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VOLUME LXVIII

AUGUST 2022

NUMBER 8



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KNIGHT' TEMPLAR

VOLUME LXVIII AUGUST 2022 NUMBER 8

Grand Encampment of Knights Templar
of the United States of America.



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David Studley
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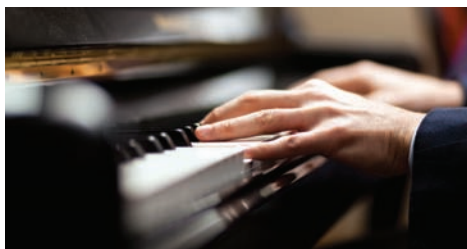
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Sir Knights, welcome to the August issue of the *Knight Templar*. I hope you like the new layout and our new logo. Expect more changes as we work to bring you the very best magazine we can create!

Thus, we may increase the magazine's size and start a bimonthly or even a quarterly publication schedule. We may increase the pagination count. You'll get more content, but at less frequent intervals. This should help up the quality of the editorial. And, since this magazine has consistently been the largest cost borne by the Grand Encampment, we may increase our advertising sales to make the *Knight Templar* cover its production (and perhaps even turn a small profit for the Grand Encampment). On this note, if you are interested in a full time ad sales position, please contact me. We are looking for the right sales team to bring the *Knight Templar* to the right vendors. Our advertisers must be relevant to our readership – ads should be a service, not a distraction.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out. This is *your* magazine. We work for you.



A black and white illustration of a crow perched on a human skull. The crow is shown in profile, facing left, with its beak slightly open. The skull is positioned below the crow, showing the eye sockets, nasal cavity, and upper jaw area. The entire image is rendered in a high-contrast, graphic style.

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Grand Master's Message

Sir Knight David J. Kussman, GCT
Grand Master of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar



Greetings in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ!

This month marks the completion of the first year of the 69th Triennium. We have had an interesting start, a significant course correction, and I am pleased to report that our Order is progressing nicely.

Next month we will begin the next round of Department Conferences. Some innovative programs and concepts will be introduced allowing better management and communications with our devoted sir knights. More to come on this in the next issue.

During my recent travels, I have been met with smiling faces and sincere handshakes from our members and the leadership of several other masonic bodies. Their words of pleasure at our new course of action and management are indeed inspiring and welcomed.

Considering these opportunities, I have been reminded of one of our core values as members of our magnanimous order. That, as Christian men, we need to surround ourselves with other God-fearing men who will keep us accountable and lifted up. If we cannot be there for our brothers in Christ, then how will we be there for God when He calls?

I submit for your study 2 Timothy 4:2, which edifies the necessity for Christian Brotherhood. Specifically, where would Timothy be without his Brother Paul? Fellowship in the Brotherhood is a necessity for a godly man to grow.

Mere eating and fellowshiping doesn't cut the mustard. Billy Graham was a great Christian leader because he surrounded himself with a strong brotherhood for accountability and encouragement. Consider, how successful would a football team be if they only played their quarterback? The quarterback, like all masonic leaders, needs a support system from team members to succeed.

My beloved sir knights, surround yourself in our brotherhood, and also surround your brothers.

Our journey continues. In His service,

David J. Kussman, GCT
Grand Master

Prelate's Apartment

Sir Knight Robert J. F. Elsner KCT PGC
Associate Grand Prelate of the Grand Encampment



¹As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. ²Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

– Ephesians

Paul often refers to himself as a servant, a prisoner, and a slave to Christ. This is shocking to many people as they read the Bible; only in faith is there true freedom. How can this be, that Paul tells us he is a prisoner but also that he is free? Jesus himself tells us in John 15:

¹³Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit – fruit that will last – and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. ¹⁷This is my command: Love each other.

Jesus' followers are free, not because of what they have done, but because of what has been done for them. As you recognize the freedom given to you through faith in God, you willingly give yourself to Him. This is one of the central paradoxes of Christianity. Because we are free, we freely give ourselves to Him.

Love one another. Show this love. If you are in a position to lead, lead with love. If you are a prelate or chaplain, be willing to lead with the love of Christ and that peace that truly surpasses all human understanding. As leaders in a Christian organization, you have been Called to serve. Let the chains and cords of service rest light around your necks because of work well done.

MASONIC (?) COWBOYS OF THE SILVER SCREEN

by Walter P. Benesch

A few years ago, the United States Postal Service issued a set of four stamps entitled "Cowboys of the Silver Screen." Although there have been numerous other stamps of Masonic cowboys in the past, the focus here on these four particular cowboys is important to Masons as all of them may have been Masons.

The stamps honored Roy Rogers, Tom Mix, Gene Autry, and William S. Hart. There is solid proof that the first three were Masons. However, there is a possibility that the fourth may also have been a member of the Craft, though this author has not been able to find solid evidence. This article will briefly trace the career of each of these distinguished actors and Masons (?).

William S. Hart

William Hart was born in Newburgh, New York in 1864. His father was Irish, his mother German, he had two brothers and four sisters. Hart was attracted to the stage from an early age and became a successful Shakespearean actor in a number of productions on and off Broadway. Besides Shakespeare, William Hart starred in the original Broadway production of *Ben-Hur* in 1899.

Of the four cowboys of the silver screen, Hart is the only one which cannot be identified with certainty as a Mason, though it was reported in an old copy of



the *Royal Arch Magazine* that he was a Mason.

As he was growing up, Hart became fascinated with the Old West. Movies were just beginning to be popular, mostly due to Edison Studios in New Jersey and a few small studios in California, so he decided to try to get into the movies. In 1914 – before Charlie Chaplin or Buster Keaton were stars – Hart anticipated that California would be the center of cinema and he moved there to pursue a career as an actor. His first films were in 1914; he was cast in several shorts. His first starring role was in a feature film called *The Bargain*. Hart, shown over in a typical Hollywood cartoon along with Keaton, Chaplin, Harold Loyd, Mary Pickford, Theda Bara, and a host of



others, evidences his popularity.

Hart wanted his films to be authentic. He acquired Billy the Kid's six gun, which he used in some of his movies. Hart insisted in costumes and props that came from the Old West. In 1915, he starred in two-reel Western shorts which became very popular. But they were not what Hart considered authentic. For his future feature films, he ensured realism and authenticity.

He met and became friends with Bat Masterson and Wyatt Earp. He used his relationship with them to learn how they experienced the Wild West, becoming an expert. Incorporating their suggestions into his feature films, he starred in a slew of films popular enough to be re-released in theaters decades later, sometimes under new titles.

In 1917 Hart accepted an offer from Adolph Zukor and joined the Players-Lasky which soon merged into Paramount Pictures. There he starred in films like *Square Deal Sanderson*, *Every Inch a Man* (pictured above), and *The Toll Gate* which were all box office smashes, for their time. By the early 1920's, Hart's brand of gritty, rugged westerns with drab costumes and moralistic themes began to fall out of fashion. In 1925 he produced *Tumbleweeds* with his own money, arranging it to be

released independently through United Artists. It was a spectacular film for the time, including an epic land rush scene and realistic shoot outs, but the film fell short at the box office.

