

# District 'C'ronicle



March 2021

Hamilton Masonic District C

Edition No.151

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## From our District Deputy Grand Master

Brethren, I hope you are all doing very well.

Below are some quotations from the Communique in the Hamilton District C Chronicle from March 2018 when the then Deputy Grand Master R. W. Bro. David Cameron wrote on: ***What will the lodges of the future look like?***

*“Lodges have always been formed and closed as needs and circumstances dictate.”*

Brethren we find ourselves in a very tricky position. We want to return to our former traditions and customs but there is a demographic unfairly targeted in this pandemic. It is out of our abiding love for our Brethren and Institution that we shall do as much as we possibly can to protect us ALL. Does then this mean that we shall be forever affected by this disease: NOT until a vaccine is available to everyone. Perhaps it is too soon to say who can or will return to lodge whenever we are given the all clear.

The former DGM continues; *“Now is a good time to take an honest look at your Lodge. There are many excellent programs for improving your Lodge, but sometimes it is just too much. You may have too few members, or they are too old, or just worn out. Maybe it is time to amalgamate, or close.”*

Most Worshipful Brother David J. Cameron was sounding a cautionary tale of decline and revitalization as a process of



the natural ups and downs of our lives. And that any fear at Amalgamation or going Dark should be dispelled as we should embrace the natural conclusion of some Lodges as we do our own lives.

The address continues; *“There are procedures for amalgamating and closing laid out in the Constitution. It starts with each Lodge making a notice of resolution. But before that, there is an informal process of discussion: discussion within the Lodge; discussion within the District; discussion with Grand Lodge. I have witnessed several Lodges faced with closing or amalgamating, in which a small group of brave Masons, have made plans to either close the Lodge or turn it around. They laid out the facts to the brethren and the brethren took action. And they are going strong to this day!*

### **Look within, be honest, and discuss, discuss, discuss.”**

Brethren, it seems clear to me that M. W. Bro. David Cameron was sounding an alarm. An alarm which now seems to be more pertinent than at its original writing. I implore each Lodge to undergo an evaluation of its membership under the constraints that Covid 19 might impose on our customs and traditions.

Brethren, M. W. Bro. David J. Cameron closed with a poem from an Unknown author

*Think not this Lodge has ended ...  
With the closing of the volume and the opening of a door,  
Think not this Lodge has ended, think what has gone before.  
Remember all those worthy men who as apprentice came,  
And who developed love and skill and worked in friendships name.*

*When you take up the working tools to gently put aside,  
Think not their work is ended, think how they were applied.  
Remember well the lessons taught, to craftsmen tried and true;  
Of Masons worthy of the name and apron white and Blue.*

*When your tracing boards are covered and the columns laid at rest,  
Think not their teaching ended, think more a message blessed.  
Remember the special meaning to master Masons all,  
Of birth and life and learning and waiting for the call.*

*With the sounding of the gavel and as the lights at last go out,  
Think not your Lodge has ended, dispel all lingering doubts,  
Master, Wardens, Brethren, remember as you depart,  
Your Lodge will live forever in every Mason’s heart.*

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’ronicle are those of the writers and therefore do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Grand Lodge. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions

Brethren, I would like to honor the memory of a young man who became Harodim Lodges No. 513 first Initiated Mason in 2020. Bro. Jeremy Woodland died recently of cancer; he was 41. He was the model Initiate and I was along with the Brethren of Harodim Lodge No. 513 very proud to have such an excellent man desiring to join our ranks. We shall honor him and the others who have shipped out to the Grand Lodge above. We shall cherish their memories in our hearts!

To the sick and shut in Brethren, may the G.A.O.T.U ease your burdens and sufferings!

Cum Luce Salutem!

**R.W. Bro. Jason McCulloch**

## From the Grand Master



“Sometimes the worst thing that happens to you, the thing you think you can’t survive... it’s the thing that makes you better than you used to be.” — Jennifer Weiner, *Fly Away Home*

Our lodges have now been shuttered for ten months and will be for several more. We miss our brethren. We miss our lodge outings. Some feel we have no chance of recovering from this enforced hiatus. But let us look at history.

Lodges were closed in Germany from 1935 to 1945. After the war, they restarted and now enjoy such a popularity that they are planning on hosting the World Conference of Regular Grand Lodges this fall. Masonry had been banned in the area that is now the Czech Republic for over a hundred years when it was revived in 1919, only to be suppressed by the Nazis and then the Communists; after a 50 year hiatus they restarted in 1989.

