently the Worshipful Master of Lodge Chennai No.317 (bearing Registration No.30), in the words of a well-wisher:

"W.Bro. Mani Sundar Gopal was born in Chennai on 2nd July 1974. His father Mr. G. Masilamani, a Senior Advocate of the Madras High Court, steered his son through J.G.V.V. for his schooling, and, thereafter, to the

Madras Law College for his B.L. degree. W.Bro. Mani Sundar Gopal then obtained an LL.M. degree from American University Washington College of Law. Currently, he is practicing at the Madras High Court.

W.Bro. Mani Sundar Gopal married Ms Deepa, BSc, MCA, a housewife, on 20th October 2002. He is a member of the Madras Gymkhana Club, the Presidency Club and the Anna Nagar Towers Club.

W.Bro. Mani Sundar Gopal saw the light of Freemasonry on 16th October 1998, when he was Initiated in Lodge Chennai No.317, where he is currently serving as the Worshipful Master – possibly the youngest ever to become a Master of any Lodge! He is a Founder Member of The Millennium Lodge No.327. He was Exalted in Chapter Chennai No.97, Advanced in Mark Lodge Chennai No.92 and Elevated in RAM Lodge Chennai No.92.”

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I would like to end this issue of the newsletter with a Masonic joke that I downloaded from the Internet, which I hope will leave a smile on your face.

[Receiving my Second Degree](#)

A little before Lodge is about to open an old man totters up to the Tyler and says, "I'm here to receive my 2nd degree." Well, they all look at this guy, who really is older than dirt, and they ask him to explain. "I was entered on July 4, 1922. Now I'm ready for my 2nd degree." So they go scurrying for the records, and sure enough, there was his name, entered on July 4, 1922. "Where have you been all these years? What took you so long to be ready for your 2nd?" they ask. He replied: "I was learning to subdue my passions!"

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Wishing you and your families all the very best for the Tamil New Year and the forthcoming holidays !

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