Hart claimed that United Artists failed to promote the film properly and sued them. The legal proceedings dragged on until 1940 when the courts ruled in Hart's favor. But while *Tumbleweeds* was weak at the box office, a new kind of cowboy was capturing the imagination of the public.

Hart's last appearance was in a documentary and re-release of *Tumbleweeds* with a spoken prologue by William Hart himself. In the prologue he reflected on the Old West and his silent movie days with fond recollection. This turned out to be his farewell appearance. Hart died on June 23, 1946, at the age of 81.

Tom Mix

Rather than the gritty, rugged cowboy portrayed by Hart, Tom Mix cultivated an image of a Western hero with a clean white hat and neat, tailored cowboy outfits. Tom Mix grew up in Dubois, Penn., and learned to ride horses on a local farm. He always dreamed of being in the circus and,

according to one rumor, was caught by his parents practicing knife throwing tricks against a wall, using his sister as his “assistant.” He was employed at the Miller Brothers 101 Ranch and soon stood out as a skilled horseman and an expert with a pistol. He became so good that, in 1909, he won the National Riding & Rodeo Championship. This was a perfect apprenticeship for his future movie career.

In April 1898, Mix enlisted in the Army to fight in the Spanish-American War under the name Thomas E. Mix. But he failed to return to duty after being granted an extended furlough. This led to him being listed as absent without leave (AWOL) on November 4, 1902, but he was never brought up on charges, nor discharged. In 1905 Mix rode in the Theodore Roosevelt inaugural parade with a group of fifty horsemen which included a number of Rough Riders. Later, due to this exposure, Hollywood publicists confused the issue, reporting that Mix had been part of the Rough Riders in the war.

Unlike Hart, we have a clear history of Mix’s Masonic connections. Mix was raised in Utopia Lodge No. 537, in Los Angeles, Calif., on February 21, 1925. He became active in both the York and Scottish Rites and took part in many of the degrees whenever his schedule allowed.

Tom Mix began his Hollywood career as a supporting actor with the Selig Polyscope Company. His first film was *Ranch Life in the Great Southwest*. In it, he showed significant skills as a cattle wrangler, capable of separating a single head from the herd and roping the bull to the ground. As a result, he performed in over one hundred Selig films and a series of matinee films which were popular in the 1920’s. Kids, including this author’s mother, grew up watching these films on Saturdays. Mix performed his own stunts, more than one of

which led to a long history of injuries. But what really made Mix so popular was an exceptionally intelligent horse named Tony which soon became almost as popular as Mix himself and a model for future Western stars that looked for a four-footed partner to supplement their identity.

When Mix moved to 20th Century Fox in the late 1920s, his weekly salary was \$7,500, an incomparable salary for a cowboy star in those days. His brazen stunts, intricate costumes, and unsurpassed horsemanship quickly attracted fans. To bolster the Western genre, he created a twelve-acre set for Hollywood, called Mixville, which included a replica frontier town, iconic dusty streets, hitching rails, a saloon, jail, bank, doctor’s office, surveyor’s office, and framed houses typical of the Western frontier of the 1880s.

Inspired by his love of the circus as a child, Mix took up with the Sells-Floto Circus in 1929 and stayed on for the next three years. He earned \$20,000 a week. Two years after his final appearance in the Sells-Floto Circus, Mix bought the Sam B. Dill circus.

Like a great many others in those times, Mix lost most of his savings in the Depression. In 1932, Universal Pictures offered Mix a chance to appear in the talkies. Universal gave Mix unique approval and rights for casting approval. Nine pictures followed, with great success. In 1933, Ralston Purina produced the *Tom Mix Ralston Straight Shooters* series. Then, when the serial films were popular, Mix starred in Mascot Pictures’ *The Miracle Rider*, for which he earned \$40,000 for four weeks of filming. That serial proved to be his last appearance on the silver screen.

By 1938, Mix devoted full time to his circus taking a promotional tour of Europe. But the appeal of a cowboy/western style circus failed to attract the more sophisticated

audiences who had already been entertained decades before by Buffalo Bill's *Wild West Show*. As a result, the European tour led to the circus to bankruptcy, diminishing Mix's dwindling fortune. Over his career Mix reportedly earned over six million dollars – approximately \$104,000,000 in current money – yet by the end of the 1930s, most of his fortune was gone.

To make ends meet, Mix took to radio. He entertained radio dramas, based upon his western exploits, but he was played by other actors. Ralston-Purina offered a special series of Tom Mix comic books, available only by mail through their company. By the end of his career Tom had made over 330 movies; today, less than ten percent are available. His star still shines on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. His boot and palm prints – as well as the hoof prints of his horse, Tony – are still there, outside Grauman's Chinese Theatre on Hollywood Boulevard.

On October 12, 1940, Tom Mix was driving his 1937 Cord 812 Phaeton on Arizona Route 79. Whether it was due to excessive speed, neglect, or just inattention, Mix hit a construction barrier at a washed-out bridge. His car careened down a gully in full view of the road repair crew. According to witnesses, a large suitcase in the back flew forward, struck Mix from behind, shattering his skull and breaking his neck. A memorial plaque stands as a marker on the site now called "Tom Mix Wash" where this famous western star died. On it is the following inscription:

In memory of Tom Mix whose spirit left his body on this spot and whose characterization and portrayals in life served to better fix memories of the old West in the minds of living men.

Tom Mix was admitted posthumously

into the Western Performers Hall of Fame at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City. For those who were truly Tom Mix fans, there was never another western actor who could match his horsemanship and talent for action – not even Bro. John Wayne, whose first Western, *Stagecoach*, appeared on the silver screen in 1939, just as Mix's career was coming to an end.

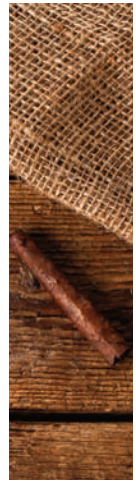
The next masonic cowboy – and the author's personal favorite – is Gene Autry. Though no longer as well remembered as some of the other Western stars, the list of Bro. Autry's accomplishments will never be equaled. His career was so varied and successful, each will be covered separately.



Orvon Eugene Autry

Orvon Eugene "Gene" Autry was born on September 29, 1907, not far from Tioga, Tex., making him the only Western born and bred star of the four. He was the grandson of a Methodist minister. In the early 1920's, while he was in his teens, his family moved to Ravia, Okla. When not in school, Gene took to playing his guitar and herding cattle on his father's ranch.

To earn a little extra cash for his family, Gene became a part-time telegrapher. To relieve the boredom between transmissions, the young Gene Autry played his guitar and



sang Western songs. One afternoon another Oklahoman – none other than Will Rogers – came into the telegraph office and heard Gene's voice and guitar playing. Rogers was impressed: He encouraged Gene to start playing professionally. Gene took Bro. Rogers' advice.