Freemasonry was banned in Russia on four separate occasions for a total of 171 years between 1785 and 1992, but they are going strong again. Who remembers that video of the Russian brethren singing *Auld Lang Syne*?

After the Influenza pandemic of 1918-20 the Craft saw a period of great growth. This has traditionally been attributed to the desire of soldiers returning from the Great War to continue the fellowship they had experienced in the forces, but was there also an effect from forced isolation?

Last Spring, when I was reading old Proceedings in preparation for my report to our Annual Communication, I was amazed to find that there was almost no mention of the Spanish Flu. What the writers of the day seemed worried about was that we not let ourselves be overrun by the number of new candidates. The Grand Secretary of Indiana wrote “Masonry, not only in Indiana, but throughout the entire country, had become enormously popular. Indiana Lodges had always been careful as to the quality of the material; but, he said, ‘a note of warning may not be out of place that extraordinary care be observed when floods of petitions are pouring in.’” I didn’t understand why this was their concern, but as our lockdown drags on and we collect quite a number of seekers waiting to join, it is making more and more sense.

A man who joins the Craft and is rushed through his degrees without being instructed in our philosophy and without having the ability to bond with several of our members, will not stay. Just as happened in the past after a rash of initiations, those men who, dare I say, are made members but not Masons, will drift away. And even those who do stay, having not been properly instructed, will not be able to pass on to the next generation the lessons that they never learned.

With vaccines now available, we can hope for the time when we will be able to safely gather again. While patiently waiting, let us think about how we will proceed with that comeback. Will we be able to pace ourselves and focus on the quintessence of Freemasonry, or will we rush into signing up as many bodies as possible? I hope we can take the time to think through our plans, to adequately brush up on our ritual, and, above all, to properly mentor our new brothers.

*David J. Cameron*



*Grand Lodge of Russia Singing Ole Lang Syne*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i4eA\\_QwuI\\_M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i4eA_QwuI_M)

## From the Deputy

My Brethren:

With a new year comes all the preparations for the next Annual Communication in July. But this year it will be different for reasons of which you are aware – for the last ten plus months.

My assignment over the next few months leading up to the Annual Communication is to socialize the many Constitutional amendments that we will be voting on at that time. You will remember that we did not cover off this agenda item last year during our abbreviated pandemic videoconference Annual Communication, not unlike the annual election of Grand Lodge Officers. Though of necessity of the time, it turns out that there are now many amendments to deal with – from two years of not addressing them.

And I have help. The Grand Secretary will be addressing all the new amendments from this year that deal with the proposed revisions to the Annual Communication including the electronic voting on the proposed

Constitutional amendments and the election of Grand Lodge Officers that will enfranchise every eligible voting Mason and not just those who can physically attend the Annual Communication. The Grand Treasurer will also be communicating the very important amendment to increase the Grand Lodge assessment. That leaves me with what would have been the 2020 proposed amendments.

I will break these proposed amendments into sizable related chunks as best as possible.

We will classify the first category of amendments under Grand Lodge Officer Powers and Duties:

One proposal, as submitted by our Grand Master, deals with the Powers and Duties of the District Deputy Grand Master to assure that the Lodge Master's/Treasurer's Report is submitted along with the other L forms as part of their report to Grand Lodge on the completion of a Lodge Official Visit. It is simply adding the name of the Form L4 to the end of the current version in section 104 (b) along with the other three L Forms.

Another proposal, also in section 104, relates to monitoring to assure the constituent lodges are providing for the safety and welfare of their members and maintaining their meeting facilities in accordance with the minimum provincial statutes and municipal by-laws and was submitted by R.W. Bro. Darren Byrne as the Chairman of the Grand Lodge Buildings Advisory Committee. The proposal would add two new subsections to the Powers and Duties of the District Deputy Grand Master in section 104 of the Constitution. Proposed Section (c) would suspend a Lodge Warrant if they failed to submit their Official Visit L Forms to the DDGM within forty-five days of the Visit until such time as the Lodge complied. And proposed Section (d) would allow for the Grand Master to extend the grace period for another forty-five days if so petitioned by the Lodge.

Another proposal relates to the Grand Librarian and Grand Archivist and would relax the qualifications for these two positions if we should ever be in a position where we don't have Brethren with 'academic training and professional experience in Library or Curatorial Science.'

