

From the Editor

The lead article this issue deals with balloting. There is the old saw about the old mason coming to the altar to vote and looking up at the WM states in a loud voice, "WM, I can't vote. All the black balls have been used!" Now we all know the lecture that accompanies the balloting process and the admonition to vote for the good of Masonry and as our conscience demands. However, what are you to do if coming to the ballot box you find that all the black cubes or balls have been used and you had decided to vote in the negative? In our Jurisdiction we vote at the altar but in New Brunswick I saw a ballot taken in a different way. Each member of the lodge eligible to vote was given a black and white ball. The ballot box had two openings. one for each hand. The Senior Deacon carried the box to every member who placed both hands into the ballot box. The voting ball was to be held in the right hand and the left hand discarded the other ball into a separate partition. This way every member has a real vote. Even in our Jurisdiction there should be the same number of black and white balls available for each vote. To be clear, if the sponsor(s) of the applicant are recommending the applicant knowing him and the lodge to be a good fit, and the investigation committee has done its job properly, and each member of there lodge has, for the good of the Craft, reported any valid reason why the individual should not be accepted, the results of the ballot should be a forgone conclusion.

Last issue asked if you knew where to see this photograph each week on the TV. The answer is "The Big Bang Theory". It is part of the montage of photographs that make up the opening credits.



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Freemasonry is "veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols" because these are the surest way by which moral and ethical truths may be taught. It is not only with the brain and with the mind that the initiate must take Freemasonry but also with the heart.

C.H. Claudy



THE GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE

Brethren,

Another new calendar year is upon us and I hope everyone has had a great Holiday Season and are well rested for the remainder of the Masonic year. I have just returned from the Annual Feast of St. John the Evangelist and the installation of the 2015 Grand Lodge Officers at the Grand lodge of Massachusetts. I came away from that session feeling very upbeat. The things I heard from most of the Grand Masters in attendance is that for the most part they are struggling with retention in their Lodges and they are looking at education in the Lodges as a means of dealing with this issue. The reason I am elated upon my return from this event is that during my travels to our Lodges over the last seven months I have been witnessing fantastic education programs in the majority of the Lodges and it appears that Freemasonry in Nova Scotia is on a rebound.

We have to remember that Masonry has many meanings and purposes to our Brothers. For some, the simple experience of becoming a Mason and counted as an accepted member of this honorable organization is the capstone of their desire. Still others take pleasure in teaching the history, meaning and purpose of our Great Organization to those that seek further Light. And for some Brothers, involvement — to whatever degree — gives them pleasure.

Certainly Masonry has many meanings, many purposes for all of us, the occasion for fraternity and Brotherly love, a chance to be charitable to the needy, and the opportunity to improve the life of another. Whatever our reason for becoming a Mason, we all want to benefit from attending Lodge so let's make our meetings meaningful and interesting. One of the Grand Masters in Boston made the following analogy, we all like sausages but very few of us would enjoy the process of seeing how they are made. Let's keep the mundane business portions of our meetings as brief as possible and fill the night with education and social activities.

In this coming year, let us guide those who desire admission, serving as a faithful and trusted Companion. Let us teach those willing to learn, so that they might do the same for another. And let us participate and lead those who look to us, so that they might follow in our footsteps and later seek our counsel.

Sincerely & Fraternaly,

Paul Frank
Grand Master





Most Worshipful Brother Arthur Stanley Brown, Grand Master 2000-2001

Most Worshipful Brother Arthur S. Brown was borne in Pictou County in 1937. He spent the majority of his formative years in Hopewell.

He attended school in Oxford, Cumberland County and Hopewell until entering the Royal Canadian Navy in 1954, where he completed the remainder of his academic education, up to and including College level courses.

On his return from Egypt in 1957 he met Evelyn Leil whom he married in 1958. They have one son James Kimberley (Kim) who is presently a member of Eastern Star Lodge No. 51.

In 1978, Brother Brown left the Navy and joined Canada Post as a member of the project team building the Almon Street Postal Plant in Halifax.

There he was responsible for the installation, set-to-work and acceptance of all mechanical, electromechanical and computer equipment related to the processing of mail.

He remained there as Superintendent of Maintenance, responsible for all technical support, until 1983, when he was promoted to the position of Manager Maintenance Engineering, for the technical support in the Atlantic Region. He also participated in various projects in Ottawa over the term, until his retirement in 1990.

