

Douglas Lodge
No. 153
A.F. & A.M.

“Freemasonry is an order whose leading star is philanthropy, and whose principles inculcate an unceasing devotion to the cause of virtue and morality.” Brother Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette

Welcome Friend;

Thank you for expressing an interest in Freemasonry and Douglas Lodge No. 153!

We've designed this informational because we recognize the amount of confusing, concerning, and frankly laughable information on freemasonry permeating the internet (we don't have goats! LOL)

As you may be aware, Freemasonry is the oldest and largest fraternity in the world. We are dedicated to making *Good Men Better*. It has been said that Freemasonry is a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols. We teach a man to improve himself through allegorical lessons we call degrees, utilizing symbols of the ancient tools of operative stonemasons.

We are also the most charitable organization in the world, donating hundreds of millions each year to organizations large and small. Some, like Shriner's Hospital for Children may be familiar to you but many others also do tremendous good in the world and benefit countless lives each day. Charity rests at the foundation of freemasonry.

The men you see around you in this Lodge have chosen to become a member for many different reasons. For some, it is a continuation of a family tradition. Others are drawn to our rich history while some immerse themselves in our deep and layered spirituality and fellowship. In truth, most men find all of it immeasurably valuable and enriching to their lives. Sharing deep and thought provoking conversa-



tions and work with like minded men committed to leading moral lives, contributing to their community, and passing on an ancient legacy to the next generation.

Enclosed within you will find helpful and interesting information to read and share with your friends and family. There is nothing “secret” within this booklet which you should keep from those you love. Quite the contrary, your loved ones should understand who we are if you desire to become a member of our Lodge. We do keep the details of our rituals and Lodge meetings secret; certainly not for nefarious reasons, far from it. Mostly it is a valued tradition and a way to distinguish you as a Mason should you choose to petition.

What is a “Lodge”?



The term “Lodge” is used to simultaneously describe various aspects of freemasonry. A Lodge is a group of men comprising a membership but, it is also the place in which those men assemble to conduct their business. It is the name given to the drawing

upon our trestle board. Yet it also represents the whole of the universe. The ceiling representing the heavens, the cardinal points of space represented by its walls, and the Earth and it’s seas as its floor with the whole of humanity standing upon it. The teachings of freemasonry are meant to represent the whole of mankind whose spirit and ideals permeate the life of every Mason regardless of where he is in the world.

Our Leadership Structure:

A Masonic lodge is comprised of several officers who are democratically elected each year to fulfill the various roles. The highest ranking of these is called the Worshipful Master. His duty is to effectively run the operations of the lodge in accordance with several doctrines including our Book of Constitutions (much like our own U.S. Constitution). Each officer, the Wardens, Deacons, Secretary, Treasurer, Chaplain, and so on, have defined responsibilities to ensure the Lodge oper-

ates at its very best. The officer positions are ranked in authority and are designed to advance a man each year to a higher position or authority and responsibility in what we call the “progressive line”. Becoming an officer is not a requirement when becoming a Mason but it affords a man an opportunity to demonstrate his hard work and commitment to the craft.

Our Mission: To empower good men with the tools to be better men in their communities and the world at large, through education, fellowship, and leadership skills.

Our Vision: To Make Masonry worth our time.

Our Core Values: At the heart of every Mason resides the same core values.

Belief in the one ever living true God. Who you pray to is your belief and yours alone. However, no Atheist can be made a Mason.

Responsible. Every Mason takes full responsibility for their actions and their lives.

Observe the Law. Every Mason strives to be a law-abiding citizen.

Trustworthy. Every Mason strives to be trustworthy in their dealings with all mankind, but more especially their fellow brothers.

Humble. Masons are known for their Charity, authentic Charity and that comes from being humble towards God and others.

Ethical Masons should always remain ethical in their dealings with others.

Respectful Masons should always be respectful of others and other ideas. You don't have to agree, but you should remain civil and respectful.

