



Secrets of the lodge

Description

A *lodge* is a shelter, probably with only simple functional articulation of parts (i.e. rooms), as in the case of a shed, pavilion, cabin, booth or bothy (in Scotland). Related to *lodge*, we have *loggia*, an annexe to a building that is open on some of its sides, like a porch or verandah. The *lodge* may be permanent like a *hunting lodge*, but you don't stay there permanently. *Lodgings* are temporary places of residence, less permanent than a house or a home — though housing in French is *logement*, Italian *alloggi*, Spanish *alojamiento*.

Logging out

Sometimes words are associated only by happy coincidence. *Log cabins* are *lodges* but there's no etymological connection between *log* and *lodge*. Beavers cut *logs* and build and shelter in *lodges*. A *ship's log* is derived from the old practice of recording the progress of logs strung together with rope and cast out from the rear of a ship to gauge its speed. The *ship's log* is a *logbook*, though at school a *logbook* was a book full of *logarithm* tables (from *logos*, ratio). That confused us but reinforced the relationship between *logbook* and data.

To *log* information is to enter it into a log book, ledger or database. To *log on* or *log in* is to gain access to the database or system by entering your credentials. Then you may *lodge* your interest, complaints, or money, which is to *deposit* or *place* some content. So if it seems *logical* to do so you can *log in* to *lodge* your payment for your *lodgings*. There's *place* in there, which brings me back to shelter and architecture.

Stones

It's no secret that freemasons meet in lodges. I've been looking at the *Handbook of Freemasonry*. After all, much of architecture's theory and myth relates to the crafts of working stone, not least to measurement and to establishing ratios.

According to Andrew Prescott in the *Handbook of Freemasonry*, —Freemasons were originally a specialist grade of stonemason, who specialised in the carving of freestone— (33). That was fine stone

that could be carved in any direction to create free forms. Freemasons were the elite of the masons and carved capitals, bosses, friezes and gargoyles. Coteries of aristocrats, politicians and merchants adopted the masonry guild ethos, status and symbols. Architects were amongst their number, including Christopher Wren (1632-1723) and John Soane (1753-1837).

As a quick introduction, read here what David Stevenson writes about the place of freemasonry in Scotland.

By the seventeenth century Scotland possessed a network of permanent institutions calling themselves lodges. Membership, at first, consisted almost entirely of stonemasons, but over time men of other occupations and social statuses were admitted, from craftsmen to noblemen. Within lodges there was brotherhood, but also a division into two ranks or degrees: entered apprentices and fellow crafts (also known as masters) (50).



Codes

I'm researching urban cryptography, so it's hard to avoid freemasonry. Stevenson goes on to write:

Members had secrets, collectively known as the Mason Word, into which they were initiated by elaborate rituals. These contained references to historical traditions relating to the mason craft and lodges, and included secret recognition codes by which initiates could identify each other. Compasses and the square played a part in their symbolism (50).

Credentials, codes, rituals and symbols: these access the secrets of the lodge. What do they reveal about place, space and architecture. I think I know now and will disclose in the next *blog* post.

Bibliography

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Note

- Image is St Paul's Cathedral, London, 25 January 2020.

Category

1. Architecture

Tags

1. cryptography
2. Freemason
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