In 1967, Bro. Brown was raised as a Master Mason in The Lodge of St. Mark No. 38 at Halifax Nova Scotia in June of that year. He became Master in 1975. In 1991, after retiring he started as Junior Warden, progressing again to Master 1993. He was Chairman of the Lodge Ritual Committee for over twenty years and was Historian of "The Lodge" for a number of years.

In 1994 he petitioned Curren Lodge No. 68 for affiliated membership and was accepted.

He was Grand Representative to Sweden for several years and presently held the Commission as Grand Representative to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

He served the positions of Grand Steward - 1994-95; District Deputy Grand Master for Second Halifax City District in 1996-97. In 1997 he was elected as Junior Grand Warden and progressed to Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia, being installed in June of 2000.

As Deputy Grand Master he served as Chairman of the Board of General Purposes and has been a member of all Committees of the Board, serving on the Long Range Planning Committee since its inception in 1994.

He was a member of the Scottish Rite since 1976, a member of Philae Temple A.A.O.N.M.S. since 1977, a member of the U.C.C. of E.

In 1997 he was inducted as a member of the Royal Order of Scotland.

Brother Brown was an Ordinary member of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 160 and a Life member of the Chiefs and Petty Officers Association (Atlantic).

Brother Brown was a member of Iona Presbyterian Church in Dartmouth, where he served as an Elder for a number of years.

Most Worshipful Brother Arthur Stanley Brown passed to the Grand Lodge Above January 2, 2015. Masonic services were conducted in Iona Presbyterian Church in Dartmouth, NS on Monday, January 5, 2015 with funeral services being held on Tuesday, January 6, 2015.

May it be his portion to hear from Him who sittith as The Judge Supreme. Well done Thou Good and Faithful Servant.

THE BLACK BALL

“A WHITE ball elects, a black ball rejects.”

This, or some similar statement, is usually made at a lodge prior to voting on the application of one who would be an initiate of Freemasonry.

In all Jurisdictions in the United States, the ballot on an applicant is taken secretly—that is, with no brother knowing how another may vote. In most Jurisdictions it is an infraction of Masonic law—in all it is a serious infraction of Masonic ethics—to endeavour to ascertain how another brother will vote, or has voted on an applicant or to disclose how he voted or will vote. The “secrecy of the ballot” and the universal (in this country) requirements that a ballot be unanimous to elect are two of the greatest bulwarks of the Fraternity. Occasionally both the secrecy and the unanimity may seem to work a hardship on a man apparently worthy of being taken by the hand as a brother; but no human institution is perfect, and no human being acts always according to the best that is in him. The occasional failure of the system to work complete justice may be laid to the individuals using it and not to the Fraternity.

“Harmony being the strength and support of all well regulated institutions, especially this of ours.”

This phrase, or one similar, is familiar to all Masons. Harmony—oneness of mind, effort, ideas and ideals—is one of the foundations of Freemasonry. Anything which interferes with Harmony by so much hurts the Institution. Therefore it is essential that lodges have a harmonious membership; that no man be admitted to the Masonic home of any brother against his will. For this reason it is required that the names of applicants to a lodge be set before the entire membership, prior to a vote, that all may know that John Smith is to be balloted upon; that any who think him unfit timber for the lodge, or who have personal objections to entering into the sacred relation of brotherhood with him, may have the opportunity to say “No.”

The power thus put in the hands of the individual Master Mason is very great. No officer, not even the Grand Master, may inquire how we vote, or why we voted as we did. No Grand Master has the power to set aside the black cube we cast. If in the ballot box is a black cube, the applicant is

rejected. (In many Jurisdictions a single black cube in the ballot box requires the ballot to be taken again, immediately, to avoid the possibility of a mistake. If the black cube reappears the second time, the applicant is rejected.)

This rejection of an application does more than merely prevent the applicant from being given the degrees. It creates over the petitioner a lodge jurisdiction. He may not apply to another lodge for the degrees refused him by this one, without first securing from that lodge a waiver of jurisdiction. He may not again apply even to the lodge which rejected him until after a certain statutory period—usually six months. When his application is again received and brought up for ballot, the fact that he previously applied and was rejected is stated to the lodge. In other words, the casting of a black cube not only rejects for the degrees, but puts a certain disability upon the applicant which he is powerless to remove.

The brother who casts a ballot, then, upon an applicant, wields a tremendous power. Like most powers, it can be used well or ill. It may work harm, or good, not only upon him upon whom it is used, but to him who uses it. Unlike many great powers put into the hands of men, however, this one is not subject to review or control by any human agency. No king, prince, potentate; no law, custom or regulation; no Masonic brother or officer, can interfere with the individual’s use of his power.

