

THE CONSTITUTION
of the
GENERAL GRAND COUNCIL
CRYPTIC MASONS INTERNATIONAL
As Revised to September 14, 1993

ARTICLE I
GENERAL GRAND COUNCIL STRUCTURE

SECTION 1. NAME. This body shall be known as the General Grand Council, Cryptic Masons International.

SECTION 2. MEMBERS. The members of the General Grand Council are:

- (a) All properly affiliated Past Grand Master of Constituent Grand Council.
- (b) All Grand Masters, Deputy Grand Masters, Grand Principal Conductors of the Work of Constituent Grand Councils or their Proxies. (A proxy, at the time of his service, must be a member of the same Constituent Grand Council.)
- (c) The first three officers of each subordinate council under the jurisdiction of this General Grand Council, or their proxies. (A proxy, at the time of his service, must be a member of the same Subordinate Council.)
- (d) Special Representatives of the General Grand Master.

SECTION 3. CONDUCT OF ASSEMBLIES. Assemblies are conducted as follows:

- (a) **MAJORITY VOTE.** At Triennial Assemblies all questions are to be determined by a majority vote unless otherwise provided. The presiding officer shall have no vote, except in case of a tie.
- (b) **MEMBER VOTE.** Each member shall be entitled to one vote as such; and one vote for each proxy held except as specified below. (A proxy, at the time of his service, must be a member of the same Constituent Grand Council.)
- (c) **SUBORDINATE COUNCIL VOTE.** Representatives from a Subordinate Council shall jointly be entitled to one vote, the majority of such representatives present determining how the vote shall be cast.
- (d) **GENERAL GRAND OFFICERS VOTE.** All General Grand Council Officers, as specified in Article 1, Section 4 shall be entitled to one vote as such; and one vote for each proxy held. (A proxy, at the time of his service, must be a member of the same Constituent Grand Council.)

- (e) **GRAND MASTERS VOTE.** Those Grand Masters who serve more than one year as Grand Masters are entitled to one vote for each full year served.

SECTION 4. OFFICERS. The officers of this General Grand Council shall be:

Most Puissant General Grand Master
Right Puissant Deputy General Grand Master
Right Puissant General Grand Principal Conductor of the Work.
Right Puissant General Grand Treasurer
Right Puissant General Grand Recorder
Right Puissant Regional Deputy General Grand Masters
Right Puissant General Grand Chaplain
Right Puissant General Grand Captain of the Guard
Right Puissant General Grand Conductor of the Council
Right Puissant General Grand Marshal
Right Puissant General Grand Steward
Right Puissant General Grand Sentinel

who shall be a Past Grand Master of a Constituent Grand Council except for General Grand Treasurer, General Grand Recorder, General Grand Chaplain and any Foreign (outside the U.S.A.) Regional Deputy General Grand Master.

- (a) **ELECTIVE OFFICERS:** The General Grand Master, Deputy General Grand Master, General Grand Principal Conductor of the Work, General Grand Treasurer and the General Grand Recorder shall be elected by ballot at each Triennial Assembly.
- (b) **APPOINTIVE OFFICERS:** The Regional Deputy Grand Masters, General Grand Chaplain, General Grand Captain of the Guard, General Grand Conductor of the Council, General Grand Marshal, General Grand Steward and the General Grand Sentinel shall be appointed by the General Grand Master to serve for a term of three (3) years and no Companion serving in any of these offices, except the General Grand Chaplain and any Foreign (outside the U.S.A.) Regional Deputy General Grand Master shall be eligible to succeed himself or to be appointed to another office during the Triennium succeeding the expiration of his term in office. However any appointive officer may be elected to a higher office in this General Grand Council at anytime.
- (c) **INSTALLATION.** The elected and appointed officers of this General Grand Council shall be installed at each Triennial Assembly, or as soon thereafter as is practicable.
- (d) **VACANCY IN OFFICE.** Provided, however, should the office of General Grand Master be vacated by death, permanent disability, or other causes, the Deputy General Grand Master and the General Grand Principal Conductor of the Work shall in the order named, be installed and succeed to the office, its title and prerogatives.
- (e) **DISABILITY.** Provided further, that the question of permanent disability or other causes as herein used shall be determined by the Committee on Cryptic Jurisprudence.

