

## Modern Speculative Freemasonry

1717 Formation of the Premier Grand Lodge of England

### John T Desaguliers LL.D. F.R.S.

Often credited as the Father of Modern Speculative Masonry, Minister and Lecturer in experimental philosophy. In 1718 Oxford conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Civil Law. Appointed chaplain to the Prince of Wales. The Grand Master of the Premier Grand Lodge of England.

### 1730 Freemasonry comes to America, Daniel Coxe

English Lawyer First Provincial Grand Master in America. In 1730 The Duke of Norfolk, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of England issued to him a deputation as Provincial Grand Master for New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

### 1733 Freemasonry comes to New England, Henry Price

First Provincial Grand Master in New England. Issued a deputation by Grand Master Viscount Montague. No record of it was preserved. A tailor by occupation with a business in Boston, he was appointed by Governor Jonathan Belcher to be Comet of a troop of Guards with the rank of Major. His being a tradesman rather than an aristocrat diminished his influence.

### 1784 A Milestone in Freemasonry

A charter was issued to Prince Hall and other men of color, by the Grand Lodge of England. This charter, designated African Lodge #459, constituted the said brethren into a "Regular Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons".

### 1791 Freemasonry Declared Universal

Prince Hall, Provincial Grand Master self educated, former bondsman, he stood with the best of men. After the Revolutionary war, many lodges in America declared themselves independent from the Grand Lodge of England; Prince Hall was designated by the Grand Lodge of England to check on the status of various lodges in America. He did so, reported the findings and formed other lodges.

## What is a Mason?

At one of our Scholarship and Awards banquets, a young man of about 10 or 11 years of age was asked if he would like to have his picture taken with the Grand Master of Masons.

He jumped up with glee. When the Grand Master took him by the hand, the youngster looked up at this tall imposing figure dressed in a black suit, a silk top hat and wearing a gold emblazoned collar and apron. With a big grin on his face the young man asked, "What is a Mason?"

The Grand Master thought for a moment for he only had a moment, then said. "A Mason is a man who works at building things. In times past Masons built things made of stone like churches and cathedrals: even the pyramids and the Great Wall of China. They were called Stone Masons because they built things made of stone to make them strong and last a long time.

But we Masons of today are a fraternity, or a social club for men. We work at building character.

## Regular and Non-Regular Grand Lodges

Freemasonry as a social fraternity, practicing speculative Masonry, began in England in 1717. This is when the "Premier Grand Lodge" was formed. Grand Lodges that can trace their origins to The Grand Lodge of England (or of Ireland, Scotland or African Lodge #459) we call **Regular Grand Lodges**. Regularity of origin, together with conforming to certain rules, customs and usages, is essential for membership in this organization.

A charter was issued to Prince Hall and other men of color in Boston, Massachusetts by the Grand Lodge of England, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 1784. This charter, designated African Lodge 459, constituted the said brethren into a "**Regular Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons**". This lodge became The Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

The Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts is the Mother Grand Lodge of all Prince Hall Affiliated Grand Lodges in North and South America and Military lodges elsewhere. All Prince Hall Grand Lodges trace their origins to African Lodge #459. They are **regular** by virtue of their relationship to African Lodge #459. This is the cement that binds Prince Hall Masons together.

In December 1994 a changing social climate and the Masonic obligation to remove the stigma of racial bigotry from Freemasonry, motivated a recognition agreement between the United Grand

Lodge of England and The Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. Recognition means that mutually, one **Regular** Grand Lodge agrees to have Masonic communications and visitations with another **Regular** Grand Lodge. Only **Regular** Grand Lodges recognize each other, and then, only if they wish to.

The bond is so strong among Prince Hall Grand Lodges no written agreement is necessary. Recognition is implied.

There are some Grand lodges in the world we do not deem Regular. In most cases it is their origin, or how they were formed, that is questioned. To recognize one of these Grand Lodges would violate our constitution and imperil the legacy of regularity given us by Prince Hall. There is no fraternal communication or visitation between Regular and Non-Regular Grand Lodges. It would transgress Masonic obligations.

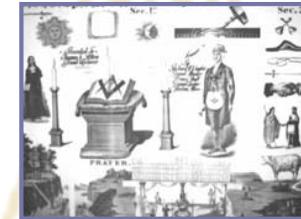
**There are over 200 principally Black Grand Lodges in the USA deemed non-regular. Several are located in Massachusetts. Their members are welcome and invited to become part of the Prince Hall family. They may join as individuals or as a group. We are not aware of any non-regular principally White Grand Lodges in the USA. They do exist in other parts of the world.**

First our own. We try to be the best men we can be. Then we try to help others, like today, when we give scholarships to young men and women to help them develop their minds. We volunteer our time at the boys and girls clubs, and little league sports. We even have a young men's club of our own called the Pythagorans. For we Masons believe the most important building is our spiritual building, or our character."

## The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge Jurisdiction of Massachusetts

24 Washington Street  
Dorchester, MA 02121

### Masonic Information Pamphlet



**Bro. Compton R. Jones**  
**Most Worshipful Grand Master**

Most Worshipful Grand Master



# MEMO

Attn: All brethren of The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge, Jurisdiction of Massachusetts

Re: (A Basic Information pamphlet)

From: Education Committee

My Brethren,

The leaflet, "The Five Facets of Freemasonry" was developed to inform non-members about the merits of Freemasonry. The Basic Information pamphlet is to help us answer questions they may have and some of our own.