His singing and radio career started after leaving high school in 1925. Gene earned spare change playing guitar and singing at local dances. His first real break came when he starred as "Oklahoma's Yodeling Cowboy" on KVOO radio in Tulsa. This led to a record contract with Columbia Records. The same year he signed with Columbia Records, Gene became interested in Masonry and around this time joined Catoosa Lodge No. 185, in Okla. Shortly after, he was picked up by WLS in Chicago and the National Barn Dance program. In 1930 and 1931, he visited New York City to record what was called "hillbilly music." Some of the more popular hits included *Do Right Daddy Blues* and the now widely forgotten *Black Bottom Blues*. Since Prohibition was still active, Gene also sang a great many songs about bootlegging, police corruption, and loose women. Those recordings are exceptionally hard to find in the United States, but on a trip to Paris in knight templar

2008 your author does remember seeing a Gene Autry CD with many of those hard-to-find songs on.

Gene's first major hit, *That Silver Haired Daddy of Mine*, was recorded in 1932 with Jimmy Long. Long was already famous for his railroading songs. The collaboration led to one hit after another. By the end of his singing career, Gene had recorded over 640 songs and had either written or co-written more than 300 of them. I'm sure many of us can name his popular Christmas songs which included *Santa Clause is Coming to Town*, *Here Comes Santa Claus*, *Frosty the Snowman*, and his all-time biggest hit *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*. By the end of his recording career Gene had sold over 100 million records, received the first ever gold record, followed by eleven more gold and platinum records. He was voted into the Country Music and Nashville Songwriters halls of fame, in 1969 and 1970 respectively.

His success led to him founding Challenge Records. They signed many artists including Jan & Dean, Marty Balin, Jan Howard, The Knickerbockers, Jerry Wallace (*Primrose Lane*) and The Champs, whose hit was the exceptionally popular *Tequila*.

Now most people would be happy

with such a successful career, but Gene felt he could offer his fans more. In 1934, Gene sang in a cowboy quartet in a film called *In Old Santa Fe*. He stood out: he was offered a starring role in a twelve-part serial called *The Phantom Empire*. That serial's success led to forty-four B Westerns in the 1940s. Innovatively, he took roles in his real name, a unique idea at the time. By 1937, Gene Autry was the number one Western star. The peak of his acting popularity was between 1940 and 1942, when he also appeared on stage acting and singing for live audiences. He was the number one singing cowboy of his era, only falling from the spotlight when he joined the armed forces to assist the war effort. In his absence another Mason filled the void and became the next singing cowboy during World War II.

After the World War II, Gene went into a short retirement from film. He continued on radio with the CBS Radio hit, *Gene Autry's Melody Ranch*. The show was so popular that he was coaxed out of retirement in 1951 with the film *Texans Never Cry*, which renewed his popularity on the screen. Soon Gene had both radio and TV shows. Even his horse, Champion, had his own show on radio, *The Adventures of Champion*. In 1950, Gene produced and starred on CBS and ABC in special appearances and on a variety of programs. In 1952 he bought a ranch, which he renamed Melody Ranch, as a possible location for shooting Westerns for the movies and TV. The initial seasons of *Gunsmoke* were filmed on the Melody Ranch. Unfortunately, the Ranch burned down in 1962.

In the 1950's, the introduction of Gene Autry comics stimulated boys' interest in reading. I remember once owning the issue pictured on the previous page. The comics incorporated what Gene called the Cowboy Code, or Commandments. Here one can see the influence Masonry had on

Gene. The Cowboy Code was a clear moral guide for all. The Cowboy Code said that the Cowboy must:

1. Never shoot first, hit a smaller man, or take unfair advantage
2. Never go back on his word, or a trust confided in him
3. Always tell the truth
4. Be gentle with children, the elderly, and animals
5. Not advocate or possess racially or religiously intolerant ideas
6. Help people in distress
7. Be a good worker
8. Keep himself clean in thought, speech, action and personal habits
9. Respect women, parents, and his nation's laws
10. Be a patriot

By the time Gene retired from show business in 1964, he had achieved something which will never be matched: Gene Autry was awarded five Hollywood Walk of Fame stars for: 1. Radio; 2. Stage; 3. Screen; 4. Records, and; 5. TV. It is doubtful anyone will ever surpass that accomplishment!

Again, one might think that was enough for anyone, but not for Bro. Autry. Unlike some of his predecessors, Gene had invested his earnings in real estate, radio stations, and TV. He purchased the rights to Republic Pictures and to all his old films, thereby ensuring a continued income from

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royalties. The films were repeatedly aired: especially during Saturday afternoons for younger fans.

In 1960, Major League Baseball (MLB) had plans for an expansion team in Los Angeles. Autry approached MLB with an interest in the radio and TV rights to the new team. After his pitch, the League executives were so impressed with his business acumen that they refused to sell him the radio rights unless he became the team's owner! Thus, Gene entered his final career as a baseball team owner and promoter. He was given the number "26" (a team is limited to 25 players), testament to how highly the team viewed his support and involvement. His team was initially called the LA Angels, but when they moved to Anaheim in 1966, they were renamed the California Angels. They became the Anaheim Angels in 1997 until 2005 when they were renamed back to their original name. Autry's management skills were salient: MLB made him the Vice President of the American League from 1983 until his death in 1998.

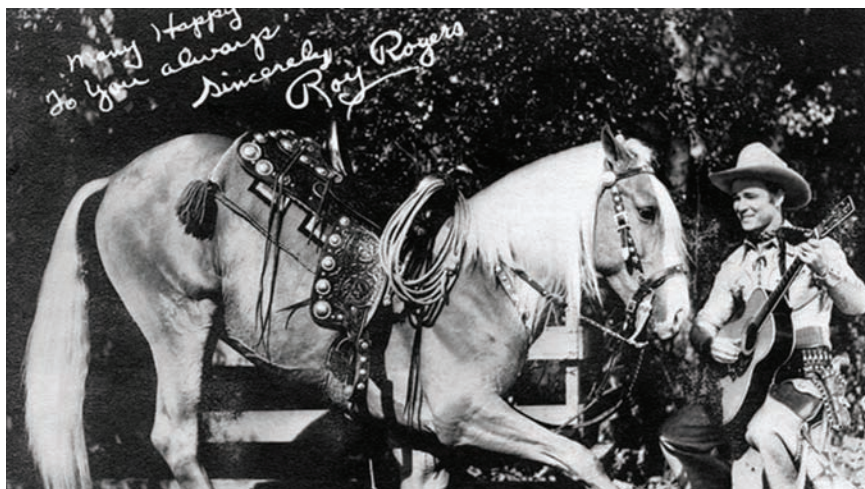
He sold a quarter of his interest in the Angels to the Walt Disney Company, but with the caveat that he would retain knight templar

controlling interest until his death. When the Angels finally won the World Series in 2002, the old Gene Autry theme song was played over the stadium's speakers as the fireworks exploded overhead. I must admit a tear welled up in my eye as I heard the old familiar voice singing, *I'm Back in the Saddle Again*. It was a fitting tribute to a great entertainer, businessman, and mason.