(f) PRECEDENCE OF RANK. Precedence of Rank shall be:

Most Puissant General Grand Master
Right Puissant Deputy General Grand Master
Right Puissant General Grand Conductor of the Work
Right Puissant General Grand Treasurer
Right Puissant General Grand Recorder
Right Puissant Regional Deputy General Grand Masters all of equal status
Right Puissant General Grand Chaplain
Right Puissant General Grand Captain of the Guard
Right Puissant General Grand Conductor of the Council
Right Puissant General Grand Marshal
Right Puissant General Grand Steward
Right Puissant General Grand Sentinel

SECTION 5. STATED ASSEMBLIES. The Stated Assemblies of this General Grand Council shall be held Triennially, at such date and place as it shall determined; provided that if in the opinion of the General Grant] Master, or in case of his inability, then the senior General Grand Officer, there shall be danger to life or health from sickness or other local cause, by any meeting being held at the time or place appointed, he may change such meeting to some other time and place; and in the event of such change being made he shall immediately notify the General Grand Recorder thereof, who shall forthwith notify the other officers and members in such manner as he may deem best calculated to effect the desired object.

SECTION 6. SPECIAL ASSEMBLIES. The General Grand Master and the Deputy General Grand Master shall have authority to call a Special Assembly of the General Grand Council whenever they consider it expedient or necessary, and it shall be their duty to do so when properly requested by a majority of the Grand Councils, of which three (3) months notice shall be given of the time and place of the special meetings. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the call and no business other than that for which it is called shall be transacted.

SECTION 7. QUORUM. A quorum of this General Grand Council shall consist of seven (7) Grand Councils.

SECTION 8. JURISDICTION. The General Grand Council shall watch over and protect the interests of Cryptic Masonry in the States, Districts or Territories which recognize its jurisdiction and where there is no Grand Council regularly established; and shall settle all difficulties which may arise and be referred to it, and shall give such advice and instructions as may seem most conducive to the peace, advancement and perpetuation of Cryptic Mason in its original integrity.

SECTION 9. POWERS AND DUTIES OF GENERAL GRAND MASTER.

(a) COUNCILS U.D. The General Grand Master, or, in case of his inability to act, the Deputy General Grand Master, shall have the power to grant dispensations for new Subordinate Councils of Cryptic Masons in any State, District, or Territory where there is no Grand Council regularly established and working independently of any other Masonic Body; such dispensation in no case to extend beyond the time of the next Stated Assembly of this General Grand Council, but no new Subordinate Council shall be established by any State, District or Territory where there is a regular subordinate Council within a reasonable distance, without the consent of the Subordinate Council nearest the place where such new Subordinate Council is proposed to be located; and he shall immediately notify the General Grand Recorder of such dispensation, and make

report of the same at the next Triennial Assembly of this General Grand Council; when the General Grand Council may grant said Subordinate Council a Charter.

- (b) **REGIONAL DEPUTY GENERAL GRAND MASTERS.** The General Grand Master, or in his inability to act, the Deputy General Grand Master, shall have the power and authority to appoint in each of the Regions into which the Constituent Grand Councils are divided, a Regional Deputy General Grand Master who shall be a Past Grand Master, to represent him and have such duties and exercise such special powers and authority as may be granted to him by the General Grand Master or the Deputy General Grand Master.
- (c) **SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVES.** The General Grand Master shall have the power and authority to appoint in each District, Territory, State or Country where no Grand Council exists but where councils subordinate to this General Grand Council have been Chartered or may hereafter be established or chartered a Special Representative who shall represent him and have such duties and exercise such special powers and authority as may be granted to him by the General Grand Master or the Deputy General Grand Master and such Special Representatives shall serve at the pleasure of the General Grand Master and not longer than three (3) years unless re-appointed by the succeeding General Grand Master or Deputy General Grand Master. Such Special Representatives, if present at any Triennial Assembly of the General Grand Council, shall be members of the same and entitled to one vote.

SECTION 10. FEES AND DUES OF SUBORDINATE COUNCILS.

- (a) **DISPENSATION AND PER CAPITA.** The fees for granting a dispensation shall be twenty-five dollars (\$25.00), and every Council holden by Dispensation, or Charter, from this body shall pay into the Treasury of the General Grand Council, the sum of one (1) dollar for each companion greeted therein, and fifty cents (\$0.50) annually for each member, until such time as a Grand Council shall be regularly established in that State, District or Territory in which such Council is located.
- (b) **FEES FOR CHARTER AND DEGREES.** The General Grand Recorder shall be paid by the petitioners five (5) dollars for his services in granting a charter. The fees in the several Councils under the immediate jurisdiction of this General Grand Council, for the Degrees of Royal Master and Select Master and the appendant degree of Super Excellent Master shall not be less than ten (10) dollars.

