

THE CRYPTIC FREEMASON

WHAT IS CMMRF SUPPORT ACCOMPLISHING NOW?

BY PAMELA I. ROGERS

INDIANA CENTER FOR VASCULAR BIOLOGY AND MEDICINE

Vascular surgeon Michael P. Murphy and Cardiologist Keith L. March of the Indiana Center for Vascular Biology and Medicine have spearheaded exciting new clinical trials that are saving lives and changing ways medicine may treat those in need.

Heart and vascular disease is the #1 killer throughout the world. A death occurs every 33 seconds, with 2600 deaths each day, and more than one million deaths each year. A woman is 5 times more likely to die of heart disease than of breast cancer. Over the past decades, physicians and scientists have worked to understand and combat vascular disease and find new therapeutic modalities. In our case – growing new blood vessels, protecting the health of existing vessels, and finding what puts different people at risk.

Many Cryptic Masons have asked for an update – how are the trials doing. Are we, Cryptic Masons, making a difference? Without this incredible teamwork starting from the donations made from CMMRF, I could not share these stories with you, but more exciting are the stories about to come. To quote Marion Crum, “from the acorn the mighty oak grows”.... You, your efforts, your diligence in helping us to make these discoveries is paving the way to a forest, not just a tree. FOUR clinical trials are underway with two or more trials under planning for initiation this year.

The grant-funded center is one of seven academic medical centers in the United States (and the only one in Indiana) that works with the National Institutes of Health on stem-cell research. The treatment costs the participants nothing—the center even covers transportation. Dr’s March and Murphy are seeing results: The Phase I study had an 84 percent success rate, according to Pat G’Sell, the center’s clinical-research manager. And, while it’s too early to report a rate for the current study, subjects are reporting dramatic changes.

Case One:

The Sportsman Gets His Legs Back

Avid golfer Chip Gagnier, 60, suffered from aching ulcers on his legs and feet due to scleroderma, an autoimmune disease that attacks the blood vessels. After an artery graft failed, it looked like leg-removal was the only option. Instead, the Indianapolis resident’s OrthoIndy doctor suggested Gagnier enroll in March and Murphy’s latest study. His right leg received stem cells in October 2010; nine to 10 months later, the limb had healed.

His left leg underwent the procedure in May 2012, and it, too, was cured. Now Gagnier is back golfing and spending time with his family. “I was willing to try anything,” he says. “I would have done handstands if it meant I wouldn’t need to have my legs amputated.”

Case Two:

A Vet's Pain Abates

David Shelton of Greenwood, 58, lost part of his right leg due to vascular disease in 1984. A veteran, Shelton works with patients at the Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center. He advises them to avoid amputation—which, he says, can lead to a “sneaky type of depression”—unless it’s absolutely necessary. He also wanted to avoid the same fate for his left leg. After four surgeries to restore blood flow to that limb, Shelton joined March and Murphy’s study in May 2012. About six months later, his pain began to lessen, and the leg continues to improve. The stem cells, along with a new prosthetic for his right leg, allowed Shelton to mow his grass this summer, “for the first time since the ’80s.”

Case Three:

A Tricky Toe Heals

Patricia Howell, 47, had a wound on her left pinkie toe that just wouldn’t improve. The reason? A vascular condition called Buerger’s disease, which is often linked to smoking and can cause blood clots and damage to skin tissue, particularly in the extremities. There was no available treatment; the Mooresville resident could only monitor the toe—which, she says, was “very sensitive to touch”—to make sure it wasn’t getting worse. She learned about the IU study from her Methodist Hospital vascular surgeon, a colleague of Murphy’s. In October 2010, she received the injections, and the toe finally healed. Howell is now able to have a more active lifestyle, walking several miles a week and riding an exercise bike.

New Trials underway

The *Autologous Adipose-Derived Stromal Vascular Fraction Cells to Treat Critical Limb Ischemia Trial* is a Phase I, open label, single-center trial that will assess the safety of autologous adipose derived stem cells in preventing amputation in patients with critical limb ischemia. This is the first study in the U.S. to use adipose derived stem cells **and all patients will receive treatment.**

The *Stem Cell Therapy to Prevent Expansion of Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Trial* (STOP-AAA) is a Phase II multi-center study that will recruit 60 patients from around the US with small infra- and juxta-renal abdominal aortic aneurysms (35-50 mm. in diameter). Patients will be randomized to a placebo and two dosing arms of mesenchymal stromal cells and the primary endpoint is rate of expansion of the aneurysm at 18 months. Important secondary endpoints will be time to surgery and rate of aneurysm rupture. This study will also provide critical data regarding the effect of stem cell treatment on genetic signatures, inflammatory mediators, and adverse cardiac events. **This “first in man” trial** is sponsored by the National Institutes of Health and is led by the IU investigators.

Cryptic Mason’s – please, help spread the word. Our center is actively seeking patients to enroll in these trials. If you know of a patient with critical limb ischemia (rest pain and/or tissue loss) who has no other options for revascularization, patients with Intermittent Claudication who may consider autologous cell therapy or patients with small AAA (35-50 mm), please contact our

study coordinators at 855-333-3260 or cvtrials@iupui.edu. You can also contact me directly at pirogers@iu.edu. Pam Rogers, Outreach Liaison.

CRYPTIC MASONRY **BY OWEN L. SHANTEAU** **GENERAL GRAND MASTER 1975-78**

The Council degrees are referred to as the Cryptic degrees. The Cryptic degrees of Masonry are the Royal and Select Master. The Super Excellent Master Degree is a part of the Council degrees but does not have anything to do with a crypt or a vault. The Super Excellent Master is not required in some jurisdictions but all Royal and Select Masters are urged to take this degree when it is conferred.