Roy Rogers

Our remaining cowboy of the silver screen is the very popular and dashing Roy Rogers, 33°. Mattie and Andy Slye had their son, Leonard Slye, on November 5, 1911, in Cincinnati, Ohio. They were always moving – from house to houseboat to anywhere they could find work. While in Duck Run, Ohio, the family got work on a small farm nearby. It was on the farm that Roy learned to ride a horse and became handy with a rope (though he could never reach the level of skill of Brothers Mix or Autry). When his sister got married and moved with her husband to California, Leonard decided to visit her and, upon the discovery of the delightful climate in Southern California, decided never to go back to the harsh Ohio winters. The next problem was finding work. According to some, he took any job he could find.

One night, while singing and playing his guitar at his sister's home, a mutual friend suggested he try out for the Midnight Frolic radio amateur night. He didn't win the contest, but he caught the ear of the Rocky Mountaineers, a country western singing group that was looking for a possible lead singer. From there he joined the Mountaineers and then, in September 1933, he was able to get a singing spot with a group called Jack and His Texas Outlaws. Jack introduced a song which any Roy Rogers fan knows well, *Tumbling Tumbleweeds*. It became a major hit, raising



Leonard's salary to a whole \$35 a week. Remember this was in the Depression – \$35 a week was good money!

While touring in New Mexico, a new group called The O-Bar-O Cowboys invited Leonard to join them. Being a sensible man, realizing they had a regular radio show that paid, he jumped at the chance. One night, while the group was performing on the radio, Leonard mentioned that he loved lemon pies. At the time Arline Wilkins and her mother were listening to the show and decided to bake the group a lemon pie. Arline and Leonard sparked a romance immediately. In 1936 they got married. Although both wanted children, Arline was not able to get pregnant, at first. This led to the adoption of a baby girl in 1940. Yet in 1943 Arline was able to conceive and they had their own baby that year.

Back in California, Warner Brothers was making a series of Western shorts. These were twenty to thirty films played in between feature films in Saturday matinees for children. Leonard got a job as a singing cowboy appearing in the short *Radio Scout*. He caught the attention of other producers and stars – including Gene Autry, who invited him to appear in a film called *The Big Show*, perfect for a pair of singing

cowboys. At the same time a new country western singing group was looking for a new voice. The Sons of the Pioneers gave Leonard his biggest break and produced one hit after another. They were given spots in a number of shorts during the late 1930's and occasionally took a role in a feature Western.

About this time Leonard realized he needed a horse that he could rely on and use in his films. After visiting a number of ranches, Leonard spotted a palomino that appeared to be as smart as it was beautiful. Leonard quickly purchased the horse and named him Trigger. Trigger of course became almost as popular as Leonard. When Gene Autry failed to show up for a movie due to scheduling conflicts, Leonard tried to convince the producers he would be perfect for the role. Their reaction: "Not with a name like Leonard! You need a new name." After a short discussion, both the producers and Leonard agreed to Roy Rogers, the name that Leonard used for the rest of his life. The movie, *Under the Western Stars*, was released in April, 1938. Roy Rogers became an instant star.

What followed was a series of very successful B Westerns: *Rough Riders Roundup*, *Days of Jesse James*, *Frontier Pony*



Express, and *Young Buffalo Bill*. During this time, Art Rush, an actor's agent, offered his services to Roy. Once hired, Art started by obtaining a new contract with Republic Pictures. He secured Roy the rights to his name and product licensing. This latter assignment proved to be valuable: over the next two decades the market was flooded with every type of Roy Rogers product you can imagine, from toys, dolls, and lunch boxes, to magazines, publicity pictures and food products with Roy's image on them. Art also realized Roy needed a sidekick and found him Gabby Hayes. The two became close friends and launched a successful partnership which stretched from film into TV years later. Along with the forty feature films produced with Republic Pictures, Roy made countless radio broadcasts and personal appearances. With Gene Autry no longer making films, since he was off fighting in World War II, Roy became the number one Western star in 1943.

Now Roy had two successful careers: as the lead singer for The Sons of the Pioneers and as a Western star in feature films. The Sons' *Don't Fence Me In* became a major hit. It climbed the charts outside of the country/western genre. Gene also recorded a version after the war. While touring with knight templar

The Sons, Roy met Dale Evans, who was in the audience at one of his shows. But Roy was married, so Dale put any thought of them being together out of her mind. Yet, if it could not be in real life, why not get close in the movies? Dale started trying out for roles in some of the Westerns being cast. In 1944, Roy made thirty-nine films and Dale appeared in two of them. The chemistry was instant and visible onscreen. The producers took advantage of this and made them a screen couple even if in real life they knew they couldn't be together.

The year 1946 was critical for Roy. Arline became sick. He joined Hollywood Lodge No. 355, Calif., and became active in both the Scottish Rite and the York Rite. Like Tom Mix he took part in many of the ceremonies and rituals. Then, that same year, Arline died of cancer. Dale ran to Roy's side to console him and help him with his children and dogs. The next year they became engaged and, on New Year's Eve of 1947, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans married – husband and wife in real life as well as on the screen. Dale once noted that she had no idea how hard of a job it would be becoming stepmother to three young children and thirty-four coon dogs.

In 1950 Roy moved to Paramount Pictures and had roles in large production films (in other words, he broke out of "just B" films). He co-starred with Bob Hope and Jane Russell in the Western comedy *Son of Paleface* and he appeared in many other Paramount films.

In August of 1950 Dale gave birth to a daughter with Down Syndrome. The child died before its second birthday. To express her sorrow, and to raise the public's awareness of Down Syndrome, Dale wrote a book about her experiences and shared uplifting thoughts for other parents with special needs children. Their managers and producers strongly objected to her writing



the book, but Dale refused to listen. This was the first book written by a public figure about special needs children. It broke the barrier of silence and neglect and helped change public perception of families with special needs children.

On December 30, 1951, NBC premiered the *Roy Rogers Show*, a weekly radio program, which later transitioned to TV. They needed a theme song for the show, so Dale came up with an idea that evolved into *Happy Trails*. It remained their theme song for the rest of their lives. The next year, Dale wanted to adopt a Native American girl but tribal law forbade non-native parents from adopting a member of the tribe. But Roy claimed ancestry to the tribe. They adopted the first of many children, including World War II orphans from Korea and England. It is important to note here: Native Americans were never portrayed as villains in Roy's films. When a Native American character appears in a Roy Rogers film, it is always as a friend and helper.

In 1954, Madison Square Garden planned to host a rodeo for New York audiences. Roy was invited to be a part of the show. During the contract negotiations, Roy submitted his song list. The submission included the inspirational song, *Peace in the*

Valley. The producers rejected it, stating the song – which has gospel overtones – was too parochial for the New York audience. Roy sent them a note stating that without the song Madison Square Garden could not have Roy Rogers and Dale Evans in the show. The Garden relented. The show went on as planned. This is a notable example: Roy and Dale were quick to uphold their beliefs – they wouldn't back down when their faith was challenged.

