The Grace Dee May

ILLUMINATIONS

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2026



Revisiting Founding Freemasons at California Grand Lodge

The Grace Dee May • 11435 Chandler Boulevard, North Hollywood, CA 91601 • www.gracedeemay.org

ILLUMINATING THE LEGACY OF THE WEST

"I do not regret the part I have taken in a cause so just and interesting to mankind."
– Samuel Adams, *Founding Freemason, St. John's Lodge, Boston*

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Audrey Marie Stein

In 2004, Audrey Marie Stein established the Grace Dee May Museum. Audrey believed that she had been richly blessed by the ***Grace*** of God. Audrey's nickname was ***Dee*** and she had been born in the month of ***May***. So, as Director of the Foundation, she named the Museum the ***Grace Dee May***.



A Salute to Our Grand Lodge Display

During the course of this momentous year for all Americans celebrating the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Grace Dee May focused countless hours on research on the often untold story of the Freemasons who helped to secure our independence and also create the framework of America's Constitution.

Our research on the Founding Freemasons brought to light amazing stories of leadership, heroism and self-sacrifice by Masonic brothers from all 13 colonies – men whose common experiences in their Masonic lodges helped guide their actions on the battlefields from the frigid winter at Valley Forge to the sweltering heat of the Carolina swamps.

From October 8-11, the GDM Museum's exhibit at the Annual Communications of Masons on Nob Hill in San Francisco was universally applauded.

The majority of exhibitors were vendors selling fraternal items. Several visitors, approaching the GDM booth would ask, "What are you selling?" The answer was easy, "The Grace Dee May isn't selling anything, we're sharing Masonic knowledge." Within this issue of Illuminations, you'll find resources including GDM-produced videos, power-point presentations, guest lecturers, and printed materials that can enliven your meetings and special events.

Let the Grace Dee May bring Masonic history to life for you and your organization in 2027.

Fraternally,
Sean Foran, *Curator and Board President*



GDM Board member, Merrick Hamer visited the GDM display at Grand Lodge



Our Vision:
The Grace Dee May Museum will seek to present a thematic look at the American West by utilizing its extensive collection of Western Art, and incorporate California history to broaden and deepen the public knowledge and appreciation of the men and women that settled the western part of the United States.

Our Mission:
The Grace Dee May Museum is committed to advancing the public knowledge and understanding of the American West and the contributions that Freemasonry has played in its development.

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The Founding Freemasons Display

An Exhibition presented by the Grace Dee May Museum and Library at the Annual Communication of Masons of California in San Francisco.

General George Washington on his white charger was at the forefront of the Grace Dee May display.





Front and center is an overview of Washington's most trusted and respected Generals. 32 hand-picked Freemasons that proved their loyalty and dependability on the battlefield.

Lafayette was like a son to Washington and his banner flanked the GDM display on the right side of our exhibit.





250th Founding Freemasons of America



















Bro. Washington is pictured with many different Masonic aprons. In the GDM booth our actual size stand-up Washington wore an apron designed by Edward Horsman of Boston. Many of the aprons shown are on display in various Masonic Lodges and museums.

A Mason of Many Aprons

George Washington wearing his Masonic apron took center stage in the Grace Dee May exhibit in San Francisco.

"Sewing" the Seeds of Liberty

Betsy Ross *(1752 – 1836)*

One of history's most unique collaborations took place in 1777 as oral history relates that George Washington collaborated with Betsy Ross, a widow running an upholstery shop in Philadelphia. Her late husband and Freemason, John Ross, was the nephew of a signer of the Declaration of Independence, George Ross, Jr. Betsy later married Joseph Ashburn who may have been a Mason. Tragically, Ashburn was captured at sea in 1780 by the British, charged with treason and died in prison.

Betsy would marry another Freemason, John Claypoole, in 1783 who became her third husband. Exactly who designed the iconic stars and stripes is uncertain but the seamstress, Betsy Ross, left her mark on history with these words, *"Behind every stitch lies a story waiting to be told."*

The Swamp Fox

"But as for this damned old fox, the Devil himself could not catch him."

– Colonel Banastre Tarleton, Commander British Legion
(Tarleton was sent to capture or kill Marion)

Francis Marion *(1732 – 1795)*

During the American Revolution, legendary commander of the militia in South Carolina, Francis Marion, supported the cause of the Patriots and enlisted in Washington's Continental Army. Marion fought against the British forces in the southern theater of the American Revolution.

Although he never served as a commander in major engagements, Marion used attack and retreat to optimize guerrilla tactics to out-maneuver and quell British forces. Bro. Marion was a member of a South Carolina Masonic Lodge.





Libations at ye olde GREEN DRAGON TAVERN

- Rattle-Skull
- Stonewall
- Blackstrap
- Whistle Belly
- Pumpkin Flip
- Bogus
- Bombo
- Mimbo
- Syllabub
- Sling
- Hot Toddy

Rattle-Skull

Shake with ice:
1 oz. rum
1 oz. Cognac
1/2 oz. sugar syrup
3/4 oz. lime juice
Then pour into a mug of porter.
Garnish with grated nutmeg.