Next month we will continue with a short description of the rationale for the remaining proposals for Constitutional amendments as submitted for the 2020 Annual Communication categorized as Regalia and Awards; Lodge; and Grand Lodge changes.

Until then, stay safe and we'll see you soon on 'Lodge Squares' at a Zoom or GoToMeeting from the comfort of your own home!

**Thomas W. Hogeboom, Deputy Grand Master**

## Also in February's Communique

### From the Grand Secretary

Grand Lodge Electronic Voting 2021 Summaries:

- Election of the District Deputy Grand Master 2021
- Election of Grand Lodge Officers 2021
- Ballot on Proposed Constitutional Amendments 2021

### From the Grand Treasurer

Assessment Increase Proposal

- Open the dialogue and assure no questions go unanswered
- Increase from \$20 per annum to \$40 per annum
- Applicable to every member of each lodge whose fees have not been commuted to Grand Lodge



## From the Grand Lodge Website ...

### Added February 24, 2021

[William Mercer Wilson Medal Regulations and Guidelines](#)

### Added February 22, 2021

[Mentoring Matters Bulletin Volume 10](#)

[Mentoring Matter Bulletin Volume 11](#)

### Added February 14, 2021

[Electronic Voting at Grand Lodge in 2021](#)

[Covid 19 Temporary Grand Lodge Policies dated February 12, 2021](#)

### Added February 3, 2021

[The Communique Feb 2021](#)

<https://grandlodge.on.ca/>

## Around the District (Virtually) Hamilton C District - Masonic Forum

R.W. Bro. Jason McCulloch, District Deputy Grand Master, Hamilton Masonic District 'C', along with his Forum team are inviting you to join together for a special March virtual Forum.

### Guest Speaker

**Grand Master, Grand Lodge of A.F. And A.M.  
of Canada in the Province of Ontario**  
**M.W. Bro. David J. Cameron**

**When - Wednesday, March 3rd, 2021 - 7:30 p.m.**  
**Where - Online via Zoom**  
**Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83099507626?pwd=MjE4ZzVzMzJSVTBueXY2ZGMzVXINdz09>

The Forum team would like to thank last month's presenters, W. Bro. Dave Beland and W. Bro. Lorne Evans for their engaging presentations. Please remember, W. Bro. Beland's contest winner will be announced at the end of the March Forum.



Fraternally,  
W. Bro. Bill Paul, District  
Masonic Education Chair

## Grand Lodge Masonic Education Committee

Please RSVP here: <https://forms.gle/EVhDuugErwTcze9b6>

The Grand Lodge Education Committee Presents:

**March 6th, 2021 @ 7:00pm EST**  
Please contact  
[glcpoomasoniced@gmail.com](mailto:glcpoomasoniced@gmail.com) to RSVP

Saturday March 6<sup>th</sup>,  
2:15 pm EST.

We welcome all masons of every rank and from every lodge. All of your families and friends are welcome to attend.

Invitations for the meeting will be sent out roughly 24 hours prior to the event. They will contain the link you need to access the presentation.

Questions and

comments may be directed directly to the team at [glcpoomasoniced@gmail.com](mailto:glcpoomasoniced@gmail.com)

Sincerely & Fraternaly,  
W. Bro. Don Kemball Zeredatha Lodge 220  
GLCPOO Education Committee

**Brock University**

## Charles A. Sankey Lecture in Masonic Studies

Sunday, March 28, 2021 at 3 p.m. EST  
JOIN US LIVE & ONLINE:  
[2020.sankeylectures.ca](http://2020.sankeylectures.ca)

"En Route to the History of Freemasonry: Frances Yates, Northern Ireland, John Toland and the Knights of Jubilation"

Lecturer:  
Prof. Margaret C. Jacob  
Department of History  
University of California,  
Los Angeles

No tickets are necessary. This event will be live-streamed. To join the event, go to this link: [2020.sankeylectures.ca](http://2020.sankeylectures.ca)

Generously sponsored by  
 Grand Lodge of A.F. & A.M. of Canada in the Province of Ontario

**Lecturer: Prof. Margaret C. Jacob, Department of  
History, University of California, Los Angeles**  
**Sunday, March 28, 2021 at 3 p.m. EST**  
JOIN US LIVE & ONLINE:  
<http://2021.sankeylectures.ca>

## Congratulation V.W. Bro. Art Moore

**Anc. Landmarks/Doric No. 654  
members and friends gather for a  
virtual presentation of 25 yr.  
Past Master Service Pin to  
V.W. Bro. Art W. Moore, 2021 02 23**



# Protocol and Etiquette

## SWORDS in a Craft Lodge

This P&E article is the sixth in a series intended to enhance the brethren's understanding of the common protocols associated with almost every lodge meeting..