For no one knows who uses the black cube. No one knows why one is cast. The individual brother and his God alone know. The very absence of any responsibility to man or authority is one of the reasons why the power should be used with intelligence, and only when, after solemn self-inquiry, the reason behind its use is found to be Masonic.

Any one can think of a hundred reasons why black cubes are cast. Our neighbour applies for the degrees. Outwardly he is an honest man of good character, bearing a good reputation. However, we have heard him quarrelling violently with his wife. We are morally sure that he struck her. We can’t prove it; the poor woman never said anything about it; she suffered the blow in silence

rather than endure the greater agony of publicity. It is not for us to have him arrested as a wife beater if his wife can stand him! But we don't want a coward, a bully in our lodge! Naturally—and most brethren will say properly—we cast the black cube. Our office associate wants to be a Mason. He applies to our lodge. As far as the investigating committee can ascertain he is a good man, honest, pays his debts, is a church member, a hard worker. But we have heard him repeat, to us and to others, matters which we know were given to him in confidence. We have learned to distrust his discretion. We don't believe that a promise means much to him. It may be, of course, that a Masonic obligation would be kept. But we are not sure. Naturally, we vote against him. Some men otherwise "good and true" are ill-natured, violent tempered, disagreeable. To admit them to our lodge might destroy its harmony of spirit. Others are vain and boastful, self-seeking, apt to bend every agency in which they come in contact to their own ends. We do not believe such a man will be an asset to our lodge. We keep him out.

A certain man is our personal enemy. The quarrel between us may have nothing to do with right and wrong; it may be the result merely of a life time of antagonism. He applies to our lodge. Our lodge is our Masonic home. We would not want this man in our family home; we do not think we will be happy with him in our Masonic home. It is our privilege to keep him out. These, and a thousand other good reasons, are all proper ones for the casting of a black cube. If the lodge might suffer, if we might suffer, if we know that our absent brother would suffer from the applicant being elected, we have the best of reasons for seeing that he is rejected. Such use of our power is proper, Masonic, ethical, wise, just.

But there is another side of the shield. Unfortunately, no hard and fast rule can be laid down. There is no way to explain "this is a good reason, but that is not a good reason" for casting a black cube. Each of us has to judge the reason for himself. Yet some suggestions may be given.

We know a man we dislike. He has different ideas from ours. He belongs to a different "set." He is not the type we admire. Our dislike does not amount to hatred, nor is it predicated upon any evil in the man's character. He and we are antipathetic; we rub each other the wrong way.

When he applies to our lodge we must decide this question: will the unpleasantness to us, in having him as a member, be greater than the good to him which may come from his reception of the Masonic teachings? Are we sure that we cannot accept him as a brother merely because we "have never liked him?" We all know cases like this; the president of the bank turns down Johnson's application for a second mortgage. Johnson makes the matter personal. He "has it in" for the president. The president applies for the degrees. Some one casts a black cube. It may, and may not, be Johnson. We don't know. But perhaps, later, we hear Johnson's boast "I got even with the son-of-a-gun who turned down my loan!" He doesn't say how he "got even," of course. But we are pretty sure we know.

Such a use of the black cube is, of course, utterly un-masonic. It is a misuse of a great power. As well turn down the minister of the Baptist church because he doesn't agree with our minister, who is a Methodist! As well turn down the automobile dealer because he refused to give us a larger allowance on our old car! Turning the Masonic black cube into a secret dagger for personal revenge is indefensible.

Freemasonry works some curious miracles. A self-made man applied five times for the degrees in a certain lodge. The man was rather ignorant, yet a commercial success. He had, literally, raised himself by his bootstraps from the poverty of the streets to a business position of some prominence. Yet he was rather raw, rough add ready, even uncouth. No shadow of personal unworthiness rested upon him; he was honest, upright, a good citizen. In this lodge a certain Past Master—as was discovered in after years—voted four times against this applicant. The Past Master left the city. On the fifth application the petitioner was elected. Something in Masonry took hold of his heart; through Masonry he was led to acquire some of the education he lacked; through Masonry he was led into the church. In time he made such a reputation for himself as a Mason that he was put in line, and finally achieved the solemn distinction of being made Master of his lodge. He is still regarded as one of the best, most constructive and ablest Masters that lodge has ever had.