Our Meetings:

Douglas Lodge No. 153 meets the first and third Thursday evening, September through May of each year. We typically are “dark” during the summer months as we recognize how important this time is for family. Our fellowship and/or dinners begin at 6:30pm (prospects and visitors welcome) followed by our stated meetings beginning at 7:30PM (Masons only).



**Douglas Masonic Lodge No. 153 A.F. & A.M.
circa 1935**

Letter from the Worshipful Master

On behalf of Douglas Lodge #153, it gives me great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you as you express interest in becoming a Freemason. Your desire to explore the rich history, traditions, and values of our fraternity is both admirable and significant. Freemasonry, with its origins steeped in antiquity, has evolved over centuries into a global brotherhood dedicated to the pursuit of truth, morality, and personal growth. From the humble beginnings of stonemasons' guilds in the medieval era to the esteemed fraternity we know today, Freemasonry has endured as a beacon of enlightenment and fraternity. At the heart of our fraternity lies the concept of the unbreakable bond of brotherhood that binds Freemasons together across generations and continents. Just as the interlocking links of the ring signify unity and strength, so too do our members find solidarity and support within our lodges. Our local lodge in downtown Castle Rock holds a distinguished place within the broader tapestry of Freemasonry. Here, you will find a community of like-minded individuals who are committed to the principles of brotherly love, relief, and truth. Through meaningful rituals, engaging discussions, and charitable endeavors, our members strive to embody the timeless values espoused by Freemasonry. Ultimately, the aim of Freemasonry is encapsulated in our enduring motto: "Making good men better." Through introspection, education, and fellowship, Freemasonry offers a transformative journey of self-improvement and moral enlightenment. As you embark on this journey with us, you will have the opportunity to forge lifelong friendships, deepen your understanding of the world, and contribute positively to your community. We are delighted that you have chosen to explore Freemasonry with us, and we eagerly anticipate the opportunity to welcome you into our fraternity. Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. Once again, welcome to Douglas Lodge #153. We look forward to embarking on this meaningful journey together.

