

District 'C'hronicle



March 2020

Hamilton Masonic District C

Edition No.139

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From our District Deputy Grand Master

Brethren,

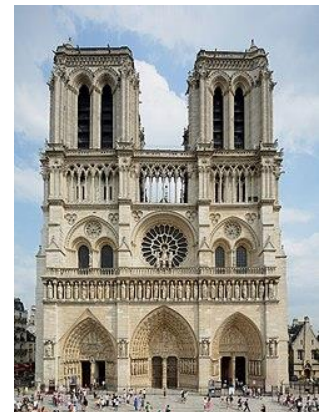
I would like to thank the officers and brethren of Valley Lodge No. 100 and Meridian Lodge No.. 687 for the warm hospitality extended to the visitors, district chairmen and myself on the occasion of my official visit to your lodges. You are all to be commended for your tireless performance to duty.

Being DDGM offers many privileges. One such privilege is the ability to attend and participate in our Masonic Memorial Service. I was able to attend such a service for W. Bro. Brian Peall of Seymour Lodge No. 272, I know you join with me in commending his soul to God and offering heartfelt condolences to his family.

Another privilege was attending the Masonic Education Conference hosted by the College of Freemasonry at the Scottish Rite. There were 28 Districts represented by Lodges and DDGM'S from across Ontario and the banquet room of the Scottish Rite was packed full of keen Mason's eager to participate in the event. The speakers were R. W. Bro. Howard Adams, W. Bro. Kip Coggins and Bro. John Badowski. R. W. Bro. Adams spoke about Leadership and ethics in the craft. W. Bro. Coggins spoke about Masonry as meditation. Bro. Badowski spoke about the celestial symbolism of Freemasonry.



While I would like to apprise you of all that I learned, for brevities sake I will inform you of the most surprising experience. W. Bro Kip Coggins with the Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master present opened and closed a lodge. It was the most compelling meditation I have ever heard, and it was probably the best opening and closing I have ever heard. It was certainly the most effective. Let me explain. Kip read the ritual. He read clearly and deliberately. He read in the same tone throughout. He read with solemnity and reverence but not too much, enough to convey the meaning of opening and closing the Lodge. He followed the grammatical symbols. He paused and took a breath emphasising the words and consequently their meaning. He knocked at the appropriate places with the same rhythm (the identical rhythm,) throughout. The knocks were loud and emphatic, like sound grammar. While Kip was replicating the opening and closing well over a hundred men had their eyes closed and followed Kips voice and the sound of the knocks. In the distance I could hear brothers muttering along the words, lost in their own meditation. I was in the presence of a Master! A Master who through research and making a daily advancement in masonic knowledge empowered the opening and closing of a lodge to such a high degree that in that moment Freemasonry became transformative. It was the intention of W. Bro. Coggins to leave an indelible impression on the assembled Brethren. It was perfect! It is our goal to be perfect. We try again and again like the apprenticed stone squarers of old. Brethren, we can marvel at the ancient monuments inspired by one well dressed stone.



Over the upcoming months, I look forward to seeing you at Fraternal visits, the upcoming Lodges of instruction, the Divine Service, and at my Official Visit and homecoming to Harodim Lodge No.513 on Thursday March 26th.

Lastly, I offer my prayers and best wishes to all sick and shut in brethren; my the G.A.O.T.U. soothe your pains and ease your burdens.

R.W. Bro. Jason McCulloch

The **DISTRICT 'C'HRONICLE** is published monthly in Hamilton, Ontario and is available for download on the district website at <http://www.hamiltondistrictmasons.org>. Please forward submissions to this newsletter through the contact details on our website.

Please note: The opinions and views expressed in any article in the District 'C'hronicle are those of the writers and therefore do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Grand Lodge. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions

From the Grand Master

Brethren,



You may have heard me say that I believe we need to stop trying to be everything to everyone. Focus on what is quintessential about Masonry and drop the rest.

I think that means we concentrate on:

- the Ritual
- explaining and discussing the meaning of the Ritual – that's education
- and teaching the Ritual - mentoring our brethren, and that's it, really.

All the rest falls out from that naturally

- charity
- community involvement
- fellowship

If you live the teachings in the Ritual you will naturally do those things.

I discussed Ritual in a previous communique. The Ritual teaches us everything we need to know to be a Mason. But it does need some explanation, and that is where education comes in.

Reading, lectures, contemplation, and discussion are all routes to understanding. So is hearing it again and again. You may have heard those words a thousand times, but one day, whether due to the way a brother delivers it, or to what is rummaging around in your subconscious, you suddenly hear it in a new way and your understanding is expanded.