Roy decided to retire from film in the early 1960s but, like Gene, he was not ready for retirement. Some entrepreneurs approached him about licensing his likeness for a chain of restaurants. Aware of the high risk in the restaurant business, Roy said he'd consent only if the enterprise had the backing of a major corporation to ensure its success. Marriott Corporation took to the idea, and over the next thirty years Roy Rogers Restaurants became one of the most successful challenges to the fast-food kingpins: MacDonalds, Burger King, and Wendy's. Meanwhile, Roy and Dale opened a museum showcasing their careers. Whenever time and health permitted, Roy and Dale showed up in person to sign autographs and have their photos taken with the visitors. On the morning of July 6, 1998, Bro. Roy Rogers died.

Here is presented a brief biography of four of the great Western heroes of the silver screen, honored by the U.S. Postal Stamp set. These were four great stars, whose careers spanned more than half a century of film, radio, TV, and business. Three – Tom Mix, Gene Autry, and Roy Rogers – are known to have been Masons. William S. Hart's membership remains unproven, though it has been claimed that he was a member of the Craft.

What is more important, though, is that all four are worthy of recognition. They gave life to one of the most exciting and important genres of entertainment: The Western. Without their pioneering efforts – especially that of Hart, Mix, and to a lesser extent, Autry – these actors paved the way for John Wayne, Jimmy Stewart, Randolph Scott, and the many others who continued the tradition.

Without our Masonic cowboys of the silver screen, those that followed may have never become as popular nor as accepted and as influential as they were.

Sir Knight Walter P. Benesch is a Past Commander of Columbia Commandery No. 2 of the District of Columbia and of Old Dominion Commandery No. 11. He is currently serving as Grand Sentinel. He resides at 3308 Spriggs Request Way, Mitchellville, Maryland 20721, and can be contacted at php1477@gmail.com



Meet Your Department Commanders

Sir Knight Jeremy C. Vaughn

Northwestern Department Commander

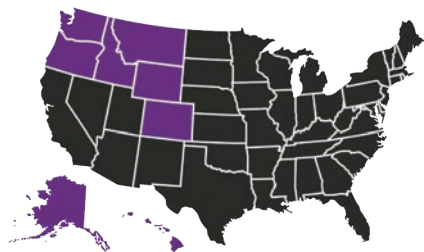
AK • CO • ID • MT • OR • WA • WY

Sir Knight Jeremy C. Vaughn was born on August 2, 1980. While in high school, he met and wooed Amanda, a Past Honored Queen of Bethel No. 39, Job's Daughters. After they both graduated from the University of Idaho, they were married. Sir Knight Jeremy later graduated from the Marshall-Wythe School of Law at the College of William & Mary in Virginia and returned to Idaho. Today, Sir Knight Jeremy practices law in Twin Falls, while Amanda teaches at Jerome High School. Sir Knight Jeremy was raised February 3, 2007, in Caribou Lodge No. 84 in Soda Springs, Idaho. A short time later, he affiliated with Twin Falls Lodge No. 45 where he has served as Master, twice. He is also a Past Master of Idaho Lodge of Research No. 1965 and Idaho City Historic Lodge No. 1863. Sir Knight Jeremy served



as Grand Orator in 2009-10 and was District Deputy Grand Master of the 4th District of the Grand Lodge of Idaho. Sir Knight Jeremy is a Past High Priest of King Solomon Chapter, Royal Arch Masons, Past Illustrious Master of Twin Falls Council, Cryptic Masons, and Past Commander of Twin Falls Commandery.

He served as Illustrious Grand Master of Cryptic Masons of Idaho (2019-2020), Grand Commander (2020-2021), and Grand High Priest of Royal Arch Masons (2021-2022). He is also a member of the Pocatello Valley of the Scottish Rite. Sir Knight Jeremy is a member of several other Masonic organizations, including Star Garnet Council, Allied Masonic Degrees (Charter Master); Intermountain Chapel, St. Thomas of Acon (Provincial Grand Secretary); Idaho Priory, Knights of the



York Cross of Honor (Past Prior); El Korah Shrine; Tacobat Grotto; Redemption Tabernacle, Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests (officer); Idaho College, Societas Rosicruciana In Civitatibus Foederatis (IX° and Charter Secretary); Tri-Valley York Rite College (Past Governor and Order of the Purple Cross; Chairman of the Council of Associate Regents, York Rite Sovereign College of North America); St. Michael Conclave, Red Cross of Constantine; among others. Sir Knight Jeremy and his bride, Amanda, are members of Twin Falls Chapter No. 29, Order of the Eastern Star, and Garnet Court No. 5, Order of Amaranth. Sir Knight Jeremy is a Past Associate Guardian of Bethel No. 43, Jobs Daughters, and was Associate Grand Guardian of Idaho for 2013-2014. Outside of Masonry, Sir Knight Jeremy has been active with the Boy Scouts, enjoys barbecue and grilling, and plays the worst game of golf you have ever seen Sir Knight Jeremy was appointed and installed as Department Commander for the Northwestern Department at the 68th Triennial Conclave of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America on August 18, 2021.

DEPARTMENTS of the GRAND ENCAMPMENT

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Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

54th Annual Voluntary Campaign Final Report

July 1, 2021 to May 15, 2022

	Contributions Only – used for awards					Contributions + Wills + Trusts	
State	Cumulative Total	Total \$ Rank	Active Members as of 5/15/22	Active Member Per Capita Average	Per Capita \$ Rank	Cumulative Total	Total \$ Rank
Total	\$1,658,324.53		66,283	\$25.02		\$4,203,770.77	
Knights Templar	\$32,865.58					\$32,865.58	
Alabama	\$29,876.00	16	998	\$29.94	18	\$30,376.00	21
Alaska	\$3,200.00	49	350	\$9.14	46	\$3,200.00	49
Arizona	\$23,070.92	23	536	\$43.04	6	\$38,099.17	16
Arkansas	\$11,556.66	36	673	\$17.17	38	\$11,556.66	38
Austria	\$0.00		18	\$0.00		\$0.00	
Brasil	\$0.00		717	\$0.00		\$0.00	
California	\$88,620.93	3	2,066	\$42.89	7	\$88,620.93	7
Central America	\$0.00			\$0.00		\$0.00	
Colorado	\$21,810.90	25	687	\$31.75	16	\$222,063.10	4
Connecticut	\$19,015.90	29	572	\$33.24	15	\$19,015.90	32
Croatia	\$0.00		48	\$0.00		\$0.00	
Delaware	\$4,432.00	47	185	\$23.96	27	\$4,432.00	47
District of Columbia	\$5,440.00	43	212	\$25.66	22	\$5,440.00	43
Florida	\$80,550.03	4	2,585	\$31.16	17	\$86,311.46	11
GE Subordinate – Asia Pacific	\$60.00	54	133	\$0.45	54	\$60.00	54
GE Subordinate – European & Africa	\$490.00	53	224	\$2.19	52	\$490.00	53
GE Subordinate - Latin America & Caribbean	\$545.00	52	329	\$1.66	53	\$545.00	52
Georgia	\$68,238.26	8	1,925	\$35.45	13	\$68,238.26	13
Hawaii	\$36,825.00	13	218	\$168.92	1	\$36,825.00	18
Idaho	\$5,010.00	45	204	\$24.56	24	\$5,010.00	45
Illinois	\$68,963.30	7	2,801	\$24.62	23	\$82,066.12	12
Indiana	\$31,031.63	15	2,480	\$12.51	44	\$31,031.63	20
Iowa	\$24,366.00	20	1,050	\$23.21	28	\$48,804.05	15
Italy	\$0.00		642	\$0.00		\$0.00	
Kansas	\$19,004.66	30	737	\$25.79	21	\$19,385.12	30
Kentucky	\$17,028.60	32	2,024	\$8.41	48	\$21,028.60	28

