



GEMS OF PURPOSE

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BETHPAGE LODGE #521, F&AM OF TENNESSEE

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You Never Know

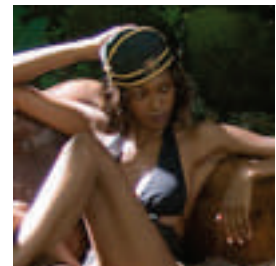
Special points of interest:

- June 10—Nashville Scottish Rite Stated Meeting @ Grand Lodge; Study Club @ 5pm, Meeting @ 6 pm, and Dinner @ 7pm..
- June 12—EA degree, Snacks @ 6pm and work at 6:30pm.
- June 19—Stated Meeting, 7pm.
- July 17—Stated Meeting, 7pm.
- August 21—Stated Meeting, 7pm.

You never know where Masonic items might show up. The pictures below are from the *2008 Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Edition* webpage. The photographs were taken in Haiku, Hawaii by Randall Grant. The model is Jessica White. The swimsuit is designed by some over-paid seamstress, but the headwear accessory was made by the Scottish Rite! It is not everyday that you see a half dress, attractive young woman wearing a Scottish Rite cap. Mamie, my wife, will never

let me go to a Scottish Rite reunion again.

For more photographs, the *2008 Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Edition's* webpage may be found at: http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/features/2008_swimsuit/models/. The Pictures included on this page were taken from: http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/features/2008_swimsuit/onlocation/secret-garden/08_secret-garden_1.html Stop by and explore the site, if your wife will let you, but don't you dare tell her I told you too!∞



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Typos: I am a little embarrassed. Well, I was in a hurry to send out the newsletter last issue, and it was apparent from the typos. I proofed the issue instead of Mamie. What can I say, "The only thing you get when you get in a hurry is TROUBLE. Hopefully this issue will be a little more professional looking.∞

Masonic References in Movies

Ok, it is no secret that I am a borderline movie buff. Mamie, my wife, is always amazed by my abilities to flip through channels on the TV and name what movie is on each channel after only seeing the opening credits, hearing the music, or by seeing five seconds of it. Two of my favorite things to do when watching a movie are looking for editing mistakes and looking for Masonic references. You would be amazed at how many of each you can find in movies.

I wanted to share with you a few movies with Masonic references or themes. I have always thought it would be a great lodge experience to dedicate a night of fellowship to watching a movie with Masonic relevance. Maybe that will be a good goal for Bethpage! Here are some great *Masonic* movies for you to enjoy.

National Treasure – Any discussion of Masonic related movies must pay reverence to the *National Treasure* movies. The resurgence of interest in the Craft is to a great extent owed to these two movies. Several of our younger brothers who have just entered the lodge have stated that these movies had an impact on their decisions to join Freemasonry.

National Treasure – A great movie based on a supposed secret treasure secured by the Knights Templar and protected and guarded by the Freemasons. Nicholas Gage plays Benjamin Franklin Gates whose ancestor was the last mis-happened keeper of the secret. It is a fast paced action film that has increased the duties of high school history teachers to include explaining to students that this movie is fiction and not fact.



National Treasure: Book of Secrets – A wonderful sequel to the first film with fewer Masonic references. The only true Masonic references within the film involves the designer of the Statue of Liberty and a few comments about Ill. Brother Albert Pike. It is definitely worth the five bucks to rent it from the movie store.

True Grit – John Wayne, what more needs to be said. Any movie with the Duke is a good one. For those of you who do not know, John Wayne was a Mason. Wayne is accompanied by Kim Darby, Glen Campbell, and Robert Duvall in this all time great film. Kim Darby's character, Matty, is quoted, while discussing her father, as saying, "When you get home, you put him in a better coffin, and you bury him in a mason's apron."

The Searchers – Another John Wayne movie with a brief reference to Masonry is *The Searchers*. In it a dead Comanche is seen wearing a blue and white apron with a square and compasses on it.

Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome – One of my dad's favorites, this film has very little relevance to Freemasonry other than an appearance of a square and compasses. Watch the film and see if you can find it. I'll give you a little hint, it is in the *Thunderdome*.

Stephen Sommers' Films – I have no knowledge as to whether Sommers is a Mason, but I do know that numerous movies associated with Sommers have Masonic references and similitude. Sommers' films include: *Van Helsing*, *The Scorpion King*, *The Mummy*, *The Mummy Returns*, and *The Jungle Book*.

Van Helsing – In the second scene of the movie, an unconventional Van Helsing is observed wearing a mask with an all-seeing eye. Although not exclusively Masonic, the all-seeing eye is closely associated with the Craft in pop culture.

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Masonic References in Movies, Conti. . . .

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The Mummy Returns – Once again we see a very loose and indirect relationship with Freemasonry. In the movie, Brandon Fraser's character is asked, "If I were to tell you that I was a stranger travelling from the East, what would you say?". Fraser responds by saying, "I would tell you that I was a traveler coming from the west to meet you."



From Hell – This film probably has the greatest and most direct references to Freemasonry with the exception of *National Treasure*. Where *National Treasure* portrays the Craft in a positive light, *From Hell* is decidedly anti-Masonic. The film clearly depicts a Masonic ritual and numerous individuals wearing Masonic rings. The plot associates Freemasonry with aiding to conceal the Jack the Ripper murders. Johnny Depp does a wonderful acting job in this film. If you rent the DVD, be sure that you watch the added features which further discusses the Masonic plot. It points it out as fiction by the way!



