

EMESSAY NOTES

February 2020



**THE
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SERVICE
ASSOCIATION
OF NORTH
AMERICA**

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MSA Receives Podcast Grant From Minnesota Grand Lodge

A grant of \$12,000 from the Col. James B. Ladd Fund of the Grand Lodge of Minnesota has been approved for the Masonic Service Association to continue the production and improvement of its Podcast program. MSA appreciates the generosity of the Grand Lodge of Minnesota.

Michael A. Smith, an active Mason in the Grand Lodge of Maine, is heading the Podcast program for MSA.

Podcasts of Short Talk Bulletins Meet Resounding Success in 1st Year

Most Masons know about the Short Talk Bulletins (STB), published monthly by the MSA since 1923. The first Podcast of the STBs was released on November 30, 2018, and the first-year report shows outstanding success.

Since that start, more than 65,000 Podcast downloads have occurred from all over the world. The numbers are steadily increasing, with 12,675 downloads in a recent 60-day period.

Short Talk Bulletins were originally conceived to bring a common stock of Masonic information to all Lodges, by providing a short, chatty discussion of some Masonic topics that could be read in every Lodge every month. They have been written by noted Masonic scholars, but also Brothers and non-members from all walks of life, and serve as a unifying beacon across the broad reach of the Craft.

Unfortunately, the majority of the Craft today have little exposure to such excellent content, unless they have an individual monthly subscription to the Short Talks or have purchased one or more the six Volumes, which include reprints of hundreds of the STBs. (See www.msana.com for more information.) Nowadays, thousands of Masonic members are interested in listening, not reading, their Masonic information. Podcasts are an option for many of them.

Several Grand Lodge Jurisdictions are now recommending the STB Podcast program to their members. For example, the Illinois Grand Lodge Membership Committee has recommended a specific list of the available Podcasts to its membership.

Since that first STB Podcast was released — “Civic Responsibilities of Lodge,” written in November, 1963 — more than 125 episodes have been published. Each month, the new Short Talk Bulletin is added to

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the list. In addition, the 97-year history of STBs is reviewed for outstanding information of current interest. The splendor of the Short Talk Bulletins is their timelessness of content.

One element of the Podcast program is the attempt to have as many of the authors of the modern STBs record their own work in their own voices, which helps demonstrate the depth and breadth of the palette of Masonic scholarship and knowledge.

An amusing aside to this comes from Walter MacDougall (PGM of Maine in 1996) after he recorded "Our Masonic Purpose," which he wrote in 1965. After finishing the recent recording, Brother MacDougall commented, "That sounds like the raving of a very young person, but I guess it was...ha ha."

Of the 125 episodes now available, the most popular are titled Freemasonry Defined, Civility, Nebraska's Return To Proficiency, Symbolism, Is Masonry Relevant, The Legend Of The Lost Word, 9 Questions, and 3, 5, 7, each of which has more than 650 downloads.

Anyone, a Mason or not, can access all of these episodes at www.shorttalkbulletins.com. Many brothers share these Podcast episodes in Lodge, with Masons and non-Masons, or as content to consume in the car on the commute.

Still unsure how to proceed? Most smart devices have an assistant, to which one might say, "Siri (or Alexa or Hey Google), find the Short Talk Bulletin Podcast." You will be listening in moments.

2 Ohio Masons Honored After 60 Years of Togetherness

Norman L. Fleming and Kenneth R. Anspach received their Entered Apprentice Degrees on the same night, November 16, 1959 in Shanes Lodge, in Rockford, Ohio. A few weeks later, they both received their Fellowcraft Degrees on the same night. At the next Lodge meeting Brother Fleming was raised a Master Mason, and two weeks later Brother Anspach was raised.

Their Masonic careers continued to follow the similar paths.

They both served as Worshipful Masters of Shanes Lodge, and both later served as District Deputy Grand Masters for the Grand Lodge of Ohio — Brother Fleming in 1982 to 1985; Brother Anspach in 1999 to 2001.

On January 20, 2020, they both traveled to Bradenton, Florida — Brother Fleming from Rockford, Ohio, and Brother Anspach from his home in Nakomis, Florida — to receive, together, their 60-year membership awards from the Grand Lodge of Ohio. Keith W. Newton, Grand Master of Ohio, presented the certificates and pins during a gathering of Ohio Masons in the Sunshine State.

Stamps of Masonic Interest

The Philatelic Freemason is a journal tracking Masonic information and interest in postal stamps. In the most recent edition, Editor Robert A. Dominique reports that the anniversary of the first moon landing has prompted several new releases.

The "First Moon Landing," with a picture of Brother E. E. "Buzz" Aldren, was issued on November 1, 2018 in Antigua, July 19, 2019 in the United States, and on July 20, 2019 in Moldova.