Travelling helps as well. That's where you will hear a brother put a different emphasis on certain words. If you go to lodge in the United States you will hear a totally different ritual – one based on the Antients. For obvious reasons, the U.S. was not part of the unification discussions in England in 1813 and so they maintain a ritual close to the Antients'. You will hear parts that were removed in the Union. The Antients were mostly Irish Masons so you will also hear this if you visit one of the Irish lodges in London. If you go to Europe, you may hear parts from the Moderns' ritual that we left out. That totally expands your insight! If any of you are familiar with Mozart's Magic Flute, you will know that it is said to be a portrayal of a Masonic Degree. Some even say he was murdered because he wrote it. I have seen the

opera several times and it did not look like a Masonic degree to me. At least not until I read the European first degree that the "red" lodges in Louisiana use!

On the other hand, we can be overwhelmed by education lectures from other countries. So much of what is on the internet is American and often doesn't really relate to our ritual. Luckily, we have a treasure trove of education pieces on our website – in Reflections, the Ontario Mason Magazine and the various subtabs listed under education. And in the books written by M.W. Bros. Bradley and Daniels, which are available from the office.

And education does not need to be a drawn out lecture. A five minute talk or discussion is often more memorable. I found when I was Worshipful Master that if it was a very busy night, it was always suggested that we drop the education to save time! But education is the second most important thing in a lodge meeting (after the Ritual, of course). Every lodge can easily have education every meeting.

Just look up one word from the Ritual in the dictionary each month and share it with your lodge! Suggest a phrase to have a discussion on in lodge – I'll bet one of your brothers will have an idea about it that you never thought of.

The five minutes that a candidate spends changing is an excellent time for some short education like that. People often say, "but the candidate misses out if the education is then". Or they want to have the education after the degree so he can hear it. But frankly, the candidate is so overloaded with information after the experience of his degree, he is not going to absorb anything more. Besides, Section 335 of the Constitution says that "Balloting shall be the last order of business except the conferring of degrees" which implies that a degree shall be the last thing you do. This only makes sense, because what you want the candidate to go home with, prominent in his mind, is the degree.

Which gets back to point one. If our primary goal is to impart the Ritual to the candidate in an impressive way, it should be the apex of the night..

David J. Cameron

*You and your lady are cordially invited to the
Hamilton Districts Reception and Dinner in honour
of the Grand Master, M.W. Bro. David J. Cameron.*

**May 1st, 2020
Scottish Rite Hamilton
4 Queen Street South,
Hamilton, Ontario**

**Reception & Refreshments: 5:30 pm
Dinner: 7:00 pm**

**Tickets: \$60.00 per person
Available at:**

<http://pm-abc.ca/grand-masters-reception/grand-masters-reception-invitation/>

From the Deputy

My Brethren:

So back to where we left off on our renewal of your Board of General Purposes and the Grand Lodge programs.

In December, we had one Management Committee meeting at the Grand Lodge office to continue the discussion on where we were headed and how the Pillar teams and Committees were working towards their goals and objectives. The first weekend of the new year was reserved for the District Deputy Grand Master's Mid-term meeting and then the second was for the first 2020 meeting of the Board of General Purposes Committee Chairman to report on their progress.

Starting this month with the Craft Stewardship Pillar, under R.W. Bro. Jamie Ireland, we will update you on the progress of their special assignments given to them this year:

- 1) Develop a communication proposal to encourage the presentation of Masonic Education, on the floor of the Lodge, at every meeting

The Committee Chairman, R.W. Bro. Dale Graham, reports that this item is in progress. The Grand Master and Deputy have been talking about the importance of Masonic Education on every agenda of every Lodge meeting during our visits – and in some Lodges, even providing that Education. The proposed Constitutional amendment to make Masonic Education mandatory at every Lodge meeting has been submitted to the Constitution and Jurisprudence Committee for their review, prior to presentation at the next Annual Communication. We are awaiting a communication strategy for this from the Masonic Education Committee.

- 2) Create a library of Masonic education articles and have them posted on the Grand Lodge web site and Digest e-mail distribution for the use by the Brethren and Lodge Leaders

Chairman Graham reports that some articles are ready for the Publishing Review Committee to suggest any edits and revisions prior to posting on a special section of the Grand Lodge web site and suitable for distribution via the Resource Digest e-mail distribution. The vision is that these articles will be an easy and readily accessible source for Lodge Education leaders to present in Lodge to assist with compliance to the proposed Constitutional amendment as mentioned above.