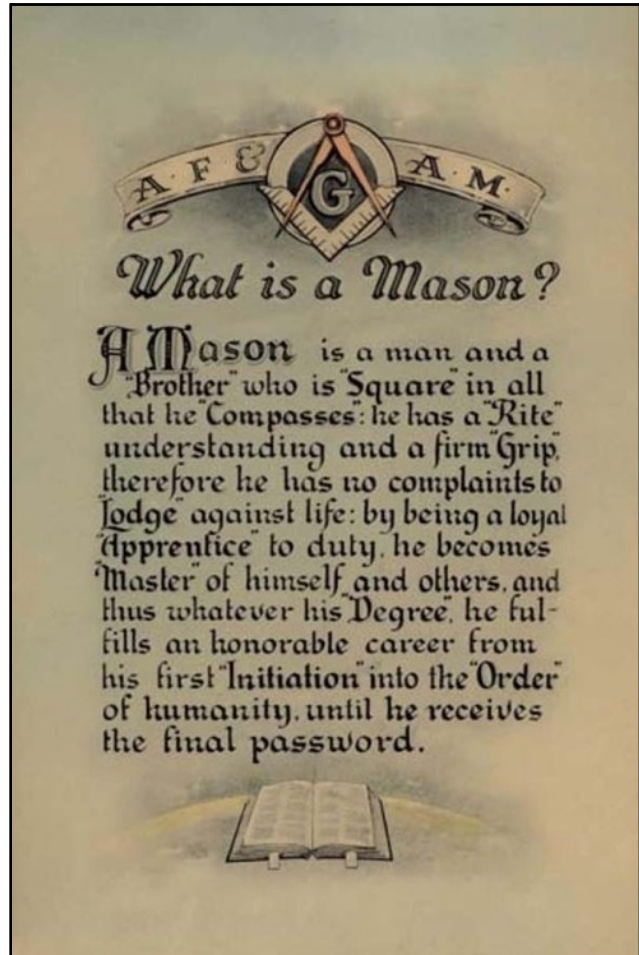
In the course of ten or twelve years the absent Past Master returned. In the light of history, he confessed (which strictly speaking he should not have done!) that it was he who had kept this man out for what he really believed were good reasons; he thought the “rough neck” would detract from the dignity and honor of the Fraternity. Yet this same “rough neck,” through Masonry, became educated, a good churchman, a fine Mason and an excellent officer. Had the Past Master whose black cube were cast with honest intention to benefit the Fraternity not left town, the blessings of Masonry might forever have been denied a heart ready to receive them, and society, lodge and church been prevented from having the services of a man who gave largely of himself to all three. The black cube is the great protection of the Fraternity; it permits the brother who does not desire to make public his secret knowledge to use that knowledge for the benefit of the Craft. It gives to all members the right to say who shall not become members of their lodge family. But at the same time it puts to the test the Masonic heart, and the personal honesty of every brother who deliberates on its use. The black cube is a thorough test of our understanding of the Masonic teaching of the cardinal virtue Justice, which “enables us to render to every man his just due without distinction.” We are taught of justice that “it should be the invariable practice of every Mason, never to deviate from the minutest principles thereof.”

Justice to the lodge requires us to cast the black cube on an applicant we believe to be unfit. Justice to ourselves requires that we cast the black cube on the application of the man we believe would destroy the harmony of our lodge.

Justice to the applicant—we are taught to render justice to every man, not merely to Masons—requires that no black cube be cast for little reasons, small reasons, mean reasons. And justice to justice requires that we think carefully, deliberate slowly, and act cautiously. No man will know what we do; no eye will see, save that All Seeing Eye which pervades the innermost recesses of our hearts, and will, so we are taught, reward us according to our merits.

Shakespeare said, “O, it is excellent to have a giant’s strength, but it is tyrannous to use it like a giant!”

The black cube is a giant’s strength to protect Freemasonry. Used thoughtlessly, carelessly, without Masonic reason, it crushes not only him at whom it is aimed but him who casts it. A well used black cube goes into the ballot. Ill used, it drops into the heart and blackens it.



He would not trust that secret to his best friend in Freemasonry, because he is aware that if his friend has not found it out, he could not make any use of it after it had been whispered in his ear. No, he keeps his peace, and the secret remains a secret.

Giovanni Giacomo Casanova,
Memoirs, Volume 2a, Paris, p. 33

A MASONIC SONG

It happened on a winter night,
And early in the season.
Some body said my bonny lad
Was gone to be a Mason.

I cried and wailed, but nought availed,
He put a forward face on.
And did avow that he was now
A Free Accepted Mason.

Still doubting if the fact was true,
He gave me demonstration;
For out he drew before my view
The Jewels of a Mason.

The Jewels all, baith great and small,
I viewed with admiration;
When he set his swage and drew his gauge,
I wondered at my Mason.

So pleased was I to see him ply
The tools of his vocation,
I beg'd for once he would dispense
And make a Maid a Mason.