Ghosts of Mississippi – Yet again, another film with subtle anti-Masonic themes. Based on the trial of Byron De La Beckwith, the murderer of Medgar Evers, the director clearly wanted to make a presumed connection between Beckwith and the Shrine. Beckwith is seen driving a car with a Shrine emblem, and all through the trial scenes, the Shrine logo is depicted on Beckwith's lapel. *Mississippi Burning* is another movie about a *Civil Rights* murder with brief Masonic reference.

Movies are a reflection of society's everyday realities, dreams, and desires. There is little wonder that Freemasonry has made its way into cinema. The next time you watch a movie, pay close attention, you never know when you might find a reference to Masonry.∞



Popular culture (also known as **pop culture**) deemed as what is popular within the social context — that of which is most strongly represented by what is perceived to be popularly accepted among society. Otherwise, popular culture is also suggested to be the widespread cultural elements in any given society that are perpetuated through that society's vernacular language or lingua franca. It comprises the daily interactions, needs and desires and cultural 'moments' that make up the everyday lives of the mainstream. It can include any number of practices, including those pertaining to cooking, clothing, consumption, mass media and the many facets of entertainment such as sports and literature. (Compare meme.) Popular culture often contrasts with a more exclusive, even elitist "high culture", that is, the culture of ruling social groups. The earliest use of "popular" in English was during the fifteenth century in law and politics, meaning "low", "base", "vulgar", and "of the common people" 'til the late eighteenth century by which time it began to mean "widespread" and gain in positive connotation.

Pop culture finds its expression in the mass circulation of items from areas such as fashion, music, sport and film. The world of pop culture has had a particular influence on art from the early 1960s on, through Pop Art. When modern pop culture began during the early 1950s, it made it harder for adults to participate. Today, most adults, their kids and grandchildren "participate" in pop culture directly or indirectly.∞



Taken from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pop_culture.



JUST A LITTLE MORE ON POP CULTURE

The following is a brief exploration of Masonry in pop culture. It is taken from California's Orinda Lodge #122 website. It is submitted here for your pleasure. Visit their website at: www.orindalodge.org/.

Most pop culture never deals with Freemasonry directly. However, from time to time there are allusions to the Craft or even stories which touch upon Masonry.

The Man Who Would Be King by Brother Rudyard Kipling is a good example. A good story, later made into an excellent film of the same title (Allied Artists Pictures, 1975), starring Michael Caine, Sean Connery, and Christopher Plummer. This movie shows how Masons may assist one another, but in a very fanciful context.

The *Turmgesellschaft* in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* novels is certainly of Masonic origin.

In Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, the Masonic initiation ritual of the character Pierre Besouchoff is described in great detail. There is also a modest body of Masonic poetry: Kipling's *The Palace* and *Mother Lodge*, Burns's *Masonic Farewell*, Goethe's *Mason Lodge*, Leigh Hunt's *Abou Ben Adhem*, Carruth's *Each in His Own Tongue*, Burns's *On the Apron*, Meredith's *Ebony Staff of Solomon*, Bowman's *Voice of America*, Malloch's *Father's Lodge* and Nesbit's *I Sat in Lodge with You*. (Carl H. Claudy)

In 1992, an episode of the British television series *Inspector Morse* entitled *Masonic Mysteries* featured a detective who is led to believe that a murder had been perpetrated by not just a Mason but a whole lodge.

Finally, and with due regard for humor, no survey of Masonry in popular culture is complete without reference to *Homer the Great*, an episode of *The Simpsons* animated series. In this episode, Homer joins The Stonecutters, a secretive fraternity whose sanctimonious mystery seems to clash oddly with *Spare Ribs and Beer Night*. Thus ensues a terrific spoof of many common misconceptions about the Lodge. Someone did their homework.∞



Note the Square and Compasses on the Sacred Parchment. They are second from the top on the right. In the episode, Homer is quoted as saying, *It's like a conspiracy!*. It really seems like one from here!



About Us

Bethpage Lodge No. 521, Free and Accepted Masons was chartered by the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Tennessee on January 27, 1885. It is named for the small community in which the lodge hall sits. Bethpage, Tennessee is an unincorporated town in northern Sumner County, just north of Nashville. In its 123 years, the lodge has flourished and been the Masonic home to many traveling brethren. It is a country lodge with many traditions. It currently has an active membership of around 90 members. Bethpage Lodge meets on the Third Thursday of each month at 7 pm, and its meetings are open to all Master Masons from Masonic Jurisdictions recognized by the Grand Lodge of Tennessee. ∞



Gems of Purpose is the electronic trestleboard or newsletter of Bethpage Lodge. Its primary mission is to assist in the spreading of Masonic light to not only the members of Bethpage Lodge but to Masonic brothers wherever this publication might land. It is edited and compiled by Brother David E. Stafford, Past Master and current Secretary of the lodge. Brother Stafford began publishing *Gems of Purpose* in 2006 as a service to the Lodge and has continued to do so. Although it is an official media of Bethpage Lodge, the views and opinions contained in *Gems of Purpose* do not necessarily reflect those of the lodge, the Grand Lodge of Tennessee, or Freemasonry. If you have questions or comments, please direct those to Brother Stafford via e-mail at bethpagelodge521@bellsouth.net. ∞



Submission - Although *Gems of Purpose* is the official educational voice of Bethpage Lodge, the lodge encourages anyone who has an interest in Masonic Education to submit possible material for inclusion in the newsletter. Items on Masonic history, philosophy, ideology, figures, and symbolism will be considered. Of course due credit will be given to the writer and if the writer is not a member of Bethpage Lodge, his lodge will be identified. *Gems of Purpose* reserves the right to edit all submissions. ∞

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