

Traveling Man, by Excellent Edward Tooma

Remember the song "I've been Everywhere Man" by the great Hank Snow? Sometimes I feel that way myself. I've been a traveling man for 50-plus years and have set foot in many Lodges around the world. My very first experience attending a foreign Lodge was in Berlin (West) Germany, known at that time as the Divided City, or the Four Powers City. The Lodge was Outpost No. 46. I still remember the Worshipful Master wearing a Turban which I thought was rather strange at first sight. Mainly because it was different from what I had been used to seeing.

While stationed in Bremerhaven, Germany, I visited North Sea Armed Forces Lodge No. 829. This was my first experience watching a degree in the German language. Surprisingly, I was able to follow along. Armed Forces Lodge has since relocated to Bremen, Germany. And, in the Republic of Korea, I had the opportunity to meet with brethren at MacArthur Lodge No. 183, named after General Douglas MacArthur. You may never go overseas, but that doesn't stop you from making as many Fraternal visits as you can. The same applies if you are a Royal Arch Mason or a member of other appendant bodies - make yourself visible. Here, stateside, I have been in Lodges from Bangor, Maine, to Washington DC, to right here in the Commonwealth of Virginia. I guess what I am trying to say is - take the opportunity every chance you have to visit your District Lodges and Chapters - not to forget neighboring jurisdictions.

Can visitation be a learning experience? Absolutely! Although our rituals are pretty much identical, it is amazing to watch and listen as others interpret their own delivery style. Rather impressive to say the least. And, fine-tuned degree work makes for an everlasting memory. Do yourself a favor and round up some Brothers or Companions, and map out places you have never been too, and go for it. Then, you can say - "I've Been Everywhere Man."

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