Cornerstone Guide

The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Oklahoma
Cornerstones Overview

1. Section 701 of the Constitution and Laws covers where a cornerstone may be laid.

2. You must first contact the Grand Lodge to have your date and time coordinated with the Most Worshipful Grand Master for a date and time that is agreeable to his schedule. While coordinating a date/time, request an information packet.
   a. Phone (405)282-3212
   b. Fax (405)282-3244
   c. E-mail: ystory@coxinet.net or okmason1@coxinet.net or
d. Mail to the Grand Lodge at PO Box 1019, Guthrie, OK 73044

3. The Grand Lodge provides the Grand Master's Ceremonial Cornerstone.

4. A companion stone, at the Lodge's expense (normally $150 each unless a different size is required) usually has the Lodge's elected officers names or some history and dates. Stones for a building, park or school might also have the names of the Architect, or Officers, or School Board Officials. You can have more than one companion stone.

5. The Grand Lodge invoices the host Lodge for all companion stones; therefore, if anyone else wishes to pay for the stone, the Lodge should collect the money from them and simply await the invoice from the Grand Lodge.

6. Normal cornerstones are 16" square and vary in thickness from 2.5" to 4" (which allows us to get the excellent price on the stones we have) made of marble or granite.

Some insight into the pre-ceremony processes...

The Lodge will complete the form with the information concerning their cornerstone/dedication ceremony (and if you desire a companion stone, the separate form for that as well). You will send it to the Grand Lodge via mail, fax or email.

The stone(s) will be ordered by the Grand Lodge and the monument company will send the Grand Lodge a "proof" of what they will etch on the stones. For the companion stones, the Grand Lodge will endeavor to contact the hosting Lodge's contact person to validate that everything is spelled correctly (last chance to make a correction). It is CRITICAL that your initial submission be 100% accurate because in the absence of being able to make that final contact, the Grand Lodge will use this document for proof comparison and final verification.

After the stone is cut, the Grand Lodge will arrange to have it picked up and brought to the ceremony itself.

The Lodge is charged with coordinating and inviting the proper officials. The Grand Lodge will invite the Grand Officers and District Deputies in the region.

The Lodge should prepare a "time capsule" for the deposit (usually a 4" diameter section of PVC pipe, capped on both ends, works sufficiently) to be sealed and deposited at the ceremony. See the special instructions on the form for what the host Lodge and Grand Lodge are responsible for providing for the deposit.
RETURN TO GRAND LODGE IMMEDIATELY
IMPORTANT INFORMATION NEEDED FOR YOUR CORNERSTONE
OR DEDICATION CEREMONY

Date of your ceremony: ___________________________ Time of Ceremony: ____________

Ceremony will be: Indoor  Outdoor (weather permitting)_______
If planned as an outdoor ceremony, and weather does not permit, the hosting Lodge shall have an Indoor
alternate location planned.

Hosting Lodge Name: ___________________________________________ No. _______

Contact Person: __________________________________________ Primary Phone: ____________

E-mail (if available): __________________________________________ Alt Phone: ____________

Name of Structure: __________________________________________

Physical address: ____________________________________________

Companion Stone: No   Yes_ (Attach Companion Stone Information Sheet)
(If more than 1 companion stone is desired, indicate the total number and provide separate sheet for each)

Will there be a meal: No   Yes   Time/Location: ___________/____________________$_

Grand Lodge Opening: Time: ________   Location: _______________________________________

Is the Hosting Lodge providing a speaker for the event: Yes__ No__

If so, Name & title of speaker: ________________________________________________

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:
* The hosting Lodge should secure and prepare for the capsule/deposit (i.e., a small Bible, list of current
City, County & School officials, current local newspaper, list of other Masonic Bodies in the
community, coins of the current year, etc.)
* The hosting Lodge is responsible for contacting officials (Mayor, City Council/Manager, Fire/Police
Chief, School Officials, etc.). Invitations should be sent 2--3 weeks prior to the ceremony.
* The Grand Lodge will prepare and bring specific items for the capsule/deposit (List of Lodge
membership, Blue Book, various lapel pins, small US flag, etc.). The Grand Lodge will also invite
Grand Lodge Officers.

For Grand Lodge Use Only
Date received ____________
Date Stone ordered ____________ Date Companion Stone(s) ordered ____________
(Date Stone(s) Picked up ____________ Date "capsule deposit" prepared ____________
Date Invitations Mailed to Grand Lodge Officers
RETURN TO GRAND LODGE IMMEDIATELY
IMPORTANT INFORMATION NEEDED FOR YOUR
COMPANION STONE
Use a separate sheet per stone or indicate Number of stones with this same information

Hosting Lodge: ___________________________ No. ____________

Contact Person: ___________________________ Phone: ______________

E-mail address: ___________________________ Alt Phone: ______________

Date of Ceremony: _________________________

Structure: ____________________________________

YOU NEED TO PROVIDE AN EXACT COPY OF WHAT YOU WISH TO BE ETCHED
ON YOUR COMPANION STONE. PLEASE CHECK YOUR SPELLING BEFORE
RETURNING IT TO THE GRAND LODGE (VIA FAX, MAIL, E-MAIL)

_____________________________________________________________________
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Normal Companion Stones cost $150 and must be paid by the Lodge (the Grand Lodge shall
invoice the Lodge) regardless of who is paying for the stone or how funds are collected.