## SWORDS AND SCABBARDS

- One authority describes a sword as a weapon with a long blade for cutting or thrusting, that is often used as a symbol of honour or authority.
- On the other hand, a scabbard is defined as a container for a sword and can hang from a belt.
- To complete the picture, a baldric is a belt worn over one shoulder and reaching down to the opposite hip; it is sometimes richly ornamented and used to carry a weapon, usually a sword.

Our rituals and protocols make no mention of, nor provision for a baldric, or a scabbard, or a sheath in which to contain a sword. It is the sword itself – indeed a “**drawn sword**” – on which we focus.

Thus the only reason why a Masonic Lodge may need to possess a scabbard is to protect the sword while the sword is being stored in its regalia cupboard. There is no need for a scabbard to ever be taken out of the cupboard and most definitely a scabbard should never be brought into the lodge room.

Finally, as the sword must remain unsheathed whilst the lodge is opened, the use of a baldric is totally unnecessary.

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT THE USE OF SWORDS IN A CRAFT LODGE

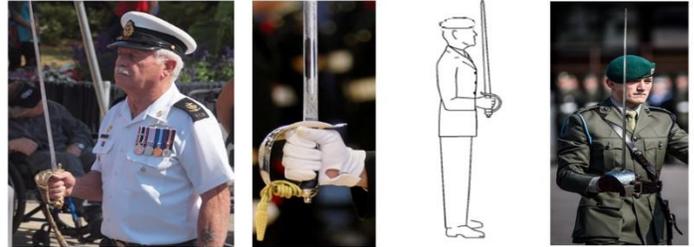
(Most of the following Qs & As are excerpts from our Grand Lodge's Questions & Answers Booklet)

1. **Q.** Does the I.G. carry the sword, (or wear a baldric holding it), while the lodge is open? (Q76, p. 19)

A. Neither the I.G. (nor the O.G.) should not wear a baldric, or place the sword in a scabbard, in the lodge room. When it is necessary for him to take up his sword, it is to be carried in his right hand and not placed in a baldric or a scabbard. (See the *Guidelines for Officers*, pp. 27-28, No. 3.)

2. **Q.** How should the I.G. carry the sword? (Q28, p. 36)

A. When carried, the sword must always be in an upright position in the R.H., with the elbow in to the side and the forearm parallel to the ground. (See the instructions in the *Ceremony of Installation*, pp. 115-116 and photos below.)



3. **Q.** When the Inner Guard and Tyler are invested, in which hand should the sword be placed? (Q26, p. 57)

A. The sword should be placed in the right hand of each of these officers, in the upright position.

4. **Q.** How do the I.G. and the T. salute when carrying the sword? (Q32, p. 57)

A. As described on pp. 115-116 of the *Ceremony of Installation & Investiture* book, the proper way to salute when carrying a sword is to:

- Transfer the sword to the L.H. in the upright position.
- Take the step of an E.A.
- Salute, then return the R.H. to the side.
- Change back from the step.
- Return the sword to the R.H. in the upright position.

5. **Q.** When is a salute required whilst carrying a sword? (C. of I., p. 116)

A. The only times when a salute is required whilst the sword is being carried are:

- After the I.G. and the T. have been invested and before they are escorted to their chairs.
- After the T. has been conducted to the A., before he is allowed to retire.

6. **Q.** When does the I.G. actually use his sword?

A. It is quite UNNECESSARY for the I.G. to have the sword in hand for openings, closings and admissions of members and visitors. The sword ought to be taken in hand ONLY when the W.M. directs that the candidate be admitted in the E.A.D. (See the *Guidelines for Officers*, pp. 27-28, No. 3)

7. **Q.** When does the I.G. not carry his sword to the anteroom door? (Q77, p. 19)

A. See the *Guidelines for Officers*, p. 22, No. 1 and pp. 27-28, No. 3.

8. **Q.** How should the I.G. present the sword to the Worshipful Master during the floor work? (Q29, p. 27)

A. The sword is handed over with the hilt resting on the L. forearm, so that the recipient can grasp the hilt. (See the *Guidelines for Officers*, p. 17, No. 7.)