SECTION 11. GRAND COUNCIL FORMATION. Whenever there shall be three councils regularly constituted in any State, District or Territory, a Grand Council may be established as soon as convenience and propriety may dictate, provided the consent of the General Grand Master or the General Grand Council be first obtained.

SECTION 12. ANNUAL DUES. (Updated August 30, 2008)

- (a) The annual dues, or per capita, assessed each Constituent or Member Grand Council of the General Grand Council shall be the sum of \$1.00 (One Dollar) US for each Cryptic Mason or Royal and Select Master, in good standing, on their rolls as of the date of their Annual Grand Assembly, except those Life Members under the provisions of Section 17 of this Constitution.

- (b) The annual dues, or per capita, assessed each Constituent or Member Jurisdiction outside the Continental United States and Canada, with the exception of Alaska, Hawaii and the Provinces of Canada, shall be \$1.50 (One Dollar and Fifty Cents) US for each Cryptic Mason or Royal and Select Master, in good standing, on their rolls as of the date of their Annual Grand Assembly, except those Life Members under the provisions of Section 17 of this Constitution.

SECTION 13. ANNUAL RETURNS. The Grand Recorder of each Grand Council shall be required to transmit to the General Grand Recorder an official notice of the election of its Grand Officers within thirty (30) days thereafter, and also transmit to the General Grand Recorder two copies of their proceedings as soon as the same are printed.

SECTION 14. CHARTER OR DISPENSATION REQUIRED. Every Council of Cryptic Masons (or Council of Royal and Select Masters) must have a charter or dispensation from the General Grand Council, or from some Grand Council and no Council shall be deemed legal without such dispensation or charter; and Masonic communication, both public and private, is hereby interdicted and Forbidden between any Council or any member of it, and any Council or Assembly that may be so illegally formed or holden or opened without such Charter, or any person assumed to be received or greeted therein. Nothing in this Section shall be construed to apply to the jurisdiction of Virginia or West Virginia.

SECTION 15. SOVEREIGNTY OF GRAND COUNCILS. Each Grand Council shall determine the legal status of the Cryptic Masons (or Royal and Select Masters) of their several jurisdictions, and shall have absolute authority over and control of, the Cryptic Rite within their several Grand Jurisdictions; including the form and substance of the rituals used in conferring, in their respective jurisdictions, the Cryptic Rite of Masonry, to wit; Royal Master, Select Master, together with the degree of Super Excellent Master.

SECTION 16. MILEAGE AND PER DIEM. All elective and appointive General Grand Council Officers and Past General Grand Master, together with the chairmen of all standing committees, shall receive twenty (20) cents per mile one way traveling by the shortest route and forty (40) dollars per day for each day consumed in traveling to and from and tow days while in attendance at the Triennial Assemblies of this General Grand Council. Provided: That their expenses are not paid by any other Masonic General Grand Body for the same Period.

SECTION 17. LIFE MEMBERSHIP. (*October 3, 2005*)

- (a) Any Royal and Select Master, in good standing of a constituent Grand Council, may purchase a Life Membership in the General Grand Council by paying a sum of \$10.00 (Ten Dollars) to the Grand Recorder of his Grand Council, who will then pay that amount to the General Grand Recorder.
- (b) The Life Membership fees will be invested in a perpetual fund with the prevailing rate of interest being for general revenue for the General Grand Council but never to exceed 5% (five percent). Any interest earned in excess of the 5% will be returned to the corpus account. At 5%, this will give the General Grand Council \$.50 (Fifty Cents) per Life Member and relieve the constituent Grand Council from the \$.35 per year for each of its Life Members.
- (c) The Royal and Select Masters with Life Membership will be kept separate from the Royal and Select Masters without Life Membership.