Fraternally yours,

Joel Charles

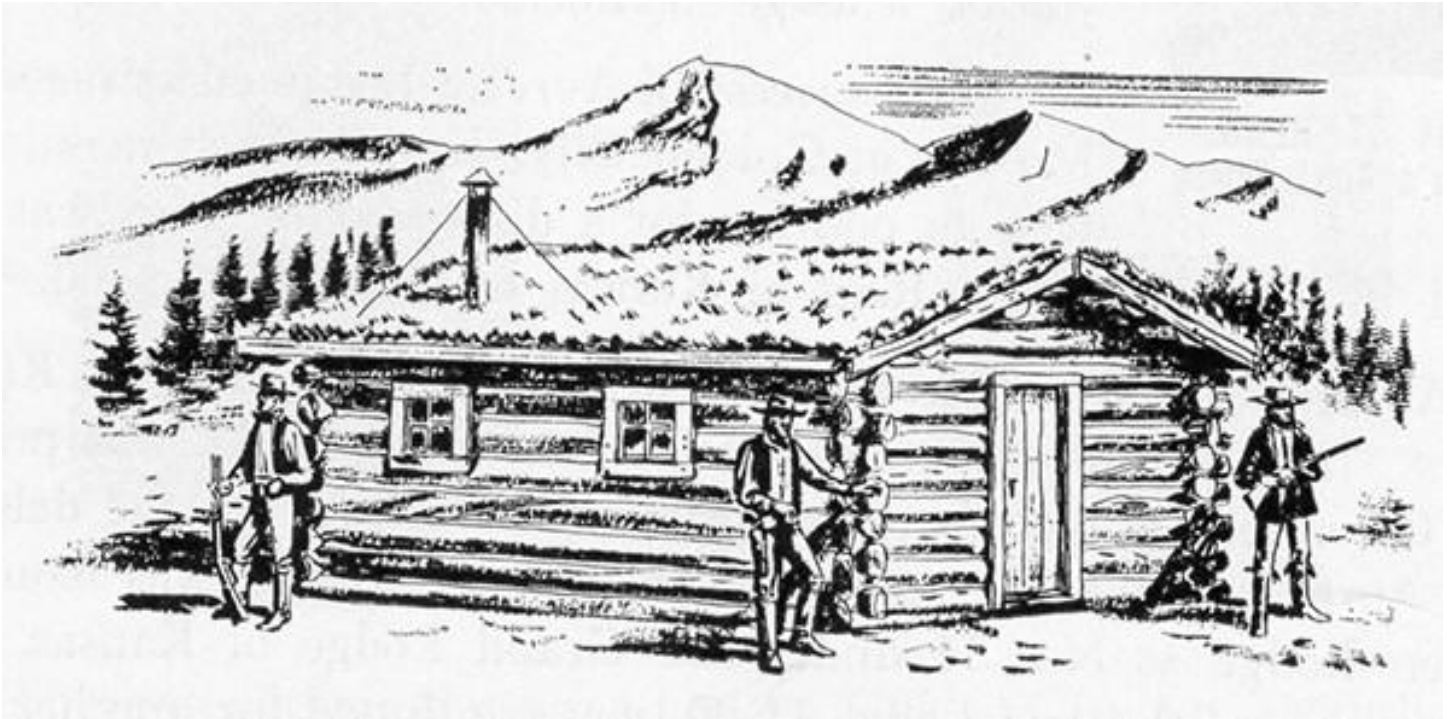
Worshipful Master 2024



Brother George Washington laying the cornerstone at our Nation's Capitol
1792

Masonry in America

While Freemasonry traces its origins from the stone mason guilds of the middle ages, the American state Grand Lodges trace their origins to the Grand Lodge of England; formed after a meeting of four local lodges near London in 1717. The Masonic craft soon followed and was invested in men such as George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, John Hancock, Paul Revere, and John Paul Jones to name just a few. As men spread across this great Nation, freemasonry followed with the likes of Meriwether Lewis, William Clark (Lewis & Clark), Daniel Boone, Davey Crockett, Kit Carson, Sam Houston, and countless other men of courage and vision. Men who sought to build a better country in the New World than the one they left behind in the Old. Grand Lodges were formed in every state and even the Indian Territory of Oklahoma, germinating the seeds of free thought and good will throughout our growing nation.



Masonry in Colorado

163 Years Young

The first meeting in what is present day Colorado was on November 3rd. 1858. A group of seven Masons from different states gathered in “Auraria” at the confluence of the Cherry Creek and Platte rivers to look for gold. We have no records of what took place during that meeting, but it grew from that first tent, to a two room log cabin and from there evolved to the many different Lodges we have across the state. The Colorado Grand Lodge was formed just a few years later in 1861.

Colorado has over ninety lodges with thousands of members doing the good work of Masons. Each of the Lodges are governed by the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge which sets the rules, helps with programs and gives leadership to the various Masonic groups in the state. The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Colorado celebrated its 163 year history in 2024!

A number of notable Colorado Masons undoubtedly have familiar sounding names to you. Names like Henry Teller, Richard Sopris, William “Buffalo Bill” Cody, Ralph Carr, Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin, and Castle Rock locals like Philip S. Miller have left indelible marks upon communities throughout our state and nation.

The History of Our Building at 3rd & Wilcox

1904—Our building was constructed using rhyolite from the former Santa Fe quarry near present day The Meadows and Red Hawk. Similar to granite in appearance and composition, rhyolite was widely used in the Denver area during the early 20th Century. Denver architect George Bettcher designed the building. It represents the only known example of an architect designed, Romanesque Revival style building in Castle Rock.