Think of each pamphlet as a question

- (1) What is Freemasonry? (The Five Facets of Freemasonry)
- (2) What is a Regular Lodge? (Masonic Information Pamphlet)

Try to get pamphlet (1) in the hands of as many personal friends as possible. Keep records of those who may be interested in knowing more. Read and study pamphlet (2). Form your own opinion. Discuss it openly.

Information motivates interest.

Education Committee  
Bro. Red Mitchell, Chairman

## RESPONDING TO THE FIVE FACETS OF FREEMASONRY (Another way to define freemasonry or what we are about) Fraternity Philanthropy Philosophy Family Fun

### Approach to Potential Members

Have a visitor's register and hand out brochures to potential members at every function. Ask questions: Are you a member of this organization? Do you know some one who is a member? What do you know about this organization?

**Fraternity:** The world's largest, the oldest Black, universally recognized fraternity. Unites good men of like interests.

**Philanthropy:** Scholarships, Donations to Charities, Support community projects, Halloween parties and Christmas gifts for children, Thanksgiving Dinners for Elders.

**Philosophy:** Fatherhood of God Brotherhood of man, Practice the Golden Rule. All men are equal.

**Family:** Eastern Stars, Pythagorans, Youth Circle.

**Fun:** Outings, conventions, trips, parties, banquets, socializing.

### Decision Making

Ask questions that give candidate a chance to respond. For what reasons would you join a fraternity? What about Freemasonry interests you? Are any masons your personal friends? Would you like to be notified about some of our public events?

### Follow up

Keep candidate file: If there is any real interest put name on special lodge mailing list. Contact him occasionally. Give the name to another Mason if you feel he would be more helpful or influential in approaching candidate.

## Prince Hall our Founder

Masons are taught to honor and respect those who have led exemplary lives and to try to emulate them. No one man more deserves to be esteemed than our founder Prince Hall. He rose from the depths of slavery and deprivation to positions of leadership and respect. It is impossible to separate the history of black men in this nation from those whose lives he influenced. He was more than the founder of this organization; he should be considered one of the founding fathers of this nation.

At the birth of our nation he petitioned to permit black men to enlist in the army that they too, "could fight for their rights as American citizens". He petitioned the Great and General Court of Massachusetts to free all slaves. He brought the black community of Boston together to create the first black school, organized by black citizens, for black children. He fought for the rights of ex-slaves in the courts gaining the return of black seamen being sold into slavery. He started a Back to Africa movement 130 years before Marcus Garvey, resulting in Prince Hall masons joining with others to establish Liberia.

These and many other efforts, such as offering the services of the African Lodge to support the Government during the Shay's Rebellion, can be attributed to this man who was truly the first civil rights leader in America. He fought for the rights of all citizens, black and white.

"Throughout history the powers of single black men flash here and there like falling stars, and die sometimes before the world has richly gauged their brightness," W.E.B. DuBois

Some whose lives were influenced by Prince Hall and who were members of our Fraternity.:

- Julian Bond** - NAAP Leader
- W.E.B. DuBois** - Educator
- Thurgood Marshall** - Supreme Court Justice
- Benjamin Hooks** - Minister Civil Servant
- Daniel Chappie James** - General
- Martin Luther King Sr.** - Minister
- Ralph David Abernathy** - Minister
- William "Count" Basie** - Civil Rights Leader
- Benjamin E. Mays** - Coll Pres Leader
- Edward "Duke" Ellington** - Composer/Musician
- Ossie Davis** - Actor
- Charles B. Rangel** - Congressman
- Jerry (Iceman) Butler** - Entertainer
- Bodles T. Washington** - Educator

## Two Patriots and Freemasons

Many are aware that Paul Revere was a patriot. Few know he was also the Grand Master of Masons in Massachusetts. Many are aware that Prince Hall was the founder of Freemasonry for Men of color. Few know of him as a patriot. He implored George Washington to allow black men to enlist in the Revolutionary army. Later during Shays' Rebellion, he offered the support of African Lodge #459 to aid the Militia at Concord and Worcester. He was committed to the preservation of the new nation.

Prince Hall and Paul Revere were contemporaries. There is no written record of the two men meeting. There

are numerous circumstances however, given their similar interests, which would indicate their paths must have crossed. They both were tradesmen. One was a leather dresser and caterer. The other was a silversmith. Both were leading citizens of their respective communities. They were involved in the social and political life of the city of Boston, that in the 1790's numbered just 18,000. There are records that show members of the St. Andrews Lodge of Boston visited African Lodge #459. Paul Revere and John Hancock were members of St. Andrews lodge. It was John Hancock's brother-in-law that brought the

charter for African Lodge back from England.

They had mutual acquaintances such as the Rev. William Bentley, pastor of the East Church of Salem and Jeremy Belknap, a noted historian. Prince Hall's catering business engaged him with many prominent people known to Paul Revere.

In December of 1994 a changing social climate and the Masonic obligation to remove the stigma of racial bigotry from Freemasonry motivated a recognition agreement between the Grand Lodge of England and the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. The Grand

Lodge of Massachusetts supported this decision. They entered into an agreement of communication and visitation of their own with the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

We may now equally and openly honor these two men for the great Patriots and Masons they were.

***A historic Masonic meeting was held in downtown Boston May 10<sup>th</sup> 2003. The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge F. &A.M. of Massachusetts and The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Massachusetts A.F.& A.M. visited the gravesites of these two great Masons. A fellowship dinner followed.***