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

# Labour in Masonry: Relationships

*The Chronicle continues our series revealing the various aspects of labour. This is the third article on the different types of labour. This month's focus is on relationships. This series is about exoteric Masonry as applied to the concept of labour/work.*

In this article, we take self-labour as the launching point to explore the further work necessary to develop successful relationships. No one can be truly self-sufficient in the strict sense of the word – we are living creatures that are dependent on other living and non-living organisms in order to live. The air we breathe, the keyboard I type this article on, the food we eat, and our friends and loved ones. Successful relationships require harmony and balance; a reciprocal exchange of giving, taking, supporting and relying. This interpenetrative relationship is expressed pictorially in the Tao – the yin within the yang, and the yang within the yin. Successful relationships will tend towards the mean.

The overwhelming labour of relationships in Masonry is encapsulated in the three fundamental principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. Brotherly love is to view the interests of your brethren as inseparable from your own, relief is to provide assistance to a brother in need, and truth is to apprise your brother of approaching danger or to reward his industry. All three of these aspects combine to reinforce that the needs of our immediate brethren are the same as ours – we all want to be happy and flourish.

In the first few questions posed to the candidate in the Initiation phase, he is asked if sincerely wishes to render himself more extensively serviceable to his fellow creatures. This notion of service is indelibly connected with the supreme value of Freemasonry – charity. To be blunt and short, charity is not philanthropy – there are societies and organizations to donate money to others, but charity in a Masonic sense has to be rendered more inclusively. In the context of a relationship, the charitable Mason makes every stride toward rendering himself serviceable to his compatriot, spouse, child, or parent, but not without prudence and not without an important understanding of truth among the Mason and the other.

As such, we have to consider what our 'duty' is to each other. This philosophy has been espoused and propagated at length in an Eastern context through the strict bonds of obligation established in Confucianism and the doctrine of 'dharma' in Indic religious traditions. Duty is complicated, and as such, overlapping relationships can come into conflict with each other. The Mason that wants to delve deeper into understanding his role in relationships will frequently assess the strength of his ties to kin, friends, coworkers and brethren.

Our shared ancestors noted the importance of relationships and the effect on the lodge when they mentioned how personal piques and quarrels can affect the harmonious nature of a Masonic meeting. Instead of ignoring the situation, we have clear instruction to have a brother "invite him to withdraw, in

order that you may endeavour to settle your differences amicably". This sentiment is also reiterated in the charge for us to "cultivate harmony, practise charity, and live in peace with all men", and the duty we have to our neighbour – to "[act] with him on the square, [render] to him every kind office which justice or mercy may require, [relieve] his distresses, [soothe] his afflictions, and by doing to him as in similar cases you would wish he should do unto you". A prominent part of the third degree focuses on the duties that we have to our brethren in both our actions as well as our words, and that as Master Masons, we should "afford assistance and instruction to [our] brethren in the inferior degrees".

In short, the essential work in a relationship is an extension of self-work since it comes from your end! In your capacity for action, you **interpret** the words and actions of others in a charitable light, put positive **intent** into what you do, and consequently **interact** accordingly with your own words and actions. In a relationship, you need to consider all three of these aspects simultaneously and strive for harmony and balance with your fellow man moving ever in the direction of compassion and truth. After you have developed yourself sufficiently, you will begin to develop an appreciation for the unfolding of a fruitful relationship and the resulting shared reciprocal joy. However, if you find yourself in a discordant situation, you must engage in the process of mediation, whether this results in an outcome of reconciliation or mutual disagreement.

**Submitted by Bro. James Lannigan  
Temple Lodge No. 324**



## Masonic Education

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

**Effaced** "Rhymes with" deface; and doesn't quite mean that. The Mason on his journey is reminded of an earlier lecture, with the hope that he hasn't forgotten that lesson because Masonry is a progressive science. Something that is effaced has been removed, or obliterated, or erased, or worst of all: forgotten. Our lessons are portrayed with drama to make an impression not only on the mind of the initiate, but on the mind of every Mason, so each of us can learn to apply the lessons throughout our lives.