Then round and round in mystic ground
He took the middle station,
And with halting pace he reached the place
Where I was made a Mason.

His compass stride he laid it wide,
I thought I guessed the reason.
But his mallet shaft it put me daft;
I longed to be a Mason.

Good plummets strong he downward hung
A noble jolly brace on;
And off a slant his broacher sent
And drove it like a Mason.

Then more and more the light did pour
With bright Illumination,
But when the grip he did me slip
I gloried in my Mason.

But the tempered steel began to fail,
Too soft for the occasion.
It melted lean he drove so keen,
My gallant noble Mason.

What farther passed is here locked fast,
I'm under obligation.
But fill to him, up to the brim,
Can make a Maid a Mason.

by Bro. Robert Burns



A Glimpse into the History of the GRAND LODGE OF NOVA SCOTIA 1966 - 2013

Part 4 of 5

by

Brian C. Loughnan,

PGH, PGL



CHAPTER IV

Board of General Purposes Formed - Warrants Retired

1996 -2005

The powers of the Grand Master are eroded and decision making takes a new direction. Lodges succumb to the apathy of members.

BOARD OF GENERAL PURPOSES

By constitutional amendment passed in 1995, a Board of General Purposes was created and held its inaugural meeting on July 8, 1995. Its early mandate was stated as :

- The Board of General Purposes shall be responsible for all matters concerning the operation of the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia.
- All committees shall be responsible to the Board of General Purposes for all matters concerning the operation of the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia.

Membership consisted of the Grand Master, all Past Grand Masters resident in the Province, all the line officers, Grand Treasurer, Grand Secretary, Grand Historian, Grand Lecturer, all District Deputy Grand Masters and one elected member from each District. The Deputy Grand Master assumed the role of Chairman of the Board each year. The total membership was approximately sixty members, but a quorum consisted of one third that number.

The various committees were made up of members of the Board with additional personnel recruited by virtue of their expertise in particular fields. Limitations were imposed on the length of service of the non-Board members of a committee.

The Board was required to meet as soon as practicable following the Annual Communication and met quarterly in the months of February, May, September and November, but could be convened at anytime by the Chairman.

Many of the committees under the control of the Board bore similar titles as they did previously, performed the same tasks and were expected to submit reports at meetings of the Board. The establishment of a Public Relations Committee was seen as an attempt to better communicate with the general public and manage any dealings with the electronic or print media concerning Grand Lodge affairs.

In the first year of operation the Board held six meetings, at locations in Windsor, Truro and Dartmouth.

By the second year of operation, the various committees had been sorted out and the Board began to function as intended. Thereafter, the Board endeavoured to meet quarterly. The Long Range Planning Committee was the largest committee of the Board and with an abundance of expertise proceeded to take on some ambitious projects. One important undertaking was the splitting of the existing Constitution into three parts, Constitution, Laws and Rules. Acceptance of the concept would place amendment of the Laws and Rules in the realm of the Board of General Purposes. (See the section "Constitution Amendments" of this chapter).

As the years passed, the impetus that had been so evident at the start began to wane, the Long Range Planning Committee began to address issues that were more ambitious and too demanding of time and commitment and may even have been inappropriate, given the fact that some

Board members served only one year terms.

GRAND LODGE OFFICE OPERATIONS

Grand Secretary Robert Northup, in his first year on the job, was determined to get a firm grasp on the Grand Lodge membership data base and was able to announce that major advances had been made and fewer corrections had been necessary. The impact of new computer systems enabled more work to be accomplished in house, resulting in a monetary saving to the Grand Lodge. Even the system of handling of supplies had been greatly improved.

Cleaning of the Grand Lodge vault was undertaken by volunteers from Burns Lodge, No. 10, and Robert Walker of Eastern Star Lodge, No. 51, helped out in the office by updating the Grand Register.

Both computer hardware and software were updated on an on-going basis in the Grand Lodge office to maximize efficiency, as evident from the Grand Secretary's Annual Reports over this time period.

At the direction of the Board of General Purposes, the Grand Secretary conducted four Secretaries' Workshops at the following locations:

- Baddeck Masonic Hall, April, 17, 1999.
- Tri-Lodges Masonic Hall, New Glasgow, October 30, 1999.
- Sackville Lodge Hall, Lower Sackville, April 17, 2001.
- Howard Johnson Motor Inn, Truro, April 20, 2002.

An Administrative Workshop for senior lodge officers was conducted at the Howard Johnson Motor Inn, in Truro, on April 26, 2003. All of these workshops were well received.