- 3) Develop a mediation handbook for use of Lodges to de-escalate differences of opinions that are disturbing the harmony of the Lodge

The Chairman reports that they are progressing on this task using specialized committee members. They have

the outline for a workshop that will focus on communication skills, conflict resolution, de-escalation, early intervention awareness and Lodge, District and administrative implications. The objective is to decrease the amount of wasted time that the Grand Secretary and the Discipline Committee members spend dealing with un-Masonic behaviour of our members.

- 4) College of Freemasonry is to submit a conference format plan for review and approval

The College of Freemasonry Committee is happy to announce the 2020 Ontario Masonic Education Conference to be held on Saturday, February 22, 2020 at the Scottish Rite Cathedral in Hamilton. Registration opens at 8 a.m. with a welcoming address by the Grand Master at 9 a.m. Lunch will be catered at noon with the wrap-up scheduled for 2:30 p.m. Seating is limited so please register on the form in the December 2019 Resource Digest or via the Grand Lodge web site. For more information, please contact R.W. Bro. Rick Cadotte at masonic.college@gmail.com

- 5) Create a plan for Grand Lodge web site On-Line Books sales for review and approval

The plan is to have just such a 'Store' where members can access the Grand Lodge publications via the Grand Lodge web site and is in the process. Our Chief Operating Officer, R.W. Bro. Lou Domjan, is marshalling this task as part of the overall electronic revisions of the management of our Grand Lodge operations.

- 6) Leadership Development to work with the Mentoring Committee to re-introduce a training plan for new members to the Board of General Purposes

Our Leadership Development Chairman, R.W. Bro. Graham Tait, reports that the resurrection of the Board of General Purposes training manual will be accompanied by an explanation on how a Past Master of our Craft can become a member of the Grand Lodge committee team.

Someone mentioned to me last week that there were too many expectations being placed on our Grand Lodge Committees. I believe that we have the right team in place to meet the goals and objectives of restoring our Grand Lodge to the mecca for young men that it once was through our focus on Ritual, Education and Mentoring. Please tune back in next month to hear how your Grand Lodge Membership Pillar is supporting these efforts. See you then!

Thomas W. Hogeboom, Deputy Grand Master



Image from: <https://content.thriveglobal.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Goal-Setting-Steps.jpg?w=1550>

Dates to Remember

March 2020

D.D.G.M. Official Visit

Ancient Landmarks / Doric Lodge No.654

Tuesday March 24th, 2020

Dinner 6:30 pm, Tyle 7:30 pm

MCH

D.D.G.M. Official Visit

DDGM Homecoming!

Harodim Lodge No.513

Thursday March 26th, 2020

Dinner 6:30 pm, Tyle 7:30 pm

MCH

A Special Evening with Tom Wood, Provincial Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Kilwinning, Grand Lodge of Scotland



'Freemasonry's greatest joys is to extend the fraternal hand of welcome!'

R. W. Bro. Jason D. S. McCulloch, Hamilton District 'C' and the Worshipful Master of Harodim Lodge No.531, W. Bro. Randy Hayes are pleased to invite all Brethren to a very special evening.

It is our distinct pleasure to invite and welcome the Provincial Grand Master (P.G.M.), the Provincial Grand Lodge of Kilwinning, Grand Lodge of Scotland to

Harodim Lodge, No. 531

Thursday, April 23, 2020

for an evening of social harmony in the

HAMILTON MASONIC CENTRE

SCOTTISH RITE CATHEDRAL,

4 QUEEN STREET SOUTH (at KING), HAMILTON.

Social gathering and cash bar 5p.m. to 6p.m.

Dinner will be served at 6p.m.

Menu: Soup, Roast Beef, Yorkshire pudding, Dessert, tea/coffee.

Lodge will Tyle at 7:30 pm

Tickets \$20.00, Payment can be made via cash or an e-transfer

If you wish to attend the dinner, please contact W. Bro. Craig

McPhail at masonc20192020@gmail.com

for your reservations and dinner tickets by Thurs, April 16.

Guest speaker at dinner will be R.W. Bro. Tom Wood, who will deliver a talk about

The history of the Mother Lodge of Scotland

Hugh Murray Lodge No. 602 A.F.&A.M.