Our two-story building is constructed with alternating wide and narrow courses of rough-faced rhyolite. Although the cupola is gone, the corner entrance behind arched openings remains, as are the fan transoms of the arched second story windows. Decorative fleur-de-lis medallions anchor tie rods between floors, and a panelized frieze rises to a bracketed and dentiled cornice. The original owners, First National Bank, occupied the building until 1933 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt closed all banks during The Great Depression.

1911—Masons from Douglas County and surrounding areas laid the cornerstone for the former Douglas County High School. In 1936 the Masons also laid the cornerstone for the addition to that school.

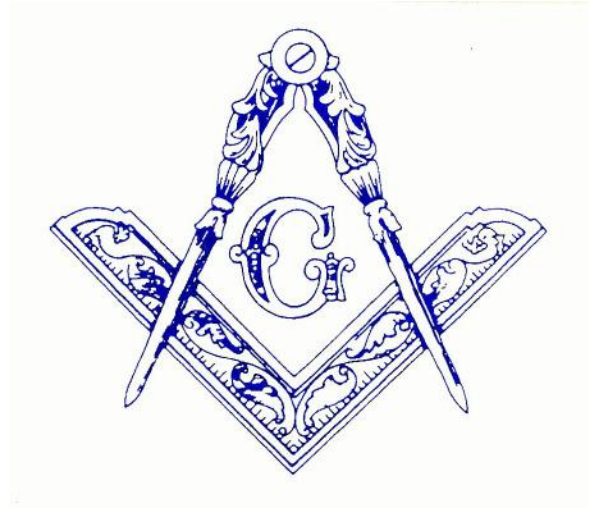
1919—A dispensation was issued to form a Lodge at Sedalia on May 5th. It was granted by M.W. Bro. Clarence M. Kellogg and the Lodge was known as Sedalia Lodge U.D. (under dispensation). The Lodge held 12 regular communications before the next Grand Lodge session. The Lodge was congratulated by the Committee on Return and Work for the neat and careful keeping of required records, these records are still kept in great condition to this very day.

1919—On October 8th, the Charter was granted under the name Douglas Lodge No. 153 at which time there were 32 charter members.

1919—October 20th Constitution of Douglas Lodge No. 153 with M.W. Bro. Frank L. Bishop officiating.

1924—Masons began using the current building to hold Lodge

1937—Masons purchased the current building and have been doing good work from this site ever since.



The Blue Lodge

Undoubtedly, you've heard reference to a number of different "titles" of Masons such as York Rite, Scottish Rite, and Shriners. Men of these bodies are, in fact, Masons but each of them began their journey to the East in what we refer to as The Blue Lodge. The Blue Lodge is the embodiment of the first three degrees of Masonry; the Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason. All Ancient Free and Accepted Masons must pass through these three degrees before they can pursue further enlightenment.

The Entered Apprentice

The first degree in freemasonry is the Entered Apprentice. The Apprentice is a symbol of youth and represents one who is at the beginning of their career. Just as in Operative masonry, the job of the apprentice is to learn, under the guidance of a Master Mason, the working tools of his "profession" and their proper applications in life.

The Fellow Craft

The second degree is that of the Fellow Craft. In ancient days the title denotes one who is a "fellow of the craft" enjoying the same privileges and obligations of every other member of the Lodge. Within Freemasonry, the Fellow Craft is

a symbol of manhood. One who has reached the meridian of his knowledge of work and, like the operative masons of ancient times, *able to bear the heat and burden of the day.*



The Master Mason

The third and final degree of the Blue lodge is that of the Master Mason. In operative masonry the term “Master” denotes one who had competed and perfected his trade or profession. He has completed his time as an Apprentice, learned the fundamentals of the craft, and proper use of the working tools, and now having completed the work, has learned to subdue his passions so as to be a master of himself.

In each of these three degrees you will be mentored by a Master Mason in learning the ritual and demonstrating proficiency through the memorization of certain elements meant to provide enlightenment and wisdom you can apply in life to improve yourself as a person, father, friend, and citizen.