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

**W. Bro. Marshall Kern**, F.C.F., Librarian & Historian.  
Blog: <https://masteremblem.com/masonic-definitions/>



From the January 2017 Chronicle edition  
archived on the Hamilton District C Website



## “What will the Lodges in the future look like.”

What will the lodges of the future look like? Will they be dining clubs? Community service groups? Esoteric associations? Whatever they will be, Freemasonry will undoubtedly be smaller – fewer members in fewer lodges. This is not your typical gloom and doom prediction. It is the natural cycle which we have seen time and again throughout our history.

Lodges have always been formed and closed as needs and circumstances dictate. A group would form in an area of economic growth, work while that area was prosperous, and then when the men left that area, it would close. That is surely how the operative lodges building cathedrals worked. When the cathedral was completed, the lodge would disband.

The Premier Grand Lodge was founded by four London lodges in 1717. By 1725 they had over sixty lodges, by 1730 a hundred, and by 1740 over two hundred. But by 1750 about a quarter of the London lodges had been expelled or erased from the register.<sup>i</sup>

Still others seceded and joined the rival “Antients” Grand Lodge after it was formed in 1751. They sought a form of Freemasonry that, at least in rhetoric, returned to the older practices which had stirred the founders.

But Antients lodges went dark too. The Antients’ practice was to re-assign the numbers of lodges that had closed to new lodges. Between 1751 and 1813 they did this 510 times!<sup>ii</sup>

The Union of the Antients and the Moderns in 1813 is held as a triumph for the Craft, but over the first thirty years of the United Grand Lodge of England, the number of lodges declined by a sixth. Fifty-nine lodges were erased in 1828 alone for not making returns. And no new lodges were warranted in London between 1813 and 1839 – twenty-six years!<sup>iii</sup>

During the French Revolution, Freemasonry almost disappeared from France.<sup>iv</sup> And edicts of Popes, Kings, and

Emperors suppressed Masonry at various times, from Portugal to Russia.<sup>v</sup>

The fall-out of the Morgan Affair decimated Freemasonry in the United States. By 1837 almost two-thirds of the lodges in Indiana had closed. Only twenty-six lodges sent representatives to the annual communication of the Grand Lodge of New York

that year. Illinois, Michigan and Vermont didn’t even hold sessions.<sup>vi</sup>

Whether as a result of the issues in England, or those in the U.S., even in Canada membership declined. Of the twenty-six lodges listed on the Provincial Register of Upper Canada in 1829, eighteen became dormant within the next decade.<sup>vii</sup>

But Freemasonry rebounded in all of these jurisdictions. And then declined and rebounded again.

As R.W. Bro. James W. Daniel, Past Grand Secretary of the United Grand Lodge of England, has said:

“Lodges come and go. They always have, because they are essentially groups of friends. Sometimes those friends almost isolate themselves and they do not bring in the next generation. Then the lodge will die. It is a matter of regret, but everybody dies. Even Grand Secretaries die. They are human. Lodges must not be kept alive unnaturally. One of the great things about Freemasonry is that basic units are allowed to die gracefully and new units are born as friends fall out and go on to form another lodge. It is a fantastic organization we have which allows this to happen and the organization goes on. It is like an amoeba. We get worried about retention rates. We did some research into the 1880’s, one of the high eras of Freemasonry. Then, the average age of a lodge before it dies was only 15 years. And we think we have problems today.”<sup>viii</sup>

There is no question but that we in Ontario have been in a period of declining membership. Twenty-five years ago we had 91,000 members in 653 lodges.<sup>ix</sup> Now we have 37,000 in 540 lodges.<sup>x</sup> Apart from the total decline, notice what that has done to *lodge* membership. In 1989 we had an average of 139 members per lodge, now it’s only 69. Given that less than a quarter of the members usually attend a given meeting, some lodges are having trouble getting enough out to open lodge.

Some lodges will go dark, other will amalgamate. Surprisingly we have found that we actually retain more members if a lodge goes dark than if it amalgamates. I think this is because, when his lodge goes dark, a brother is empowered to find a new lodge where he fits in and likes what they are doing.

Having fewer lodges is not always a bad thing. The remaining lodges end up with a larger number of active members, so that they have the critical mass to do things. There is less recycling of line officers and Worshipful Masters, leading to a more enthusiastic governance. The brethren who previously had affiliated with several marginal lodges to keep them alive have fewer mundane meetings to attend and therefore more time and energy to devote to successful projects.