All you can eat PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Saturday March 28th, 2020
10:00 a.m. to noon at the

HILLCREST

MASONIC TEMPLE

257 Mohawk Rd. Hamilton, ON

Sausages, pancakes, juice, coffee, tea and more all included

Tickets \$15.00 per person

\$7.50 Kids 12 and under

This event is a fund raiser for our

Lodge's 100th Anniversary Celebrations

To book a table for your family, tickets or information

Contact the Lodge Secretary at HMLSecretary602@outlook.com or 905-517-6728



Support Home Hospice (our District Charity)


Win a Numbered and Framed Print of the Rosslyn Chapel

Brethren who would like to own a framed and numbered (9) print of Rosslyn Chapel provided by D.D.G.M. Jason McCulloch will be afforded an opportunity to win same.


See the print on display in the
Scottish Rite Club

For ticket information contact
W. Bro. Mike Oddi at: 905-929-5545

Even More Dates to Remember



Charles A. Sankey Lecture in Masonic Studies




Lecturer:
Prof. Cécile Révauger
Professor Emerita of English
Université Bordeaux Montaigne
Bordeaux, France

Sunday, March 22, 2020 at 3 p.m.
Sean O'Sullivan Theatre,
Brock University


**"Enlightenment, Gender and Race:
Personal Reflections on Leading
Issues in Masonic Studies"**

This event is free, but tickets are required. To reserve your ticket online,
please go to sankeylectures.ca and click the TICKETS link.



Seal of the Lodge Les Amis de l'Humanité, Paris, 1846

Generously sponsored by



Get your tickets at: <http://sankeylectures.ca/tickets/>



BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!

All Master Masons are invited to attend a Grand Lodge of Instruction in the **HAMILTON A, B & C DISTRICTS** on Tuesday, March 31st, 2020.

Hillcrest Lodge No. 594 will be hosting this event at Hillcrest Masonic Temple, 257 Mohawk Road West, Hamilton.

*** Please RSVP W. Bro. Sean Straughan, Hamilton B District - Chairman of Masonic Education, via sean@seanstraughan.com by Saturday, March 28th, 2020 ***

This workshop will focus on
THE MECHANICS OF THE WORK for each Degree

PROGRAM:

- REGISTRATION – from 6:30 PM until 6:59 PM
- FIRST DEGREE – from 7:00 PM until 7:40 PM
- SECOND DEGREE – from 7:40 PM until 8:20 PM
- THIRD DEGREE – from 8:20 PM until 9:00 PM
- Q & A – at the conclusion of each degree presentation

NO REGALIA

LODGE WILL NOT BE OPENED

DRESS CODE
Smart Casual



Masonic Past Masters' Association of the Hamilton Districts

Invites all Past Masters to our
Saturday, March 14th Breakfast Meeting
At The Scottish Rite

Our Guest Speaker Mr. John Gerrard,
C.E.O. Habitat for Humanity

Meet and greet 8:30am Breakfast... 9:00 a.m. **cost \$15:00**

Please reserve your breakfast before Saturday March 7th
by contacting R.W. Bro. Tom Young at
905-318-018 or by email at thomas.young@rogers.com

You can also Register and Pay for this event through
our new website at<http://pm-abc.ca/>



Building in Burlington,
Halton Hills, Milton, Oakville
Mississauga

We build strength, stability and independence.



**John Gerrard, CEO,
Habitat for Humanity
Halton-Mississauga**

John Gerrard joined Habitat for Humanity Halton-Mississauga (HFHHM) in the spring of 2012 after a career spanning several decades and industries in the private sector.

John spent the early part of his career in retail – in both operations and advertising. He worked primarily for companies that dealt in drug and mass channels, most notably Shoppers Drug Mart. After working as a VP of international sales, and as a consultant for several charities, John embarked on a new chapter in his career as HFHHM's CEO.

His passion, dedication, and transformational vision have seen his affiliate double its capacity and modernize their home ownership model to help more people than ever find a safe and decent place to live.

John holds a Bachelor's Degree in Commerce from the University of Windsor.

Still More Dates - April 2020

D.D.G.M. Official Visit

Seymour Lodge No. 272
Tuesday April 14th, 2020
Tyle 7:30 pm , Ancaster

D.D.G.M. Official Visit

Dufferin Lodge No.291
Thursday April 16th, 2020
Tyle 7:30 pm followed by Pie Night
Flamborough

D.D.G.M. Official Visit

Westmount Lodge No. 671
Tuesday April 21st, 2020
Dinner 6:30 pm Tyle 7:30 pm
Hillcrest

Hamilton Masonic Districts Board of Relief Spring Divine Service



Sunday, April 26, 2020
Binbrook United
Church
2617 Binbrook Road,
Binbrook, L0R 1C0
Assembly 7:00 pm,
Service 7:30 pm

Hosted by Harmony
Lodge No. 57



**Craft Association of the
Hamilton Masonic Districts**
Lodge of Instruction:
Guest Speaker Rev. Stephen Deak
Wednesday April 29th, 2020, 7:15 p.m.
Hillcrest Temple. All are welcome.

