

**MASTER'S MINUTE for October 7, 2016 "Member Retention”**

My Brothers,

Masonic retention is a word upon the lips of every Grand Lodge, subordinate lodge and its many Freemason members, today, across the world. It may surprise you to know that Masonic retention was on the mind of Albert Mackey, Freemason Researcher and Historian, when he wrote Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry over 130 years ago. Here is what he wrote:

*Parrot Mason - One who commits to memory the questions and answers of the work, lectures, and the formulas of the ritual but pays no attention to the history and philosophy of the institution; is commonly called a Parrot Mason, because he is supposed to repeat what he has learned without any conception of its true meaning.*

*In former times, such superficial Freemasons were held by many in high repute because of the facility with which they passed through the ceremonies of a reception, and they were generally designated as Bright Masons. But, the progress of Freemasonry as a science now requires something more than a mere knowledge of the lectures to constitute a Masonic scholar."...Mackey's Revised Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, Vol. 2, Page 752*

Memorization without understanding will only take a person to the end of his memorized work, much like memorizing a geometric equation does not prove truly useful unless you understand its components.

For example, if I asked someone to tell me the equation to measure the area of a circle, the answer quickly coming from their lips may very well be **Pi r²** ... and I would applaud their knowledge. But how useful is that knowledge if you do not know that:

Pi = the ratio of the circumference to the diameter of a circle; approximately equal to 3.14159 rounded

r = Radius of the circle...the measurement from the center-point to its perimeter or boundary.

² (Squared) = the radius times itself.

Therefore, your quick answer of **Pi r²** (the equation with which you may perform the task) was absolutely correct, but if you cannot understand each component of the equation, you cannot "do the math", and therefore your journey ends.

We are here to Learn. Memorization of ritual is important within Freemasonry, however without learning the spiritual, symbolic and historical components within Freemasonry's depths, your journey, too, will end without actually finding Freemasonry's true light. True Masonic retention is obtained when both Ritual and Masonic knowledge are balanced with one another. Masonic education is the only means with which the fraternity can both retain its current membership and produce new members to carry on Freemasonry's proud traditions. **We are Enlightenment Lodge**. This should be the foundation of our Lodge as we strive to be the source of enlightenment not only in Freemasonry, but in the community and the world at large.