“To improve vision through research, education, and supporting access to care.”

Louisiana	\$21,443.42	26	888	\$24.15	26	\$21,443.42	27
Maine	\$19,840.00	27	984	\$20.16	31	\$20,633.89	29
Maryland	\$37,991.50	12	922	\$41.21	8	\$37,991.50	17
Mass/Rhode Island	\$64,009.97	10	1,666	\$38.42	9	\$64,009.97	14
Mexico	\$0.00		264	\$0.00		\$0.00	
Michigan	\$28,369.00	19	1,412	\$20.09	32	\$1,014,460.02	2
Minnesota	\$24,171.34	21	884	\$27.34	19	\$24,171.34	24
Mississippi	\$4,735.00	46	1,114	\$4.25	50	\$4,735.00	46
Missouri	\$24,032.79	22	1,470	\$16.35	40	\$24,032.79	25
Montana	\$5,455.00	42	533	\$10.23	45	\$5,455.00	42
Nebraska	\$10,920.00	38	539	\$20.26	30	\$10,920.00	40
Nevada	\$11,917.00	35	324	\$36.78	11	\$11,917.00	37
New Hampshire	\$11,538.00	37	305	\$37.83	10	\$11,538.00	39
New Jersey	\$12,287.00	34	625	\$19.66	34	\$12,287.00	35
New Mexico	\$5,120.00	44	281	\$18.22	36	\$5,120.00	44
New York	\$29,305.40	17	1,352	\$21.68	29	\$29,305.40	22
North Carolina	\$71,314.08	6	2,095	\$34.04	14	\$87,314.08	8
North Dakota	\$32,360.00	14	201	\$161.00	2	\$32,360.00	19
Ohio	\$95,161.69	2	5,789	\$16.44	39	\$95,161.69	6
Oklahoma	\$22,784.67	24	1,187	\$19.20	35	\$22,784.67	26
Oregon	\$9,160.50	41	459	\$19.96	33	\$86,827.50	10
Panama	\$60.00	55	156	\$0.38	55	\$60.00	55
Pennsylvania	\$238,464.96	1	3,604	\$66.17	3	\$241,001.44	3
Philippines	\$1,060.00	51	482	\$2.20	51	\$1,060.00	51
Portugal	\$0.00		201	\$0.00		\$0.00	
Romania	\$0.00		548	\$0.00		\$0.00	
South Carolina	\$28,532.63	18	2,158	\$13.22	43	\$28,532.63	23
South Dakota	\$2,555.00	50	297	\$8.60	47	\$2,555.00	50
Tennessee	\$67,074.04	9	2,760	\$24.30	25	\$87,074.04	9
Texas	\$71,821.14	5	5,173	\$13.88	41	\$172,469.47	5
Togo	\$0.00		78	\$0.00		\$0.00	
Utah	\$15,145.00	33	257	\$58.93	4	\$15,145.00	34
Vermont	\$3,371.00	48	247	\$13.65	42	\$3,371.00	48
Virginia	\$39,730.39	11	1,531	\$25.95	20	\$1,115,739.12	1
Washington	\$17,951.00	31	503	\$35.69	12	\$17,951.00	33
West Virginia	\$9,805.96	39	1,591	\$6.16	49	\$9,805.96	41
Wisconsin	\$9,718.00	40	563	\$17.26	37	\$11,955.58	36
Wyoming	\$19,117.68	28	426	\$44.88	5	\$19,117.68	31



Music is *Magic* – Use It: Especially in Templary!

by George E. Moore

As a newly raised Master Mason in 2003, I had the benefit of learning the Blue Lodge “Examinations” from a very well-traveled and masonically-educated Brother: W.B. William C. Adams, who earned many Masonic titles in his life, including being knighted a Knight of the York Cross of Honor.

During our many hours together at his kitchen table in my Masonic infancy, he shared many valuable bits of wisdom with me, including stressing that everything we do as masons during our ritual work is for the candidate. When he mentioned this, he would often chuckle and add, “that man paid good money for that degree.”

Several years later when I joined Commandery, I was moved by the use of classic Christian hymns during the Order of the Temple, particularly during the Ascension. It added so much. It made me commit right then to stay active in Templary.

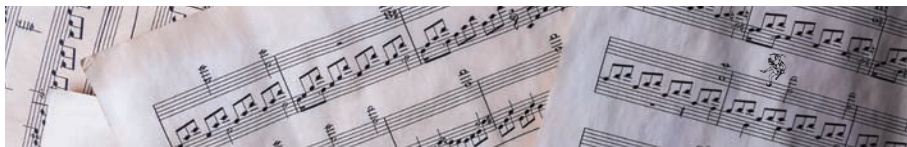
Soon after my knighting, I began traveling around as a new Sir Knight to other Commanderies but was disheartened

to see an Order of the Temple that did not employ the use of any music whatsoever. It wasn’t “wrong” by any means, but to me it was a completely different Masonic experience.

As Freemasons, we are separated from all other groups and organizations, which fiercely compete for the modern man’s time. We are fortunate that we get to impress our candidates with beautiful ritual work. And, by its very nature, Commandery is in prime position to impress a candidate beyond his imagination, in ways he has never experienced before in Masonry.

Our Masonic ritual work is comprised of thousands of beautiful small experiences which combine for an unforgettable overall experience which, if done well, can encourage the candidate to make a lifelong commitment to our fraternity. Sometimes this extends to creating multiple generations of Masons, as well.

Unfortunately, some of these beautiful moments in our rituals are overlooked by modern Masons for one reason or another,



including omitting music as part of the Masonic experience.

Think about the power of music in one's own life – a song can instantly set the mood for a moment, take a person on a trip down memory lane, and yes, even touch the most tender chords of human existence.