Hosted by Harodim Lodge No.513

Martin Family – Meridian Lodge No. 687

There was a good turn-out of the Martin clan at the February 12th Regular Meeting of Meridian Lodge,

W. Bro. Peter Martin, a Past Master of Meridian Lodge, his brother / Brother Bill Martin Jr., a Master Mason and member of Meridian Lodge and affiliated member of Bow River Lodge No. 1, Calgary, Bill Martin's son, Bro. Lee Martin, a Master Mason, and member of Bow River Lodge No. 1, Calgary and last but certainly not least W.Bro. Matthew Wilkinson, a Past Master of Meridian Lodge and nephew of Peter and Bill Martin.

Bros. Peter Martin, Bill Martin Jr. and Lee Martin took part in the F.C. degree work of the evening.

Around the District

February 2020



D.D.G.M. Official Visit to Valley Lodge No.100



D.D.G.M. Official Visit to Meridian Lodge No.687



W. Bro. Bill Paul with his
Sponsor into Freemasonry



The Grand Lodge Offices
in Attendance



R.W. Bro. Jason D.S. McCulloch,
R.W. Bro. Roger G. Parliament, PDDGM - recipient
of the 50 years a Past Master Long Service Award;
and W. Bro. Quinn Leyland, Worshipful Master of
Meridian Lodge No. 687.

Perspectives

An address To R.W. Sirs Association of the Hamilton Districts Waterdown Masonic Hall Sept 14, 2019 (Part 2)

R.W. Bro. Thomas W. Hogeboom, Deputy Grand Master

(Ed Note: This is the conclusion of an address that began in our February Chronicle. Focusing on Gen-Xers and the Millennials – those men born after 1965, and what they seek)

I have made it a mission over the past several years to interact with a significant number of these young, modern Masons and have benefited from their insights and objectives. Their quest is for knowledge, wisdom, understanding – learning, culture, self-improvement – and it has made me a better Mason. Too often, we confuse Masonic education with Masonic training – emphasizing form over essence. It is important to learn the basics, to deliver the ritual accurately, to perform the choreography of the floor work in strict conformity to our usage and custom. Of even greater importance should be what the symbols embody and the allegories enshrine, and what they mean in contemporary terms. From this perspective, these modern Masons are leading us back to our very roots when Speculative replaced Operative and Freemasonry emerged as a philosophical and occult science.

In the 21st century, most would agree that the Craft has become a friendly social entity, employed mainly for philanthropic purposes – in others words, a service club. The great work that Masons do in the community must always be encouraged, supported and commended, but surely fundraising for worthy causes and projects is a byproduct and extension of our Masonic beliefs, not the primary object or main purpose of our existence.

Let me be very clear. The social virtues are fundamental to our Order – Fraternity, Liberty and Equality. Sincere fraternal affection is the cement that binds us together. For many, fellowship and social intercourse are the main attraction and principal reward of membership in the lodge. Not everyone is absorbed in the study of the deeper philosophical aspects of the Craft. Masonry has the unique capacity to be what you make of it. Every man has his own reason for becoming and continuing as a Mason, and each is valid and legitimate.

The social Mason, such as myself, is easily satisfied and readily accommodated. Just being there is often enough. Such men have made an immense contribution during a lifetime of social contacts and civic service. My concern is that we also make room and provide space for those men serious in their quest for the key to the inner chamber of Freemasonry.

In a Masonic Lodge, good men congregate as equals without regard to class distinction, socio-economic status, educational background, profession or trade, race or creed. Every candidate enters the lodge stripped of all money and status. He brings into the lodge only himself – who he is and what he hopes to become. As an initiatory Order, we are in the business of transforming men, giving each man instruction in achieving a higher degree of selfawareness. That is the real meaning of what we promise every candidate by admitting him to “the mysteries and privileges of ancient Freemasonry.”