Throughout the ages many great and accomplished men have been members of the Craft and credit it with contributing greatly to their successes in life. There are far too many to list here but it’s important that you recognize the diversity of our fraternity in terms of skill in the art of building things of value.

Here are just a few...

William “Bud” Abbott (Comedian)

Harold Maurice Abrahams (Athlete; “world’s fastest man”)

Elias Ashmole (scientist; founder of The Royal Society of London)

Frederic Auguste Bartholdi (sculptor; The Statue of Liberty)

William James “Count” Bassie (Orchestra leader/composer)

Robert Burns (Poet Laureate of Scotland)

Walter Chrysler (Automobile manufacturer)

Ty Cobb (Baseball player)

Samuel Colt (Inventor)

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Author)

Charles Hilton (Hotel founder/Entrepreneur)

Harry Houdini (Escape Artist)

Charles Lindberg (Aviator)

Dr. Charles Mayo (Founder of the Mayo Clinic)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (Composer)

Sir Isaac Newton (Scientist)

James C. Penny (Founder/Department Store)

Richard Pryor (Comedian)

Cecil J. Rhodes (Founder De Beers/Rhodes Scholarship)

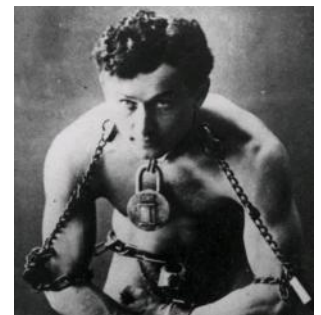
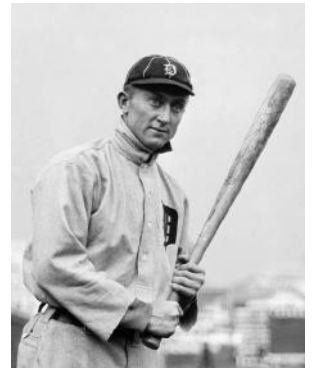
Ringling Brothers (Circus Entertainers)

Harland David “Colonel” Sanders (Restaurateur)

Warner Brothers (Studio/Film makers)

James Watt (Scientist/Inventor)

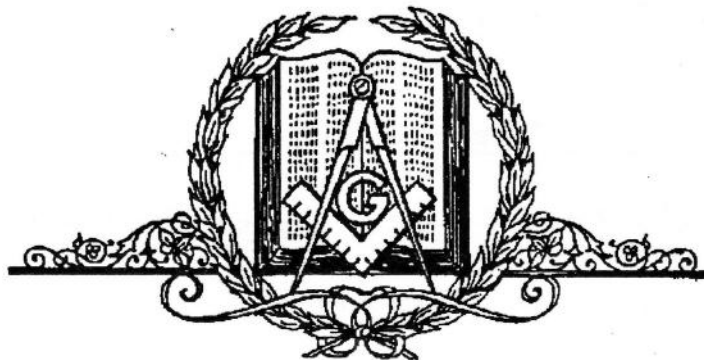
Steven Wozniak (Founder, Apple Computers)





Additionally, fifteen U.S. Presidents have been Brothers along with countless other Heads of State around the world. Millions of Masons have left an indelible mark of Liberty & Virtue upon the Earth and continue to strengthen and support the cause through Truth, Relief, and Brotherly Love.





Recommended Reading:

Freemasons for Dummies by Christopher Hodapp

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Freemasonry by Brent Morris

Is it True What They Say About Freemasonry? By Arturo De Hoyes

American Freemasons by Mark Tabbert

Lodge Contacts:

Worshipful Master:

Joel Charles

Joel.charles@gmail.com

Secretary:

Jeffery Noakes

Secretary.dl153@gmail.com

Douglas Lodge No. 153 meets the 1st & 3rd Thursday evenings

(Dinner/Fellowship 6:30pm / Meeting at 7:30pm)