Now think of how powerful music can be in Masonic ritual, how much it can add to the candidate's experience. Read through the ritual – the music is in there for a reason. Think back to Blue Lodge – about how different the third degree would be without Pleyel's Hymn being sung at the graveside. And playing a funeral dirge on the march to the grave (such as Chopan's *Funeral March*) adds even more to the somber tone of that occasion. Even something as simple as adding quiet background organ music during the circumambulations of a candidate can change the whole tone of that portion of the ritual work (pardon the pun).

Many grand bodies, in various jurisdictions across Freemasonry, have musical resources available, sometimes in the form of pre-recorded music. They may even be able to connect you with a Masonic musician who can assist in the performance of the ritual. These grand bodies often permit the additional use of optional music and songs during ritual work in addition to the music listed in the ritual itself, subject to that grand body's laws, rules, and regulations, which must be strictly observed.

If you are a member of a Masonic body which is not fortunate enough to have any

musical resources or musicians available, do not despair – the internet offers many options which can meet your Masonic music needs. Virtually any song you would like to use can be found online and downloaded either for free (if in the public domain) or for a small fee and put into a playlist for use during ritual work. If you are unsure how to put a playlist together, and play it during the ritual work, ask around your Masonic circles to see if there is tech-savvy Brother who can help put it together and provide instruction; or perhaps they have a child or grand-child that can help. Millennial Masons will jump at the chance to be useful. Consider appointing millennial masons to a music committee.

In the last few years, I have made it a mission to make sure that music is a part of ritual work where appropriate. I have been told by many Brothers, Companions, and Knights that the appropriate and timely use of music really enhances the Masonic experience for everyone, particularly for the candidate, who should always be our focus. I always offer to supply beautiful pre-recorded Christian organ music during every conferral of the Order of the Temple in which I am involved. I am always thanked afterwards for enhancing the experience of every Sir Knight in the Asylum, particularly enhancing the experience the candidate.

Music is magic.

Use it. Especially in Templary!

Sir Knight George Moore is a Past Commander of Sidney Commandery No. 46 in Sidney, Ohio. You may reach him at george@georgemoorelaw.com

Mastering the

It's seldom clear to us how we impact the people around us, the people following us, and even the "whole picture of the point of our work."

Even when it is clear, any insight gleaned is often limited by self-imposed or circumstantial constraints.

Freemasonry's symbolic and moral instruction harnesses this phenomenon: the candidate undergoes experience before receiving explanation. In the Royal Arch, we get the final lesson regarding our capacity for teamwork: when we three do agree, our individual strengths are enhanced when aligned with the strengths of others. In Council we are exposed to the observer's perspective. Decrypting, if you will, the value of differing perceptions, strengths, and experiences allows for intentional cooperation. The Royal Master degree gives us fundamental insights on the impact of personal effectiveness.

Are we proactive? Even when we think we understand the "overall picture" and have a goal in mind, circumstances beyond our control may interfere with our intentions. But action itself is valuable. Hiram's instruction during the circumambulations plainly states that we contribute to what comes before us, that the time we have is a precious – and finite – opportunity, and though we may not recognize the impact we have, actual understanding awaits us when we move on. Our ideas, work, and creations are valuable and should be acted upon. How they manifest through time is beyond us – the seed may yield fruit in time

long after us.

Importantly, the question is put, do we exemplify a commitment to be and do our best? Whatever we do should be done whole-heartedly. Our actions are not outcome dependent; they should spring from a desire to do right. This is true inspiration. The work is its own reward, as we say.

Depending on your ritual, the prologue to the Royal Master may focus on a bowl, an undefined object, or a three-tier candelabra, but each shows that Adoniram's activity and skill produced a result. Adoniram created something under direction for the sake of creation itself. In some cases, neither he nor Hiram (his "supervisor") knew the intended use of the object prior to its completion: The best example of our dedication is evidenced in labor.

Do we intend our work to complement the work of others? Effective education guides the student from the basics to the complex and illustrates how various skills and concepts interact to reveal the whole through the parts. The Biblical references and the lecture in the Royal Master reveal how each golden vessel was brought to the Holy of Holies, there placed around the Ark to properly incur the presence of God. When we intentionally focus our activities and efforts as part of a team, we complement each other and manifest a greater vision.

"In the event of an emergency, please ensure that your oxygen mask is working properly before assisting others." To effectively serve others, we must first

“Royal We”

by Steve Balke



prioritize what we're doing. The Royal Master takes us on a journey, depicting how working together is as important to the individual as it is to whole. Like every Lodge, or really any other Masonic body or committee, among those who can best agree, our strengths resonate while our weaknesses cancel out.

The courses offered by the York Rite Leadership Program have been designed to augment the lessons of our ritual. The first courses are about personal effectiveness – they give you the tools and materials needed to be self-apprising, to move past old habits and acquired traits. The second courses provide methodologies to bridge any remaining gaps to teamworking. You create a plan that includes all team members, values input from others, and represents a knight templar

common vision. Finally, we help you refine your communication skills to realize team perspectives and common goals. The whole team should feel satisfied – not only with the organization's accomplishment – but with their personal contribution, too.

If you want to learn more about leadership principles, join the York Rite Leadership Training Program. Visit the website at YorkRiteLeadership.org for more information and to register for the program.



BEAUCEANT



On Saturday, April 9, 2022, two Beauceant members were honored at the Beauceant Brunch at the 169th Annual Conclave of the Grand Commandery, Knights Templar of Texas, Waco. (Mrs. Bill) Maggie Matyashk served as Worthy President of Waco Assembly No. 199 in 1978, 1999, 2006, and 2013. She served as Supreme Director of Music for three different Supreme Worthy Presidents and recorded a CD with popular Social Order of the Beauceant songs and marches, which she shared with other assemblies. As an accomplished pianist, she performs as Director of Music for her Assembly and many others for installations when requested.



At Elizabethtown Assembly No 265, Penn., meeting on April 9, (Mrs. David E.) Sonja Alcon, Past Supreme Worthy President, was awarded the Faith, Loyalty and Love certificate by the Worthy President for her generous donation to KTEF.





Port Arthur Assembly No. 160, Nederland, Tex., catered the reception for the Southeast Texas York Rite College No. 90 for their 2022-2023 Installation of Officers on May 7th with newly installed Preeminent Governor, Wayne Morvant. Members serving were (Mrs. James) Charlene Stringer, (Mrs. William) Ann O'Dell and (Mrs. Richard) Jeanette Cotton, Past Supreme Worthy President. The Installation was well attended.



The members of Cleveland Assembly No. 15, Cleveland, Ohio, support multiple hospitals in their area of Ohio by making layette boxes containing outfits and blankets for premature and full-term deceased babies along with isolette covers for babies born to drug addicted parents to help adjust their sleep cycle. They also turn in pop-top tabs to the local Shrine to help cover cost of transportation for children to and from burn units for treatment.



100% & 200% Life Sponsorships

369 COMMANDERIES AT 100%

The Officers and Trustees of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation wish to thank all Grand Commanderies that have become either 100% or 200% Life Sponsors within their jurisdiction and to those Grand Commanderies that are activity working towards the 100% goal.