I would suggest that I am not the only experienced veteran who can learn much from these young serious thinking men now knocking at our doors. As Masons of long standing and wide experience we must continually upgrade, expand, and enhance our knowledge. The admonition given in the Charge to the candidate in the First Degree ‘to make a daily advancement’ is not restricted to the Entered Apprentice. In many respects, I still consider myself an Apprentice, because I am still learning the secrets of this trade we call Freemasonry. It has been estimated that esotericism is all but unknown to ninety per cent of the Brethren. Yet there is no shortage of books and internet sites available for a refresher course in the deeper meaning of Masonry. Then, when a candidate you have sponsored seeks guidance, or one to whom you have become a Mentor asks a question, you will be able to exchange insights and share opinions, respecting each other’s point of view. Our greatest asset is curiosity and our greatest blessing is tolerance – intellectual curiosity impels and excites us and tolerance, enlightens and enlarges us. It is a regrettable reality that some of these keen new Masons feel lonely and alienated – even shunned by their senior Brethren. This is not just a generational gap; it is a well-known phenomenon of discomfort when confronted with unfamiliar realms of thought. There is a fear of what is unknown and a suspicion of what is unfamiliar.

To counteract this, there are small study groups springing up where in-depth discussions of books and papers on diverse subjects energize those participating. Electronic resources allow these Masons to connect and communicate. Traditional Observance lodges are being formed, based on the European model, where candidates are required to prove intellectual and philosophical proficiency before advancing to the next degree. One of the proudest moments of my Masonic career was to have been chosen as the Charter Worshipful Master of the first Traditional Observance Lodge in Ontario that was dedicated ten years ago in Bath. Since then, another such Lodge has been dedicated in Stratford and another will soon be dedicated in the city of Toronto. The members of these Lodges are, for the most part, highly motivated, intellectual, well-educated, widely-read articulate young Masons – I say for the most part because there is a sprinkly of gray hair and white beards among these Lodges of Brethren who want to catch the next wave and are there to be a resource for these new initiatives. In

Templum Fidelis Lodge, we had two Past Grand Masters as Charter members and another joined our ranks the day we were dedicated.

Opportunity is knocking my Brethren – and knocking loudly. Perhaps now we can restore our lodges to what they were originally intended to be – a place where likeminded men can enjoy each other’s company, provide a forum where they may openly discuss and freely debate the basic questions of life. Perhaps Freemasonry can again become a gentleman’s learned society where men are able to transform themselves into better men.

Please, please, please Brethren - don’t confuse any of what I have said here today for a lessening of the guard at our West Gate. On the contrary, a very big part of our reformation will be an increased scrutiny of applicants to our Gentle Craft and

generally, making it harder to become a member. I am not afraid of our numbers decreasing further. I am not afraid of more of our Lodge Buildings closing. I will take quality over quantity any day. I am a firm believer that we are selling our product too cheaply. This is of course the subject of another presentation but let me just say that one of the most important jobs we can be assigned by our Worshipful Master is to be a member of an Investigating Committee. We need to conduct serious investigations. Investigations should take longer, and they should be more thorough. We need to meet our candidates more than once, and at least one of these times, meeting him in his home with his family. We should require a more complete statement from petitioners as to what they expect from membership in a Masonic Lodge. The petitioner should appear before the Lodge at refreshment prior to his election. We need to know that our candidates will indeed “reflect honour on our choice.”

I yearn for the days of our Grandfathers, when they had to save for months to make the Application Fee. If there is a perception that our product has no value, it will be treated as such.

Through all the changing scenes of life, Freemasonry has remained constant – its teachings permanent and unchanging; its essence steadfast and immovable.

Reformation is neither revolution nor rebellion. It is rather the means and process by which to reshape and renew, adapting our timeless principles to the day and age in which we live, move and have our being. I respectfully suggest that the strategy by which this may be accomplished is to reclaim our inheritance as a modern mystery school and restore the original idea and ideal of Freemasonry.

I joined Freemasonry during my last year of undergraduate studies at Queen’s University to be a part of the lives of my Father and the men he called Brothers at our little Lodge in Bath thirty-nine years ago. But I have stayed because I came to believe in Masonry, because I believe in its influence for good.

The items I have discussed today are not something that can be enforced by your Grand Lodge. These items all have to be grass-root driven. It will be the challenge of Grand Lodge to open the discussion and keep it in front of the membership, but it will be the Lodges that make it happen. I challenge each of you to join with me in making our Freemasonry come alive during our allotted time. The future of our Gentle Craft is in our hands Brethren - yours and mine. Let us be sure that those who follow us tomorrow can be forever proud of our achievements in Freemasonry today.



Are You Bored With the Ritual?

Have you ever been to a lodge where they just ran through the opening ritual as if it was a “who can talk faster”-competition? And where nobody paid attention to any of the words and sentences uttered?

If not, you don’t visit enough! (Or you just didn’t pay attention)

For some, it is even boring to go through the same ritual again and again at the beginning of every meeting. Are they right? Ultimately, why do we even have a ritual – some might ask...

So, stop for a moment reading this and try to come up with a comprehensive, meaningful answer to the question:

WHY DO WE HAVE A RITUAL?

