

## ROSICRUCIAN MESSAGES and MAIL DELIVERY SYSTEMS

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Nearly everyone--- ranging, from the average boy or girl at a grade school, to an lifelong academic researcher who has spent many hours in institutions of higher learning, to even our dedicated Masonic Rosicrucian Scholars --- usually, can tell people easily that Rosicrucianism involves a wide spectrum encompassing aspects of studying Ancient Wisdom and applying it for the modern Era. However, those same persons usually find it more difficult to describe precisely "how" that Ancient Wisdom was transmitted.

Some people may speculate on the whole gamut of theories from oral history (mouth-to-ear); to hieroglyphic symbols on walls; to clay tablets; to numerology; to geometric patterns; to Astronomy and the study of the Planets; to Physics; to Medicine; to Pharmacology (which root word "Pharmakon" in Greek, actually meant "Poison"; later translated into "drug" in modern Greek"....and logia, meaning "study of". The German word "Apotheke" means "Apothecary" in English, which has evolved into the modern "Pharmacy". That evolution is just a heartbeat away from "Alchemy". While we as Masonic Scholars to do not pretend to turn base metals into gold: We do attempt to turn raw information into useful knowledge to benefit mankind.

It is interesting that for centuries, information was conveyed by postal mail. History books say that "variants of the Postal System dates back to antiquity". The telegraph provided some modifying advancements by transmitting messages via Morse Code, which could be deciphered and written into Telegrams using the native language of the recipient. Later, the telephone allowed voice-to-voice communications. The introduction of the airplane in the year 1903 spawned interest in transporting mail by that medium. Now, in today's "electronic age" we have cell-phones; smart-phones, Skype transmissions of audio and video; as well as electronic E-Mail which can convey messages instantly.

Perhaps the biggest drawback to the speed of modern communications is the lack of "originality". News-outlets 'borrow' from one another instead of doing the harder leg work of digging for original newsworthy events. Worse yet: once something is posted on the Internet: it is quite likely to be blindly believed with little or no reservations --- and **if a falsehood is discovered, a 'retraction' is often SLOW or NON-EXISTENT in being forthcoming.**

There are many groups globally pretending to be "Rosicrucian" in their nature, character, makeup, or format. However, our S.R.I.C.F. Masonic Rosicrucian Colleges are composed of men of integrity who believe in Almighty God. Our scholarly studies within our Colleges are meant for conveyance from one Frater to another Frater for edifying purposes.

This Presentation here will mainly confine itself to Rosicrucian Messages and our Mail Delivery Systems. Our sovereign Body, The High College of the S.R.I.C.F. serving the



United States, to its credit, publishes an annual selection of articles in a journal called The Ad Lucem. I am thankful that it is still published in paper format, and I have received many issues of that journal via U.S. Postal Mail. It also publishes The Fama, which is akin to a Journal of annual proceedings. Its name is a throwback to the "Fama Fraternitatis" manifesto published in the year 1614, which detailed the travels of Father Christian Rosenkreutz, which outlined the death of his tor companion (a fellow Monk) on the island of Cyprus, en-route to Jerusalem. Fr. Rosenkreutz's travel plan was slightly detoured through Damascus, portions of Arabia and Morocco. I still believe that Fr. Rosenkreutz still kept his vow to visit the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, before returning to Spain where he was ostracized; prompting his return to his native land of Germany, where he died at the ripe old age of 120 years old.

His "Fraternity of the Rose and Cross" (Rosicrucianism) had its members do nothing but cure the sick, and do that function, gratis. They went out in pairs, two-by-two. According to Rule #3 of the Society, each year on a certain agreed date and time, the entirety of the membership would meet together to discuss or compare what new discoveries each had made ....or if absent, they were "to write the cause of their absence". I find that cause in Rule #3 quite revealing since the message citing their cause of absence had to be written. In those days, written messages were obviously hand-carried.

That is what makes this Presentation so useful: it signifies that the contemporary speech: Either spoken face-to-face or the CONTEMPORARY WRITTEN-WORD, transmitted on-foot (or later by other physical means) was held in high esteem. Speaking "directly to someone" gives not only the words or message, but also enables a whole host of non-verbal 'cues' such as 'body-English' which can put a message in a wholly different context. A facial feature such as a twinkle-of-an-eye or a lip-smirk, or even hands-on-hips (to show 'indifference') can make the recipient react in vastly different ways.