- (d) Cryptic Masons from jurisdictions, not subordinate to the General Grand Council, may purchase Life Membership at large for \$10.00 (Ten Dollars). This membership carries no special preferences nor a vote at the General Grand Assembly.
- (e) Each new life member will receive a special membership certificate designating his status with the General Grand Council.
- (f) Each constituent Grand Council may or may not adopt this Life Membership proposal.
- (g) If a Life Member transfers to another Grand Council Jurisdiction, he may take his Life Membership with him and the Grand Recorder of Jurisdiction to which he has transferred will inform the General Grand Recorder of the transfer and not pay the \$0.35 per year for this Life Membership.
- (h) If a Life Member is a Plural Member in his Jurisdiction, or Dual Member in another Grand Council Jurisdiction, his Life Membership is only good in each Council where he was a member when it was purchased. He may or may not purchase Life Memberships in all Councils where he is a member. However, the Grand Councils, to which he belongs, will pay the \$0.35 to the General Grand Recorder for each council where he doesn't hold a Life Membership.
- (i) Holders of Life Membership certificates are subject to all the laws, rules and regulations as provided in the code of any Grand Council Cryptic Masons or Royal and Select Masters and loss of membership by suspension or expulsion shall automatically abrogate his life membership and any claim to any portion of any such fees paid for such life membership.
- (j) Any Council or individual may purchase a Memorial Life membership in the name of a deceased Companion for the sum of \$10.00 provided that the Companion, in whose name the certificate is to be issued, was in good standing in a legally constituted Council at the time of his demise. A special membership certificate designating the Memorial Life membership for the deceased and the purchaser may be sent to the purchaser or the family of the deceased at the request of the purchaser.

ARTICLE II SUBORDINATE COUNCILS

SECTION 1. OFFICERS. A Council of Cryptic Masons under immediate jurisdiction of this General Grand Council shall consist of the following officers; Illustrious Master, Deputy Master, Principal Conductor of the Work, Treasurer, Recorder, Captain of the Guard, Conductor of the Council, Marshal, Steward, Chaplain, Sentinel and as many other members as may be convenient for working together.

SECTION 2. ANNUAL RETURNS. Every Council under the immediate Jurisdiction of this General Grand Council shall annually make a return to the

General Grand Recorder of their name, number, location and time of stated meetings with a list of officers and members, degrees conferred, companions admitted, died, suspended or expelled in accordance with the form furnished from the office of the General Grand Recorder.

SECTION 3. UNDER DISPENSATION. Every Council under dispensation from this General Grand council shall at the close of its period, return to the General Grand Recorder its dispensation and records.

SECTION 4. DEGREES. The degrees recognized by this General Grand Council are as follows and must be conferred only in the order named: ROYAL MASTER, SELECT MASTER, AND SUPER EXCELLENT MASTER.

ARTICLE III STANDING COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. APPOINTMENTS. The General Grand Master (elect), after installation, and before the close of the session, shall appoint the following committees, whose term shall extend and be analogous with the term of the General Grand master, unless by him sooner removed by the appointment of his or their successors, viz:

- (a) **FINANCE AND ACOOUNTS.** A committee of FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS, consisting of as many members as in the judgment of the General Grand Master shall be necessary, whose duty it shall be to examine and pass upon all business of a financial nature; to examine the books and accounts of the General Grand Treasurer and the General Grand Recorder, and make a report thereof in writing, as early as may be, during the session of the General Grand Council and to perform such other duties as the General Grand Council may refer to them.
- (b) **CRYPTIC JURISPRUDENCE.** A committee on CRYPTIC JURISPRUDENCE, consisting of as many members as in the judgment of the General Grand Master, shall be necessary, whose duty shall be to examine all questions of Masonic law and jurisprudence, the status of membership, conflicts if opinion, appeals and grievances, as existing or arising within the bodies constituting the membership of the General grand Council, which may be referred to them for action or opinion, and such other duties as may be referred to them for action nor opinion, and such other duties as may be referred to them by the General Grand Master or presiding officer.
- (c) **CREDENTIALS AND REGISTRATION.** A committee on CREDENTIALS AND REGISTRATION, to consist of five (5) or more members, whose duty it shall be to register all delegates at the Triennial Assembly, check all credentials and report as soon as practicable after the opening of the Triennial Assembly, the number of delegates present and entitled to vote and to participate in the proceedings thereof.