The Cryptic degrees derive their names from the scenes of the Royal and Select Master which are laid in the underground crypt beneath King Solomon's Temple. The word cryptic means hidden, hence its use in describing the degrees of the Council.

The Cryptic degrees historically precede the Royal Arch; this is a peculiarity of the York Rite, that the moving of degrees is often inverse and the historical connection reversed. The light and knowledge gained always reflects back upon the path we have traveled. This is good for York Rite as it causes the reflective Mason to be continually studying the sublime precepts and ceremonies.

The Royal Master, which is the first degree of the Council, is very impressive and has a valuable lesson pertaining to Ancient Craft Masonry. In the Royal Master Degree, we find Hiram Abif alive, and the sublime teachings of useful labor on earth and a worthy end of life is imparted to the candidate. The tragedy of his untimely death is again brought forward with the great loss suffered by the Craft. The lecture of the Royal Master Degree explains the articles contained in the Holy of Holies of King Solomon's Temple including the Ark of the Covenant, a knowledge of which is essential to those who are desirous of fully understanding the preceding degrees of Masonry. The principal characters are King Solomon and his associates.

The Select Master Degree is dramatized by one of the incidents that occurred during the building of the Temple. Our three ancient Grand Masters, King Solomon, Hiram of Tyre, and Hiram Abif, appear in charge of a very important work, and one of King Solomon's most particular friends is promoted to the work. Here secrets are imparted that clarify the preceding degrees. The Select Master Degree is laid in an underground vault, and the knowledge displayed is beneficial to those seeking full Masonic Light and knowledge. The degree is believed to have its origin from a similar degree of Scottish Rite Masonry. The Select Master Degree is highly dramatic, very interesting and completes the circle of perfection of Ancient Craft Masonry.

The Super Excellent Master Degree is the most impressive and beautiful degree of all Masonry. It refers to the last sad days of the reign of Zedekiah, the last King of Judah, and his punishment for disobeying the commands of Jeremiah and the resultant destruction of the city and for the destruction of the Temple of God. Fidelity to a trust reposed is the one great lesson

taught in the Super Excellent Master Degree, and it affords the foundation for one of the greatest dramas of Old Testament history.

The Super Excellent Master Degree requires a large cast to dramatize it properly. Every Royal and Select Master should avail himself of the Super Excellent Master Degree.

The Cryptic Freemason

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**THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SECRETS OF MASONRY
DEMONSTRATED
BY THOMAS SMITH WEBB**

If the secrets of Masonry are replete with such advantages to mankind, it may be asked, Why are they not divulged for the general good of society? To which it may be answered: Were the privileges of Masonry to be indiscriminately bestowed; the design of the institution would be subverted; and, being familiar, like many other important matters, would soon lose their value, and sink into disregard.

It is a weakness in human nature, that men are generally more charmed with novelty, than the real worth or intrinsic value of things. Novelty influences all our actions and determinations. What is new, or difficult in the acquisition, however trifling or insignificant, readily captivates the imagination, and ensures a temporary admiration; while what is familiar, or easily obtained, however noble and eminent for its utility, is sure to be disregarded by the giddy and unthinking.

Did the particular secrets or peculiar forms prevalent among Masons constitute the essence of the art, it might be alledged that our amusements were trifling; and our ceremonies superficial: But this is not the case. Having their use, they are preserved; and from the recollection of the lessons they inculcate, the well informed Mason derives instruction. Drawing them to a near inspection, he views them through a proper medium; adverts to the circumstances which gave them rise; dwells upon the tenets they convey; and finding them replete with useful information, adopts them as keys to the privileges of his art, and prizes them a sacred. Thus convinced of their propriety, he estimates the value from their utility.

Many persons are deluded by their vague supposition that our mysteries are merely nominal; that the practices established among us are frivolous; and that our ceremonies might be adopted, or waved, at pleasure. On this false foundation, we have found them hurrying through all the degrees, without adverting to the propriety of one step they pursue, or possessing one a single qualification requisite for advancement. Passing through the usual formalities, they have accepted offices, and assumed the government of lodges, equally unacquainted with the rules of the institution they pretended to support, or the nature of the trust reposed in them. The consequence is obvious; wherever such practices have been allowed, anarchy and confusion have ensued, and the substance has been lost in the shadow.

Were the brethren, who preside over lodges, properly instructed previous to their appointment, and regularly apprised of the importance of their respective offices, a general reformation would speedily take place. This would evince the propriety of our mode of

government, and lead men to acknowledge, that our honors were deservedly conferred. The ancient consequence of the order would be restored, and the reputation of the Society preserved.

Such conduct alone can support our character. Unless prudent actions shall distinguish our title to the honors of Masonry, and regular deportment display the influence and utility of our rules, the world in general will not easily be led to reconcile our proceedings with the tenets of our profession.

Masonry is an art equally useful and extensive. In every art there is a mystery; which requires a gradual progression of knowledge to arrive at any degree of perfection in it. Without much instruction, and more exercise, no man can be skillful in any art; in like manner, without an assiduous application to the various subjects treated of in the different lectures of Masonry, no person can be sufficiently acquainted with its true value.

It must not, however, be inferred from this remark, that persons, who labor under the disadvantages of a confined education, or whose whole sphere of life requires a more intense application to business or study, are to be discouraged in their endeavors to gain a knowledge of Masonry.

To qualify an individual to enjoy the benefits of the society at large, or to partake of its privileges, it is not absolutely necessary that he should be acquainted with all the intricate parts of the science. These are only intended for the diligent and assiduous Mason, who may have leisure and opportunity to indulge such pursuits. Though some are more able than others, more eminent, some more useful, yet all, in their different spheres, may remain advantageous to the community.