Why do we obsess about numbers? Why do we so desperately want new members? Are we driven by a burning desire to improve men and society by sharing the philosophy of Freemasonry? Or are we pre-occupied with paying for the upkeep of our crumbling buildings? Perhaps we should we rename ourselves the Architectural Preservation Society.

What harm can focusing on numbers do? It might lead to accepting a candidate we shouldn’t, because we need his

money! We might focus our time and effort on recruiting new members, rather than developing the members we already have (and then they, of course, will leave, leaving us just as desperate.) We talk about how things were in the good old days when our temples were overflowing, but who wants to join a group that continually says “We used to be great.”?

And measuring a lodge’s health by its size is not a valid method. Some small lodges are quite healthy thank-you. Some even purposely limit their size to a small number.

Grand Lodge focusses on this decrease in numbers and feels it needs to help, so it develops programs to increase membership. But as R.W. Bro. Russell Staye, a Past Provincial Grand Master of the Orange Order, and a Past District Deputy Grand Master in our Grand Jurisdiction, said in a speech distilled from his observations of both organizations:

“What follows is what I think of as a period of what I refer to as 1960’s solutions. Essentially programmes consisting of structured social events, the belief that if only you can train the member to do everything the “right way” all may yet be well, and the desire to engage in events to present the organization to the public in a favourable light.

However well-intentioned these ideas are, they actually create stress upon the membership. Because the numbers are not what they once were, but the quantity and scope of initiatives has increased, those dedicated brethren who remain bear an ever increasing load of responsibilities.

This in turn may, and often does lead to a disconnection between the leadership of Grand Lodge and the membership. This occurs in main because the leaders continue to seek new ways to rehabilitate the order, while the brethren already burdened with more work attempt to rationalize doing more with less, with the fact that the numbers are not rebounding.

Structurally while dues received fall with the roll numbers operating expenses never do. This offers the classic dilemma of maintaining revenue though fee increases or cutting expenses. On a local level this may lead to lodges combining into one hall, raising dues, or even going into darkness.

Either choice has its pitfalls – increased dues puts a certain stress on individuals. Cutting expenses leads to a greater sense of retreat, and a pervasive feeling that the best days are past.”<sup>xi</sup>

So what can we do? As Grand Lodges, we need to stop making more and more programs to rescue lodges. Instead, we need to empower individual lodges to look at their unique situations and make the changes they need to thrive.

Let them adopt an Observant model if they wish. Allow lodges to meet in undedicated rooms, so they can sell their millstone of a building and instead rent a room once a month in a multi-use facility. (I favour a room in a hotel, or a tavern - that seems to have a precedent!) Let them know they can change their bylaws so they meet less often. Then their meetings could be more elaborate, perhaps with proper festive boards, so they become events to look forward to. Let them focus on mentoring, or education, or mysticism – whatever it is they want their lodge to be. But above all, encourage them to strive for excellence in whatever they choose for themselves.

Many a present-day Mason thinks Grand Lodge will not let them explore these options, so we have to give them *permission*. And some ideas of where to start their thinking, like the ones mentioned above. As long as they don’t alter the Ritual or the Landmarks, they’re open for discussion. The funny thing is that none of the above is an innovation. They are all things that Masons have done in the past!

What will the lodges of the future look like? Certainly there will be fewer of them, but the ones that are there will be vibrant. Personally I hope some look like the Lodge at the Goose and Gridiron.

**David J. Cameron,**



<sup>vii</sup> McLeod, Wallace, Ed., *Whence Come We? Freemasonry in Ontario 1764-1980*, Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, 1980, p. 53

<sup>viii</sup> Daniel, James W., *Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario, 2001*, p. 236

<sup>ix</sup> *Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario, 1990*, p.75

<sup>x</sup> from data compiled by M.W. Bro Terence Shand, Grand Secretary of The Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario

<sup>xi</sup> Staye, Russell, “Masonry in the Round”, a speech given in 2010 in Ottawa, Canada

<sup>ii</sup> Kearsley, Mike, *The Prestonian Lecture for 2014: 1814 – Consolidation and Change. The First Year of the United Grand Lodge of England*, Carrfields Publications, Nottingham, U.K., 2013, p. 53