ARTICLE IV SPECIAL COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. APPOINTMENTS. The General Grand Master may appoint such Special Committees as in his judgment would be to the best interest of this General Grand Council. The following committees are suggested: A committee on Publicity; A committee on Cryptic History and Promotion; A committee on Ritual and/or Work; A committee on Aims and Purposes; A committee on Charters and Dispensations; A committee on The Cryptic Room; A committee on Fraternal Dead; A committee on Topical Reference; A committee on York Rite Coordination; A committee on Visitors.

ARTICLE V INVESTMENTS AND FUNDS

SECTION 1. INVESTMENTS AND FUNDS.

- (a) **PERMANENT FUND.** There is hereby established a permanent fund, which shall consist of the bonds and cash on hand in a special account. As of September, 1984, this fund was \$50,000. The principal and any contribution to it shall be kept intact. This shall be considered the Permanent Fund and the earnings of this fund shall be transferred to the General Fund for the General expense of this General Grand Council.
- (b) **TRUSTEES.** The above fund shall be held in trust by the General Grand Treasurer. The General Grand Master, the Deputy General Grand Master and the General Grand Principal Conductor of the Work, shall be trustees of this fund. No funds shall be transferred from the Permanent Fund except by action of the General Grand Council, who may, in case of an emergency transfer to the General Fund such funds as may be deemed necessary for the well being of the General Grand Council.
- (c) **GENERAL FUND.** The General Fund shall consist of all moneys that are received by the General Grand Recorder and by him transmitted to the General Grand Treasurer and shall only be paid out by warrants drawn by the General Grand Recorder, and such warrants shall be countersigned by the General Grand Master. The General Fund shall be under the direction of the committee on Finance and Accounts of the General Grand Council, and they shall prepare a budget at each Triennial Assembly for the general expenses of the General Grand Council.

ARTICLE VI CHANGE OF CONSTITUTION

SECTION 1. How AMENDED. This Constitution may be amended at any Stated Assembly by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present as specified in Article 1, Section 2.

- (a) **How PROPOSED.** All amendments to this Constitution of the General Grand Council, of Cryptic Masons must be proposed in writing.
- (b) **CONTENTS.** They must contain such section or sub-section thereof which it is proposed to amend, in its entire from, as it is intended to be after it is amended.
- (c) **ADDITIONAL SECTIONS.** If desirable, such proposed amendments may be numbered as additional sections of sub-sections thereof.
- (d) **FILED WITH THE GENERAL GRAND RECORDER.** Such proposed amendments shall be forwarded to the General Grand Recorder at least six (6) months prior to the Triennial Assembly of the General Grand Council.
- (e) **GENERAL GRAND RECORDER DUTY.** The General Grand Recorder shall five (5) months prior to the date of the next Triennial Assembly of this General Grand Council,

mail to each of the General Grand Officers, Past Grand Masters, Grand Recorders and Grand Masters of each Constituent Grand Council a copy of all proposed amendments which shall have been filed with him.

- (f) **JURISPRUDENCE COMMITTEE.** The Jurisprudence Committee shall carefully consider all such proposed amendments and report thereon to the General Grand Council at its next Triennial Assemble and no action shall be taken thereon by the General Grand Council until such report shall have been made.
- (g) **EFFECTIVE DATES.** Unless otherwise provided by the General Grand Council, all amendments presented shall take effect immediately after adoption.

SECTION 2. NON-MEMBER GRAND COUNCIL. Nothing contained in this Constitution shall be construed to derogate from the right or authority of any Grand Council which may not determine to become a constituent member of this General Grand Council.

SECTION 3. MEMBER GRAND COUNCIL. Any Grand Council may become a Member of this General Grand Council whenever it shall ratify and accept this Constitution. Upon such acceptance and ratification the Grand Recorder shall immediately notify the General Grand Recorder.

SECTION 4. GRAND COUNCIL CONSTITUENCY. Every Grand Council shall be sovereign in its own jurisdiction, and may withdraw its constituency from this General Grand Council; Provided, always, that before such withdrawal shall be effective in the General Grand Council, a certified copy of the resolution of withdrawal so adopted by the constituent Grand Council shall be filed with the General Grand Recorder, which resolution shall be signed and certified by the Grand Master and Grand Recorder of the Grand Council so withdrawing; and provided further that if, at the time of the withdrawal of any Grand Council, any companion of the Grand Council so withdrawing, shall at the time of such withdrawal be an officer of or hold a membership on a committee of this General Grand Council., such office or committeemanship shall become vacant; and provided further, that all indebtedness to this General Grand Council shall have been paid.