President Abraham Lincoln loved reading books of all types. Paraphrasing him: Lincoln regarded Books as a means of spanning-the-generations by being able to "communicate" with deceased writers such as Aristotle or Plato; or his contemporaries; even passing those thoughts on to "generations yet unborn". I must emphasize that Lincoln was not "channeling", nor attempting to step into time-travel. He was merely indicating that the mortal bodies of men (such as Aristotle or Plato) who had died centuries earlier were dead and their bodies had decomposed (including their human brain) --- yet, their 'thoughts lived on' by means of their writings. **There is immense benefit from learning from the "mistakes" and the "wisdom" of others who have gone before us.**

However, even Abraham Lincoln, prior to his election as President of the United States, received a postal letter from an 11 year old girl, Grace Bedell of Westfield, New York (Ironically ten years later she moved to the little town of Delphos, Kansas, just 20 miles south of Concordia, Kansas on U.S. 81, and thence west about 5 miles). When little Miss Bedell wrote to Lincoln in the autumn of 1860, she urged him to "let your whiskers grow" since "your face is so thin". Lincoln replied in October 1860 in which he acknowledged her letter and considered himself: "Your very sincere well wisher". Lincoln made no promises, but shortly afterward began to grow his famous beard. Once elected President, and on his train trip to Washington, D.C. for the Inauguration, Lincoln's train stopped at Westfield, New York. Amazingly, President-elect Abraham Lincoln met his postal correspondent Miss Grace Bedell in-person. According to Miss Bedell, Lincoln climbed down and sat with her on the edge of the station platform whereby Lincoln said: "Gracie: Look at my whiskers. I have been growing them for you". According to Miss Bedell: Lincoln gently kissed her and she never saw him alive again.

Freemasons and Masonic Rosicrucians have always prized Libraries. They remain a tangible resource for learning. I must again emphasize that Abraham Lincoln didn't believe in 'communing/channeling with The Dead'. His intent was merely to imply that "Words live on...if they are passed on, and "the bigger 'if' --- **if they are read and comprehended** by someone at another place or even another moment in Time. Books of bygone centuries are great as a reference and resource-tool. Their biggest drawback: they aren't "interactive". By clear contrast: Communication between living-people IS truly interactive.



Although tangible postal-mail isn't as "personal" as the spoken-word: it still conveys various nuances such as the flair of unique personalized penmanship. Good, faithful, lifelong friends can tell how the other feels just by reading their letters. A friend with a discerning-eye can detect traces of shakiness...which could signal haste or serious illness....or simply that the sender is getting "older". By contrast, with electronic E-Mail, the keystrokes "look the same" whether it is a person 10 years old or 95 years old.

Furthermore, it is so "impersonal", that a person could easily have an impostor sending the same message.

Bro.: Albert Pike, 33<sup>o</sup>, a Knight Templar and a Masonic Rosicrucian, wrote a touching letter to an old dying friend on September 3, 1885. It was sent by Pike to Dr. Thurston of Van Buren, Arkansas, and recipient of the letter who received it just one day before he died. Dr. Thurston and Albert Pike had known each other for over 45 years. In his letter, Pike calls Dr. Thurston his "DEAREST AND BEST AND TRUEST OLD FRIEND". Pike is saddened by the Doctor's earlier letter informing Pike that he (Dr. Thurston) was about to die. Pike offered great words of comfort, describing his respect for his friend and cherishing the fondness of old memories. Pike says he has "an absolute certainty that there is a Supreme Deity, the intelligence and Lord of the Universe". Pike praised his friend, the Doctor, saying: "You have led an upright, harmless, and blameless life, always doing good, and not wrong and evil. You have enjoyed the harmless pleasures of life and have never wearied of it, nor thought it had not been a life worth living. Therefore you need not fear to meet whatever lies beyond the veil (of death)." Pike goes on to say that he believes in "a just and merciful God, who will deal gently and tenderly with the human creatures whom He has made so weak and so imperfect."