Prior to 1996, the Grand lodge Library had more or less functioned as a responsibility of the Advisory Board and, due to its access through the Grand Lodge office, an element of responsibility also lay with the Grand Secretary. In addition, the Grand Historian had a distinct interest, especially in the preservation of old and valuable books. Therefore, the Board of General Purposes made a logical decision in 1997, when it formed a Library Committee under the chairmanship of the Grand Historian, with the Grand Secretary and George

Robinson (who had devoted so much time to the library) forming the remainder of the committee.

The library was painted and new shelving installed. Most of the books had been catalogued and entered in the database. The Committee had done a creditable job, but still sought volunteer assistance in the sorting and classification of material.

Sadly, George L. Robinson was called to the Grand Lodge Above soon after completing the cataloguing of the library holdings, a project he had laboured so hard to complete.

Museum artifacts, placed in suitable display cases, were located in the same area as the library for all to see. However, additional work was required to properly identify many of the holdings.

The story of the development of the Grand Lodge Library and the associated museum had been one of great vision and good intention; but whenever the goal appeared within reach, it invariably slipped away. Even after the great work of George Robinson, the lack of a dedicated custodian to continue the essential library cataloguing on a regular basis, resulted in deterioration of the resource in a few short years. The library was destined to face even more upheaval in the coming years.

FINANCIAL SITUATION

The Grand Lodge entered this period with expenses exceeding revenue. With a much needed increase in per capita assessment in place, the finances could now be expected to be manageable. Salaries of the office staff had been frozen since 1993 and belt tightening had been the order of the day for some time.

On a brighter note, the Capital Fund finally attained the \$100,000 target on May 31, 1996. In accordance with the Constitution, after a period of twenty four months had elapsed, 80% of the earned income became available for Grand Lodge purposes.

Office staff in the past had not been in the employ of Grand Lodge for extended periods of time and no provision for a retirement pension fund had ever been made. Miss Ardith Pye, on the other hand, had been employed for over twenty five years and was nearing retirement age. The Finance Committee recommended that the useable portion of earned income from the Capital

useable portion of earned income from the Capital Fund be allocated as a Staff Retirement Reserve. The recommendation was duly approved by the Board of General Purposes and the first steps were taken to set up a suitable staff retirement fund. To bolster the fledgling reserve, large amounts were transferred from the operating account.

In response to concern regarding the manner of calculating the per capita assessment based on December 31, 1994, membership levels, a motion, supported by the Finance Committee, was proposed to apply a new formula for the calculation. The motion was adopted at the Annual Communication, in 1998. Henceforth, the per capita assessment would be approved by the Board of General Purposes and no longer by motion at the Annual Communication. The rate would be obtained by dividing the total annual budget, as approved by the Board, by the total number of members on the lodge rolls at the end of the fiscal year preceding that for which the budget was approved. No longer could a disgruntled assembly at the Annual Communication reject a motion to ensure continuation of adequate revenue for the operation of the Grand Lodge. As part of the same motion described in the previous paragraph, the assessment for the Masonic Foundation remained and was lowered to \$3.00 for the year 1999 only. This assessment for the Foundation was completely removed by the year 2000 and thereafter the Foundation was supported by donations from other sources.

Annual Per Capita Assessments (formerly Annual Dues) 1996 - 2005

Year	Grand Lodge	Masonic Foundation
1996	\$16.00	\$5.00
1997	\$16.00	\$5.00
1998	\$16.00	\$5.00
1999	\$17.13	\$3.00
2000	\$19.00	
2001	\$19.44	
2002	\$20.48	
2003	\$21.24	
2004	\$22.08	
2005	\$23.05	

The practice of holding the Annual Communications of Grand Lodge at the Best Western Glengarry Hotel, in Truro, each year on a trial basis, had proved to be a financially sound

decision. Costs could be predicted with reasonable accuracy and a routine was soon established. In addition, the Dartmouth Masonic Centre generously contributed approximately \$2,000 each year to defray much of the costs of the Grand Master’s Reception.

With the operations of the former Freemasons’ Home no longer making fiscal demands on the Grand Lodge membership, Grand Treasurer Harold Crosby succeeded in bringing the finances of Grand Lodge under control through sound budgetary management and investment policies.

THE MASONIC FOUNDATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

The Masonic Foundation’s several programs for the most part increased in popularity, especially the Scholarship Program. On the other hand, the Drug Awareness Program never reached its expected potential and was discontinued.