In my younger years I used to be a member of a local student theatre group. There was this older actor who often came to help us to understand the intricacies of acting and directing, and also giving us the occasional lesson about Art. One day, during a rehearsal he happened to say: *no one should enter the stage with dirty shoes!* All of us, without exception, suddenly looked down to our footwear... The old wise man smiled and added quietly “That’s only part of it... more important is what is here, inside” he pointed toward his heart. Are you clean and ready to step onto the stage? We should remember that, most likely, the origins of tragedy as a play on the stage have sacramental roots and strong connections with the gods and demigods of the Greek mythology.

The old actor was telling us to leave the “dust” of the outside, mundane life off-stage and to come in clean, with the mind and soul ready to share the unique experience of the tragedy (or comedy).

The function and role of our Masonic opening (and closing) ceremony is very similar. We use the ritual to mark a clear delimitation between the outside mundane world and the inner, virtual space where “likeminded men” gather to create a different state of mind in order to share something that we have in common only and exclusively with the brethren present.

We all come from the hectic, chaotic world outside and our goal is to create our own inner world, a *sacred space*, if you wish, where we transition ourselves into a different realm to elevate our souls and minds into the state that is open to receive the spiritual and moral teachings and to build bonds. That is the “why” for the existence and use of the ritual!

Any lodge that is not capable or willing to create this sacred inner space for its members – for the enlightenment of Masons or, even more importantly, to initiate, i.e. to bring in an “outsider” into the sacred circle of those insiders that possess the knowledge – does a disservice to the Craft.

To have a chat and some “refreshment” without any kind of spiritual experience, one should join any dining club or a bowling team: there is male bond, camaraderie, a drink or two, jokes and fun. There is absolutely no need to be in a Freemasons lodge to achieve these “goals”. If someone joined the lodge expecting only that kind of “fun” – he joined the wrong group.

However, we are just as guilty as the ignorant who came to be there by misunderstanding. If we ‘advertise’ ourselves as “service club” and “hobby” and “community organization” – we singlehandedly are killing the Craft... The only thing that separates us from the many fraternal institutions and social groups is our **unique ritual** with its rich and layered messages conveyed (almost) as an allegory play!

A Masonic meeting without creating an uplifting spiritual, intellectual and insider (remember, esoteric is insider!) experience is a futile exercise of going through the motions without ever understanding the meaning.

Perhaps, before bringing in new members that will soon run away disappointed, we should rethink the way we do simply things like opening and closing ritual. For as the opening is meant to create that inner sacred space for the initiated, so is the closing meant to remind us to preserve this unique experience in the silence of our heart before returning to the noisy mundane world.

W. Bro. István Horvath, WM of the Electric Lodge No.495

Protocol and Etiquette

Continuing from last month a focus on various key aspects of Head Table protocols This article discusses WHO can be invited to sit at the Head Table.

QUESTION:

Who can be seated at the Head Table for a Masonic banquet?

ANSWER:

Basically, anyone can be invited to sit at a Head Table, (whether a Mason or not), but there really should be an appropriate reason for doing so.

Bear in mind that a Head Table is considered as the **PRINCIPAL TABLE** at a banquet or conference, where the presiding officer, chief speaker, guests of honour and other dignitaries are seated. It is the focus of everyone’s attention.

Also, there may not be room to seat everyone at the Head Table who the Worshipful Master would like to have join him. The number of Head Table guests should be restricted to a manageable number, (e.g. no more than 15). A Secondary Head Table could be utilized for the overflow, if need be. The overall arrangements are usually a direct function of the evening’s program.

We can generally categorise Head Table guests as:

1. Those who **MUST** be seated there, (as per Protocols).
2. Those who **SHOULD** be seated there, (if space permits), and
3. Those who **COULD** be seated there, (if space permits).



Who MUST be seated at the Head Table

- The Worshipful Master.
- The Guest of Honour.
- Anyone who, by their rank, is automatically entitled to assume the gavel in lodge (i.e. the GM, a PGM, the DGM, and the DDGM of your District).

Who SHOULD be seated at the Head Table (space permitting

- The lodge’s JW and SW.
- Anyone on our Grand Lodge’s “Order of Introduction” list, (abiding by their seniority/order on the list).