After ordering the stone, the monument company will fax their copy of the text to be etched to
the Grand Lodge and the contact person shall be asked to verify it one final time prior to giving
permission to have the stone etched. In the event the Grand Lodge cannot fax this to the
contact person for their verification, this form will be used to make that final comparison.

This form may be faxed to the Grand Lodge at (405) 282-3244 or a copy e-mailed to:
ystory@coxinet.net or okmason1@coxinet.net or mailed to the Grand Lodge at P.O. Box 1019,
Guthrie, OK 73044
The Ceremony of Laying a Cornerstone

This is distinctly a Grand Lodge Ceremony under the direction of the Grand Master. All arrangements, dates, etc., must be approved by him. The ceremony cannot be performed by a Constituent Lodge.

No cornerstone should be laid with Masonic Ceremonies except those of acknowledged public structures (see Section 701 of the Constitution and Laws), such as Churches, Public Buildings, Monuments or Buildings to be used for Masonic purposes, and then only upon request of proper authorities.

When practicable, the stone should be placed in the Northeast corner of the building, otherwise at the most suitable and desirable location. The structure must be of a non-combustible material such as brick, stone, tile, concrete or other non-combustible material.

Proper detailed planning at the local level and coordination with the Grand Lodge staff is what will assure a successful and meaningful event. Following are some helpful hints, as well as policies.

Preparation:

**You must contact the Grand Lodge not less than 6 weeks prior to the contemplated date and arrange a satisfactory date (coordinated and approved by the Grand Master) before proceeding.**

**You should know that the stones are 16 inch squares, approximately 3-4 inches thick (sometimes slightly thinner). It should be proportioned to fit into the brick or stone work of the building, and have a mortar joint around the stone as is used in the masonry of the building. The Grand lodge supplies the standard cornerstone but if an additional companion stone is desired, the host Lodge will be required to pay for it (normally $150). More than one companion stone is also possible, if desired. The Lodge will be Invoiced for the companion stones by the Grand Lodge.**

Location of the stone:

The cornerstone is symbolically placed in the Northeast comer of the building; however, it is more desirable that it be located in a prominent place where it may be seen by visitors passing by.

The hosting Lodge is responsible for coordinating the location with the appropriate local officials.

Inscription on the stone:

The inscription on the cornerstone changes only in regards to the sitting Grand Master's name and the dates of the ceremony. No other wording is permitted on the Grand Lodge's stone. The date on the stone must be the same as the date of the ceremony (unless approved by the Grand Master).

The names of Officers, Trustees, Committees, etc., for either the Lodge or the Public Building (or both) may be on an adjacent stone (or stones). This is the stone we refer to as the "Companion Stone."

Time Capsule:

The Lodge is required to prepare a "Time Capsule" at their expense. It is sometimes called the "box" or "cask" and is to be deposited under or behind the cornerstone. It may be of copper, just large enough to easily contain all items desired and should be carefully soldered to exclude any possible air or moisture. No iron or steel should be permitted to come in contact with the capsule. Typically, in modern times, most Lodges use a container made of PVC material, usually a 4" diameter section of pipe capped on both ends.

There is no specified list on the contents to be deposited, but what is placed in the cask shall be documented, normally by the Grand Secretary, and returned to the Grand Lodge for inclusion in the annual proceedings.

Typically, the Grand Lodge deposits a small US Flag, current listing of the hosting
Lodge's membership, a current copy of the *Oklahoma Mason* magazine, the "Blue Book" list of Lodges for the State of Oklahoma and various Grand Lodge lapel pins, to include a wives pin and a widow pin and card.

The host Lodge should prepare for the capsule a list of other Masonic Bodies in the community, a current copy of the local newspaper, a small Bible, one or more coins of the current year, a list of officials, a brief history of the building and any other items of current interest to the community.

**Publicity:**

- The host Lodge should contact all news media in their area—newspapers, radio, television stations, to ensure proper publicity for the event.
- Have a local High School Band perform is a desirable aspect of a successful event.

**Invitations:**

- Two to three weeks prior to the ceremony, the host Lodge should be sure to send invitations by mail to the City, County, State and Federal Officials, as well as all applicable school personnel such as Principals and Superintendents, and also the building contractor, architect and engineer. The Lodge needs to be certain the Grand Lodge is aware of who will be in attendance and have a list of those present at the ceremony.
- The Grand Master will call on those dignitaries during the ceremony to spread the cement on top of the stone.
- The Grand Lodge takes care of inviting the Grand Lodge officers, Past Grand Masters and appropriate District Deputy Grand Masters in the region.

**Accommodations:**

- It is customary that the host Lodge provides lunch for the Grand Lodge Officers and their ladies.
## Division of Responsibilities for Masonic Cornerstone Ceremonies

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Additional Grand Lodge set-up & ceremonial responsibilities shall be detailed internally, to include all basic items, such as who is responsible for picking up stones at the monument company to who ensures the proper paraphernalia is on site for the event and in the proper position in time for the ceremony.