

Sharing the Word

Closing a Chapter

One of the most confusing and most often seen mistakes seen a Chapter is the sharing of the WORD at the closing of a chapter. The Word can only be shared if it is not buried, when the chapter is closed, the Word is buried.

Many years ago Ex. Comp. Ian Watt of White Oak Chapter No. 104 gave an explanation which makes it easier to remember for both the PRINCIPALS and the Companions when performing the same.

Companions preparing to share the word as per the Book of the Work will have their right foot forming a triangle and their left hands (pinky to pinky) in the proper position with their right hands forming an arch. This creates 4 triangles; Companions forming the first; Feet forming the second; L. Hands forming the third and the R. Hands forming the fourth. The joined right hands are lowered to the level of the breast in three distinct motions completed three times, time spaced evenly, each time returning the joined right hands to the level of the forehead forming an arch.

Now we think of sharing the word as three steps:

W.....word, sharing it with our companions

A..... arms, movements of removing the stones

R.....repeating, after Z. at the closing of a chapter.

WAR....this is the gem word for the Companions remembering the sequence before the closing of the Chapter.

When sharing of the word it is done with THREE Companions only. Companions not participating stand at the sign of fidelity. Companions will form the four triangles. Companions will then Share the word, with their arms down in open chapter —their arm movement as if replacing the stones 3 times down with 3 distinct motions, then raise their arms into an arch, this is the signal to Z. that all groups of three are ready when they have formed an arch —then repeat after Z., “As we three...” The Companions then resume their places that Z. may complete the closing of the chapter.

Opening a Chapter

For the Principals during the OPENING, **WAR** becomes **RAW**, the sequence is reversed and the gem word would be:

RAW...Repeat in unison with Z. “As we three...”—arm movements as if removing the 3 stones—sharing the word under the arch.

Companions give no sign while Principals share the Word at the opening of a chapter.

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Sources:

Ex. Comp. Ian Watt, White Oak Chapter No. 104
Book of the Work, Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Canada in the Province of Ontario