The Foundation investigated other options that might provide worthwhile projects that could involve the participation of Masons throughout the entire jurisdiction. Thereby yielding the public awareness and promotion of the Fraternity that appeared to be generally lacking. One such charitable program was named “**The Masonic Outreach Program**”. It involved encouraging individual Masons to reach out to seniors and others in local communities. As it turned out, Masons were not inclined to bother with application forms to obtain a few dollars to assist with expenses to pay for acts of kindness they had provided freely in the past. Gratified that the spirit of Freemasonry was alive and well in Nova Scotia, the Foundation terminated the monetary incentive part of the program.

It came to the attention of the Foundation that the **Big Brothers/Big Sisters** organization was in financial difficulty. A one- time monetary donation made to the Halifax/Dartmouth Agency eased the problem and enabled the agency to continue its good work.

The Foundation undertook to sponsor another new program known as “**In School Mentoring Program**” run by nine agencies of the Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization. The extremely successful venture, in addition to aiding the children in the schools, brought favourable publicity to the Fraternity. Past Grand Master

Lawrin Armstrong, at the annual meeting of the organization, in Toronto, accepted on behalf of the Foundation, a crystal vase in recognition and appreciation of the leadership shown by the Freemasons of Nova Scotia in establishing the **“In School Mentoring Program”**.

The Foundation partnered with Cape Breton Centre Masonic District Association in funding the supply of school materials for under-privileged children through the **“Back to School Program”**, sponsored by “Every Woman’s Centre”, in 1998. Later, the Provincial Government provided aid to those families on provincial assistance, but left many other deserving families out in the cold. The latter group continued to be assisted through the **“Back to School Program”**.

To encourage lodges to participate in endeavours that would benefit the welfare of local communities and as a consequence raise the image of Freemasonry, the Foundation offered to share funding for approved projects for a one year duration. These were to be known as Joint Programs”. Initial response to the concept was slow in manifesting itself.¹

In 2004, the **Shared Funds Program** guidelines required that all applications be received by the Foundation prior to January 15. The amount of funding for each project was limited to the lesser of 50% of the project cost, or \$2,500. The guidelines would become more attractive in later years.

The **Nova Scotia Freemasons Scholarship Program** continued to be a source of pride to the Fraternity. In the year 2004, a total of 151 scholarships were awarded for a total value of \$93,300. Approximately one half of this figure was financed by the lodges, using the shared funding arrangement.

Benevolent assistance was still provided as required and remained an important function of the Foundation. It should be noted here that much of the funding for the Masonic Foundation came in the form of donations from funds of Freemasons’ Home, which was still in the process of winding down.²

MASONIC EDUCATION AND WORKSHOPS

In addition to the workshops conducted by the Grand Secretary, previously mentioned, workshops were held in various districts by the respective District Deputy Grand Masters. To improve the level of Masonic knowledge of new Masons, the Education Committee made an effort to produce a package of material to encourage self study. Whether because of a costing issue, or a lack of will to complete the project, the concept never really came to fruition.

Notwithstanding the numerous times annual reports had revealed the inability of many lodges to conduct meetings with acceptable decorum, the underlying causes still remained unaddressed. The Committee on the Condition of the Order, in 2005, placed responsibility squarely on the Education Committee and criticized the Board of General Purposes for not ensuring that the Committee was actively engaged in reversing the less than acceptable trend. Both the Education and the Ritual Committees were advised to take immediate steps to improve the level of the work.

The Board of General Purposes, in 1997, approved a **“Friend to Friend”** program, specifically written for use for Lodge Open Houses, Ladies Nights or for any similar events, with an adaptable format to fit the occasion. The program was based upon a program of the same name employed by the Grand Lodge of Canada in Ontario. The Board also approved purchase of 14 copies of a video produced by the Masonic Services Association for use with the program. District Deputy Grand Masters were encouraged to make the videos available to the lodges as required.

The Nova Scotia Freemason

After 1998, the Nova Scotia Freemason came under the control of the Public Relations Committee. A new printer had been located and 8,000 copies were expected to be produced four times a year. The editorial staff was headed by Lorne Urqhart. The committee proposed that the bulletin content should include information from the concordant bodies. A mailing data base was to be compiled from data provided by the secretaries of the several bodies and vetted to prevent duplication. The publication was to be expanded

to cover more than the four page editions of the past. The ambitious proposal, however, never came to fruition.

The Nova Scotia Freemason retained its Craft Masonry exclusivity and the cost of the printing was passed on to the constituent lodges by means of a 50 cent charge for every member of the lodge which was included as an item on the Annual Assessment invoice. This charge was discontinued as a direct billing after the 1999 Annual Assessment and was thereafter absorbed into the per capita assessment.