Who COULD be seated at the Head Table (suggestions only, and if space permits)

- A William Mercer Wilson Medal recipient.
- A Grand Master’s Meritorious Service Award recipient.
- Someone who has rendered extraordinary service to the lodge.
- A recent recipient of a Masonic award or recognition (or a non-Masonic award, such as the *Order of Canada*).
- Someone who is celebrating a birthday that day.
- The candidate(s) for the evening.
- The Chairman in charge of the banquet.
- Anyone who is responding to a toast.
- Anyone who is proposing a toast.
- The person who is introducing the Guest Speaker.
- A visiting brother from another Grand Jurisdiction.

NOTE: It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss banquets when wives/friends/family of Head Table guests are present.

R.W. Bro. Gordon Crutcher, Assistant to The Custodian

Masonic Education

Here is a definition of a word found within Masonic ritual that is not common outside of our Lodge rooms.

Divers colours. A lecture in our Ritual describes ‘a celestial canopy of divers colours’. To the uninitiated this means that above us there are various colours. When the word ‘divers’ originally came into English the emphasis was on the second syllable because the word ‘divers’ comes from a French origin. As Masonic ritual was being prepared the phrase ‘divers colours’ meant ‘different colours’. The initiated Mason will learn to understand that there is more to be seen than just the sky above, or the ceiling of the lodge room. The Mason who studies this will do well to look at the representations of the celestial canopy in each lodge room he visits.

Provided for your daily advancement in Masonic knowledge from the Sarnia District Masonic Library.

W. Bro. Marshall Kern, Librarian & Historian



Lodge of instruction

For EA & FC and their Mentors

DDGM - R.W.BRO.
JASON D. S. MCCULLOCH

is pleased to announce the upcoming LODGE of INSTRUCTION hosted by Hamilton District C.

It will be of particular interest to our newer members, especially Entered Apprentice and Fellowcraft Masons, as we will be presenting educational information to further explain details of the entered apprentice ritual, with the hope our newer members gain a better understanding of this degree. It is hoped that senior brethren or mentors will bring their newer brother masons along to this event.

CONTACT

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W. Bro. Craig McPhail
PHONE: 905-517-6037
masonc20192020@gmail.com

TOPICS

Religions - Love
Initiation
Allegories and Symbols

MASONIC DISTRICT C - HAMILTON

Date & Time: 5th Wednesday, April 29, 2020 @ 7:00 pm

Location: Hillcrest Masonic Temple, 257-261 Mohawk Road W, Hamilton

Dress is casual. No Regalia.
RSVP using the contacts on the left.

PARTICIPANTS: MASONS ONLY

Open to brethren of all Districts, with hopes that brethren from all Hamilton Masonic Districts as well as neighbouring Districts will attend.

There will be a social hour with refreshments served following the workshop, to provide an opportunity for fellowship and discussion.

SPEAKERS

Special Guest Speaker - Rev. Stephen Deák

W. Bro. István Horváth
W. Bro. Stan Satchell, Chairman of Lodge Resources
Bro. James Lannigan



IN MEMORIAM

W. Bro. Brian Peall
Seymour Lodge No. 272

Initiated February 12, 2002
Passed April 18, 2002
Raised October 8, 2002
Served as Worshipful Master 2007 & 2008

Passed to the Grand Lodge Above Feb 4, 2020
May the G.A.O.T.U. Grant Him Peace



From the Editor

Brethren,

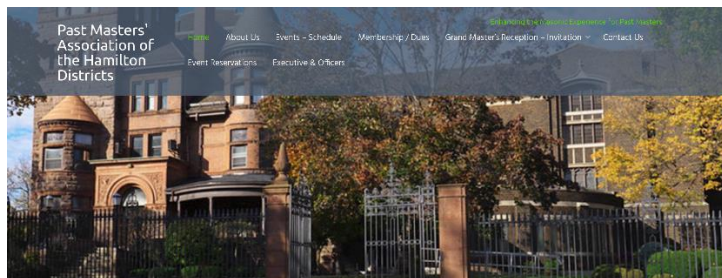
The March edition is chock full of information, events and Masonic Education. Seems like all the warm weather means no one had to waste time shoveling and they sharpened their pencils instead. So many submissions this month that we had to bite the bullet and add two more pages.

It looks like March and April are going to be busy months for District C Masons. Lodge of INstruction, the Divine Service, Homecoming and special visitors from Scotland, not to mention St. Patrick's Day, Easter and Hugh Murray's Pancake Breakfast!

We still want to hear your perspective, send your responses to me at gnotman@hotmail.com with **Masonic Response** in the subject line.
S&F Glen



Past Masters Association Website



Our Hamilton Past Masters Association has a new website. <http://pm-abc.ca/> You can use it to check upcoming events, pay dues, book reservations and stay informed.



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Webmaster: V.W. Bro. Bill Fulton

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