

Master's Moments

By

James D. Hawkins, PM

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The opinions presented in this paper are strictly those of the author and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Master and Wardens of the A. Douglas Smith Jr., Lodge of Research #1949 or the official views of the Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Virginia.

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The A.D. Smith, Jr. Lodge of Research enjoys a certain amount of momentum. Once a person joins, they tend to retain their membership. The dues are very reasonable and the meeting schedule is not that demanding. A look at the attendance and member participation probably would reveal that the 80/20 rule applies to our lodge as with most organizations in our society. That is, only 20 % (or fewer) of the members participate in one way or another. Like "Old Man River, the Lodge just keeps rollin' along."

And yet, I'm sure you can appreciate that as Master of ADSLOR this year, I want to do more than preside over an organization that is on auto-pilot. I would like to contribute leadership to the lodge that will result in growth, success [however one measures it] and relevance to the Masonic community.

Understandably, I have thought a lot about our lodge as Senior Warden and since my installation as Master last December. Let me share a few of my observations and conclusions

1. As the years go by the primary reason for creating and supporting the Lodge becomes lost in the memories of the Charter Members and the archives of the Lodge. A significant impetus for establishing this lodge was to honor a beloved Past Grand Master and his devotion to Masonic education. Therefore we must work to re-instill a sense of purpose with the members and stake holders of the Lodge.
2. A characteristic that distinguishes A.D. Smith, Jr. Lodge of Research from other Masonic organizations devoted to providing more light and encouraging scholarly works is our relationship with the M.W. Grand

Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of the Commonwealth of Virginia. We were chartered by and can be an instrument of the Grand Lodge for the advancement and furtherance of Masonic education in Northern Virginia. I believe we should do everything we can to strengthen this aspect of our existence and become a more important and indispensable tool for implementing the goals and objectives of the Grand Master and the Grand Lodge Committee on Masonic Education.

3. The programs and programing of our lodge should appeal to Masons of all stripes: those who have an interest in conducting so-called research themselves, and those who simply thirst for more information and knowledge about Masonry.
4. We should encourage a view of our Lodge as an ongoing organization – one that functions throughout the year - not just on four Saturdays a year - to advance its purpose and serve its constituents. The internet, publications and our Speakers Bureau offer distinct possibilities in this regard.

I want A Douglas Smith, Jr. Lodge of Research to be true to its heritage and worthy of its potential. I invite your thoughts and efforts toward this objective