Grand Commanderies at 100%

- 2022 – MARYLAND & UTAH
- 2021 – ILLINOIS
- 2021 – IOWA & CONNECTICUT
- 2020 – OHIO & TEXAS
- 2017 – VIRGINIA & GEORGIA
- 2015 – DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
- 2015 – WYOMING
- 2014 – TENNESSEE & MONTANA
- 1996 – SOUTH CAROLINA & OREGON
- 1995 – ALABAMA
- 1994 – NEW HAMPSHIRE



Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.
gratefully expresses
Appreciation and Commendation
to the
Grand Commandery, Knights Templar of

for its loyal cooperation and significant achievement in not only reaching the quota set by the Most Eminent Grand Master of the Grand Encampment Knights Templar of the United States of America, by securing ten percent (10%) of its members to become Life Sponsors of our Grand Humanitarian Charity, but now have 100% of its members as Life Sponsors, a most commendable achievement.



[Signature]
President
June 1, 2014
Date

Grand Commanderies at 200%

- 2020 – TEXAS & OHIO

Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

April 1, 2022 – April 30, 2022

GRAND MASTER'S CLUBS

AZ Clayton J. Howard	ME Paul A. Rollins
CA Stephen E. Alderete	ME Mahlon E. Welch
CA Chris H. Clark	MI Gary W. Leach
CA Benny D. Croyle	MI William B. Ten Eyck
CA Cirilo P. Marquez	MO Chad E. Wagoner
CA Jordan T. Yelinek	NE Frank L. Borden Jr.
CO Joseph D. Edwards	NY Alonzo C. LaBarr
DE Sheldon M. Waters	OH Kyle J. Binkley
FL Richard E. Lynn	OH Carl C. Keller
FL John H. Paugh	OH Jerry C. Scott
GA James T. House	OK Garrett R. Huxall
IN Charles M. Kostbade	OR Courtland B. Brooks
IA Douglas R. Clabaugh	SC Ronny D. Powell
IA Monte L. Harris	TN John E. Byars
IA Wade E. Sheeler	TN Billy C. Hall
KY Davis P. Privette III	TN Justin M. Huggins
ME David A. Blouin	TX Cecil Martin
ME Kenneth A. Caldwell	TX Benjamin A. Shepperd
ME Keith M. Cook	VA Joel T. Bundy
ME Alan D. Johnston	VA Thomas L. Spellman
ME Jeremy P. Lakin	VA Ralph T. Woodrow
ME Stephen E. Lawrence	WY Jon C. Rowe
ME Robert F. O'Brien	WY Lewis E. Shepherd
ME Eric S. Pooler	WY Otto G. Uecker

GRAND COMMANDER'S CLUBS

AZ Clayton J. Howard	OH Arthur F. Koeniger
CA Chris H. Clark	OK Robert L. Bradway
CA Cirilo P. Marquez	OR Courtland B. Brooks
CO Joseph D. Edwards	PA John F. McCombs
FL Larry D. Duff	PA Sanford E. Powell
FL John A. Kranioiu	PA David S. Sterner
IN Dathan L. Reed	SC Garland R. Harman
KS Charles C. Blatchley	TN Richard N. Alloway
LA William J. Surls	TN Timothy M. Rubel
MI David D. Hutton	TX Micah A. Thornton
MN Alan Mackenzie	VA Emmett G. Dalton Jr.
MN Steven A. Seay	VA Herbert M. Reedy
NH Bunnak Oum	WI Stephen Britton



by Ben Williams

**"I enjoyed the movie and its ending and thought the flying
and carrier flight deck scenes were terrific."**

William Sizemore II, 33^d, G.C., Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy (Retired)

Ace, Maverick, returns in this fast-paced thriller and testament to the "best of the best."

Opening to scenes reminiscent of its prequel, now thirty-six years old, you just can't resist the hint of nostalgia. This is a keen trick: the sense of the familiar – of a place you've been before – cements the sense of realism even where, clearly, there isn't any.

The film – which minimized CGI in post-production – showcases remarkable flying; taut, snappy dialogue (almost too slick in places); and fantastical imagery (sunlit shots dripping with poise). There's an element of formula about the whole thing: in places you can almost hear the *Mission Impossible* theme lurking in the background. It could easily have unraveled into yesterday's laundry. Instead, due mainly to the film's masterful editing by Eddie Hamilton (*Mission Impossible*) and Chris Lebenzon (best editor Oscar nominee for *Top Gun* in 1986), it survives, rising a triumph. Even if Maverick flies off into the sunset with the girl (as you know he will – after all, this *is* Tom Cruise) it still somehow works.

I don't think there's a single take lasting more than thirty seconds. The film is a collage of dreams. The dialogue – short well-timed lines – doesn't need to carry the story – the mosaic of shots is so effective that you happily endure the platitudes. The story is

fast, a fluttering of shots, arcs, and sequences.

The chemistry among the cast is palpable. This twins a paean for the past – for days long gone, for lost youth, for the promise of extinction and death – manifest in the audience, a majority of whom saw the original when it came out all those years ago, and then had their kids watch it, too, no doubt – with a triumph for the future. "The end is inevitable Maverick. Your kind is heading for extinction," says the Rear Admiral. "Maybe so, sir. But not today," replies Maverick.

At the end of the day, you suspend the disbelief because you *want* the glory. It's like *Rocky* rising a fist out of the 1970s dystopian wreckage. *Maverick* soars. It works because you want it to work. This blend of the familiar; the plucky rule breaker who survives by talent against the imposition of envious superiors, and the fact that merit is enough to win; all speaks to the viewer in ways that transcend simple propaganda. It's about the individual. But the triumph belongs to the team.

Tom Cruise gets a lot of flak (in the movie and off the screen). But one begins to feel like his heroic roles are less about him triumphing and more about uploading imagery of personal triumph in the audience. You can rely on *Maverick* like a happy memory. And like Peter Pan tells Wendy, these images help you fly.

august 2022

100 Years!
Celebration of the Cornerstone Laying at

The MASONIC TEMPLE

Detroit, Michigan

September 24, 2022

5 p.m. to 12 a.m.

Cornerstone Consecration

by Grand Lodge of Michigan

Music by

The Next Generation Funk Brothers

Ralph Armstrong Trio

DJ Rock'em

Tickets: \$100

Premium Bar

Dinner

Valet

Black Tie (preferred)

Entree: filet mignon w portabello demi glaze • pinwheel chicken florentine, cheese and tarragon mushroom sauce • kale quinoa stuffed delicata squash, tomato, garlic, asparagus, olive oil & tahini sauce • grilled salmon filet with ginger orange glaze

Sides: wild rice & vermicelli sauté with celery, herbs, diced red peppers & scallions • glazed roasted brussels sprouts & turn cut carrots

Full Bar: prohibition punch • champagne toast • premium liquor



Special Display

George Washington's Trowel



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