<sup>iii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54

<sup>iv</sup> Beresiner, Yasha, “A French Masonic Certificate & Associated Personalities” *The Journal of The Masonic Society, Issue 26*, Indianapolis, IN, U.S.A., Fall 2014, p.31

<sup>v</sup> Rebold, Emmanuel, Brennan, J. Fletcher, trans., *A General History of Free-Masonry in Europe*, American Masonic Publishing Assoc., Cincinnati, OH, U.S.A., 1869, pp. 113 - 154

<sup>vi</sup> Bullock, Steven, *Revolutionary Brotherhood: Freemasonry and the Transformation of the American Social Order, 1730-1840*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, N.C., U.S.A., 1996, p. 282

## IN MEMORIAM

first Initiated Mason in 2020.

**Bro. Jeremy Woodland**  
Harodim Lodges No. 513

Initiated: January 23, 2020

*Passed to the Grand Lodge Above February 11, 2021*

**In Life Respected, In Death Regretted.  
We Will cherish him in our hearts forever.**

## Whose Email Is It Anyway?

It used to be, in the pre-digital era, that every summons, minutes and correspondence happened on paper. Secretaries used to have big boxes of documents inherited from previous secretaries, and preserving the lodge's past was their duty, together with the lodge archivist and historian... if they existed. (In many places these are just nominal offices)

Yes, sometimes fires or flood or other natural calamities destroyed the documents of the past, however, on this continent the Fate was merciful, and our archives are extensive – even if not organized and ready for systematic research.

Then email took the place of snail mail and suddenly every (or almost every) document is digital, with the good and bad sides of this development. It is not my intention to debate on either side when it comes preserving our Masonic past in digital format. Communication and availability of the documents not only makes our lives more comfortable but also speeds up the communication process and provides a handy tool for the present and future researchers. There is a small issue I would like the reader to think of – the one formulated in the title of this article. Most lodge secretaries and functionaries send out lodge correspondence via their own personal email. So, what's the big deal? – you may ask.

Well, imagine the following simple scenarios: ABC is the secretary of the Imaginary Lodge and using his personal email, where he also receives messages from his darling working temporarily in another province, from his extended family around the globe... and reminders of unpaid bills. Then ABC is hit by a truck and you must take over the lodge's correspondence. What do you do? Or XYZ is an aging secretary and in his personal email box he has over 40,000 email messages, everything with pictures from his niece's graduation and first child to long exchange of letters about his ailing great uncle, and CRA messages and tax filings from his accountant. When he steps down, and we all know that every secretary will step down one day... how will he be able to "hand over" the archives of the lodge correspondence to the next secretary? Or all that just will be considered "lost" and the new secretary will start from zero, without any continuity?

Even though the solution is simple, many secretaries are reluctant to change their habits. And it would be really simple:

today it is easy to set up free email accounts with various service providers. Create an account for **secretaryimaginarylodge@your.favourite.ca** and share the password with one or two leaders of the lodge (just in case), e.g., the WM and the Treasurer or the SW or the Historian...

Just don't use an email that is tied to your present IPS, like cogeco or rogers or bell. One day, when you get fed up with them and you'll change provider, the lodge would lose all its past. Or are you going to print out hundreds of emails? (Which would defy the idea of digital archives)

Grand Lodge has recommended that each lodge have a dedicated email address used by its officers, regardless of the annual rotation (which is another anomaly but that's for another paper). Lodges should discuss this at their next CoGP meeting.

**Submitted by W.Bro. István Horváth**

## From the Editor

Brethren,

February leaving on a mild note, after so much snow. Now March creeping in like a wet lamb, I can smell the wool!..or maybe mud from the backyard.

This edition has updates from Grand Lodge on e-voting, temporary Covid-19 rules, increasing costs, and more virtual meetings. *Our District forum is hosting the Grand Master this Wednesday March 3<sup>rd</sup>, so please plan to attend.*

More interesting content on the nature of Labour from Bro. James Lannigan on Labour. Delving the archives for a speech that supports what future lodges will look like. Submissions from our regulars R.W. Bro Crutcher and W.Bro Kern and a new one from W.Bro. Horvath.

Wednesday March 17<sup>th</sup>, St. Paddy's Day, hoping for quick vaccinations so we can all get together again soon.

I read this in Saturday's Spectator, ...a life of purpose and meaning is filled with laughter and levity... In my opinion this is why so many masons I know smile so much.

Be well, and be Safe.

S&F, Glen



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