Stonewall

(also called "Stone Fence")

2 oz. dark rum
4 oz. hard apple cider
Pour dark rum into glass, top the glass off with hard cider. Add a couple ice cubes and stir.

(A favorite with Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys)



Black Strap

(also called Black Stripe)

2 oz. dark rum
1/2 oz. molasses
2 oz. hot water
lemon or lime
Pour molasses and dark rum into mug. Add hot water and stir. Squeeze in lemon or lime for tartness.

Popular winter (hot) and summer (with ice)

Whistle Belly

(also Whip-Belly Vengeance)

1 gal. sour beer
1 qt. molasses
1 qt. bread crumbs
Pour beer, molasses, and breadcrumbs in large kettle and boil. Drink hot.

(Also a cure for stomach ailments)



Pumpkin Flip

24 oz. strong beer
8 oz. dark rum
4 oz. pumpkin puree
1 whole egg
nutmeg
Mix well, heat with a hot poker, "flip" the liquid back and forth between mugs. Garnish with grated nutmeg.

(Connecticut Generals Israel Putnam and David Wooster's favorite)



History of the Green Dragon Tavern

The tavern was located on Union Street (originally Green Dragon Lane) in Boston. Known as the "Headquarters of the Revolution" for serving as a secret meeting place for the Sons of Liberty. The property was purchased in 1764 by Paul Revere and his Masonic Lodge (St. Andrew's). The upper rooms were used for private meetings. Dr. Joseph Warren and John Hancock were frequently in attendance. The British considered The Green Dragon a "Nest of Treason" and a major source for sedition and espionage.



"Speaking of Liberty Quiz"

Match these Freemason Patriots with their correct quote.

"I am dying, but with a strong hope and persuasion that my country will gain her independence."

"Give me liberty or give me death!"

"I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

"National honor is the national property of the highest value."

"Humanity has won its battle. Liberty now has a country."

"I have not yet begun to fight!"

"There, I guess King George will be able to read that without his spectacles!"

"All might be free if they valued freedom, and defended it as they should."

"There is a time for casting silver; a time for casting cannon."

"I shall make it the most agreeable part of my duty to study merit, and reward the brave and deserving."

"Don't fire until you see the whites of their eyes!"

Nathan Hale

Samuel Adams

John Paul Jones

David Wooster

James Monroe

Marquis de Lafayette

John Hancock

Paul Revere

George Washington

William Ellery

Benedict Arnold

Israel Putnam

Benjamin Franklin

John Stark

Henry Knox

Peter Muhlenberg

Nathanael Greene

Patrick Henry

Francis Marion

Joseph Warren

Richard Henry Lee

"They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety."

"Live free or die."

"We want great men who, when fortune frowns, will not be discouraged."

"We fight, get beat, rise, and fight again"

"I am in love and my sweetheart is Liberty."

"There is a time for all things; a time to preach and a time to pray, but those times have passed away; there is a time to fight, and that time has come!"

"May we ever be a people favored of GOD. May our land be a land of liberty, the seat of virtue, the asylum of the oppressed, a name and a praise in the whole earth."

"To preserve liberty, it is essential that the whole body of people always possess arms."

"Let me die in the old uniform in which I fought my battles for freedom. May God forgive me for putting on another."

"Resolve to serve no man more faithfully than your country."

This is not an easy quiz but you can find the answers posted on the Grace Dee May website

Answers will be posted on the Grace Dee May Museum website: www.GraceDeeMay.org

Be Resourceful

Make The Grace Dee May
Your Resource for Masonic History

The researchers at The Grace Dee May have created original and unique programs, booklets, videos, power-point presentations, and more that all share the exciting stories of the heritage and history of the Freemasons of the West.

Our goal is to illuminate the impact that Masons have had on the lives of countless individuals and communities. Whether you showcase one of our videos before an event at your lodge or want to invite the GDM to put on a live theatrical presentation for a Layman's Night – *we are here to bring Masonic history to life!*

Here are just a few of the resources we'd love to share with you and your Masonic or community organization:

"Founding Freemasons" - a 6-minute video on the untold story of the Freemasons were helped win the American Revolution and create the U.S. Constitution.





"This is Your Life, Bro. George Washington" - a re-creation of a live radio broadcast where Masons from the American Revolution gather to honor the life of America's first President.

"Raise a Glass to Masonry" - A historic lecture and multi-media presentation on the history of the Masonic roots of the wine industry in California.





"Knights of Early Los Angeles" - A colorful power-point on the founding of the first Masonic Lodge in LA and the rise of the Knights Templar in Southern California.

"Masons on the Move" - a comical video overview of the Western Movement beginning with the epic exploration of Masonic brothers, Lewis & Clark and culminating with Freemasons in the aerospace industry.





"Masons in the Movies" - A fond look back at the stars of Hollywood who proudly espoused their Masonic brotherhood.

These programs and other educational materials can be previewed on our website at: www.gracedeemay.org and go to the "About" drop down button at the top of the page and click "video preview".
For more information on our multi-media programs, call the GDM Marketing Director, Ron Cooper at (818) 383-9265.

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