With regard to both Regular Mail" and "Airmail": Nebraska was a leader when both came into usage on the prairie. Blue Springs, Nebraska, has the distinction of being the "First Post Office in Gage County, Nebraska" and when "Air Mail" came into vogue: The Blue Springs, Nebraska Post Office issued a commemorative postal envelope AND cancellation mark celebrating "NATIONAL AIR MAIL WEEK, MAY 15th to 21st, 1938. Notice the image at top of this presentation.

Many people (including myself, until recently) have never heard of "V-Mail" or "Victory Mail" which was utilized during World War II. This was a hybrid of conventional postal-mail and photographic film. Letters were handwritten on paper sheets (7 x 9 and 1/8ths inches). Individual letters would be read and 'censored' (due to National Security concerns) and then, if acceptable: thousands of the letters would be copied to film, then printed back to paper upon arrival at their destination (depending on where the Sailor/Soldier/Airman/Marine was stationed). Although some 'personal touches' were sacrificed in the process: it served the National Security function that it was designed-for.

I am grateful that AIR MAIL still exists. With so much impersonal automation and even telephone message-centers with seemingly artificial voices uttering "Press 1 for English"; "Press 2 for Spanish" and other types of bland 'menu' options that give people "the run-around"... Air Mail is a godsend on a global basis. Next to actual face-to-face contact or phone-contact, Air Mail may be one of the few relics left in today's world which can be a truly "personalized" and "genuinely human" form of Communication.

Let us cherish our "means of communication" in whatever formats we use. Let us endeavor to study diligently, report our observations and findings accurately, and most importantly: Use of God-given intellect to pass along knowledge that will help us, our Lodges and Colleges, our communities, our nation and our world. Not just for the current generation, but for many, many more generations yet-to-come.

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Sources / Recommended Readings /Exhibits:

- Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry by Dr. Albert G. Mackey, M.D., 33<sup>o</sup> and a Knight Templar. Re: List of various Masonic Libraries.
- Exhibit: Image of Commemorative Air Mail Letter mailed and postmarked from Blue Springs, Nebraska; denoting Blue Springs as the oldest Post Office in Gage County, Nebraska ---as it celebrated National Air Mail Week in May 1938.



- Postal Letter written by Albert Pike of Washington, D.C. on September 3, 1885 to his friend Dr. Thurston of Van Buren, Arkansas.
- Postal Letter exchanges from Miss Grace Bedell to Abraham Lincoln (Autumn 1860); Mr. Lincoln's reply to Miss Bedell on Oct 19, 1860. (In the Public Domain)
- United States Constitution. Re: Congress having domain over Post Offices.
- Archival information: U.S. Postal Service.

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About the Author:

Frater James A. Marples, VII<sup>o</sup>, is a Perpetual Life Member of Mulvane Masonic Lodge #201 A.F. & A.M. in Mulvane, Kansas. He is a Life Member of The International Peace Gardens Lodge of Freemasons (Canada-USA) and also an Honorary Member of Golden Rule Masonic Lodge #562 in Willard, Ohio; as well as an Honorary Member of Nelson Masonic Lodge #77, in Nelson, Nebraska, which has recently consolidated with the Superior Masonic Lodge at Superior, Nebraska.

Companion and Sir Knight Jim is a Life Member of the Wichita York Rite Bodies (Wichita Chapter #33 R.A.M.; Wichita Council #12 R. & S.M.; and Mt. Olivet Commandery #12 K.T.). He is also a Life Member of the Lincoln Nebraska Scottish Rite Bodies; The Robert-the-Bruce Association (California); The George Washington Masonic Stamp Club; Masonic Order of the Gordian Knot (Indiana); Masonic Order of the Sword of Bunker Hill; Kentucky Chapter #134 of National Sojourners and Heroes of '76; North Texas York Rite College #118 of Sherman, Texas; and Nebraska College S.R.I.C.F.

He is a Regular Member of The Allied Masonic Degrees; Grand College of Rites; St. David Conclave of The Red Cross of Constantine; Shawnee County Kansas Square and Compass Club; and Holyrood Council #61 of Knight Masons (Nebraska).

Bro. Jim (since the year 1980) has also been an F.C.C. licensed Amateur Radio Operator with the Call-Sign KA0HOO (pronounced phonetically: Kilo-Alpha-Zero-Hotel-Oscar-Oscar. (Author's note..."phonetics are used to avoid confusing rhyming letters which might not be easily understood, if 'static' is present, on the airwaves)