Grand Lodge Web Site

The Grand Lodge, with an eye to the future, recognized the value of the Internet as an alternative means of communicating with brethren throughout the Masonic world and its benefit as an aid to those searching the web for information concerning the Fraternity. The Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia went on line with a basic web page, in 1997, through the efforts of Thomas Trappenberg, who then immediately sought employment outside the country. When Victor Lewis returned to the area, he became involved in the development of the site and proceeded to transform the web site into an arguably enviable asset.

RITUAL AND CEREMONY

Certain amendments to the Constitution passed at the 1996 Annual Communication, or referred to the Ritual Committee for action, were important in as much as the ritual and ceremonial procedures now required revision to accommodate deviations from what had been the accepted practice.

A form of open installation of Grand Lodge Officers had been developed and employed since 1992. It wasn't surprising, therefore, that some Masons would seek to have the same privilege extended to constituent lodges. A motion to that effect, introduced in 1996, was initially tabled and then referred to the Ritual Committee to devise a suitable procedure for consideration at the next Annual Communication. The motion was accordingly lifted from the table the following year and, after a report from the Ritual Committee was read, the motion was put to a vote and promptly defeated.

Approval was finally granted, in 1996, to permit lodges to conduct business on any degree

except for the conferral of degrees and the instruction therein, at the discretion of the Master. Attendance at meetings would be limited to those who qualified in the degree on which the lodge was opened. Only Master Masons were permitted to vote on any subject. This bold initiative enabled newly initiated brethren to be present in lodge and promoted a feeling of belonging which had not been present under the previous arrangement. Suitable changes to the Authorized Work (Fourth Edition) in the form of appendices, reflected these modifications and were subsequently approved by the Board of General Purposes.

Efforts were directed towards preparation and publication of a Fifth Edition of the Authorized Work. After a lengthy period, the Fifth Edition was printed, in 2003, in a larger ring- binder form and separated into tabbed sections. The book was somewhat cumbersome and not readily carried in a suit coat pocket. To make matters worse, the content was rife with errors and not at all satisfactory.

It was felt there was a need for a Grand Lodge Standard to be carried at the head of all Grand Lodge processions. The office of Grand Standard Bearer was duly created at the Annual Communication, in 1997.

A competition, opened for submissions for the Grand Lodge Standard, attracted many excellent designs and the Grand Standards Committee, formed to review all entries, made the difficult choice of a winning design from Gregory Randall of Elmsdale Lodge. The findings of the Committee were officially adopted and Grand Master Sam Karrel proclaimed Gregory Randall to be the first Grand Standard Bearer of the Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia. The Grand Lodge Standard made its first appearance at the 1998 Annual Communication.

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS

The following motions of significance to amend the Constitution and not mentioned elsewhere in this chapter, are here simplified for brevity:

At the Annual Communication in 1996, a total of sixteen notices of motion to amend the Constitution were submitted. Many were of a minor nature and some were even withdrawn. Of interest was:

- A motion, presented on behalf of the Long Range

Planning Committee, to replace the section of the Constitution concerning the election of Grand Lodge Officers was intended to.... “change the process of electing the senior Grand Lodge Officers and give more members an opportunity to serve at that level.” The motion contained proposals that were not widely acceptable and failed to gain approval.

It had been suggested in the past, that a permanent and more central location be chosen to hold the Annual Communications of Grand Lodge. Although not an amendment to amend the Constitution, but more a resolution, the following amended motion was approved:

- “ That this Grand Lodge select a permanent, central location at which to hold its Annual Communication for a trial period of three years and that this central location be the Town of Truro. And further that this trial period commence no later than the Annual Communication of 1997 and reviewed after the three year period to determine whether the practice should continue or not.”

The year 1997 brought a further fourteen notices of motion to be dealt with. Of note were:

- Another motion to change the process of electing Grand Lodge Officers was presented in almost the same form as that of the year before. Again the motion was defeated.
- Grand Representative appointments may well be for life. Another attempt to limit appointments, this time to three year commissions, to provide opportunities for others to experience the honour of an appointment, was defeated.
- The Ancient Landmarks recognized by this jurisdiction are not those listed by Dr Albert Mackey. Confusion on this issue had persisted over the years. A motion was made to add an additional note in Chapter I of the Constitution that would remove any ambiguity. The motion was tabled for further study.
- Also approved was a motion to permit the Grand Master to appoint a Grand Parliamentarian to act as an advisor upon request, but who would take no active part in debate.

Following the tabling of the motion concerning Landmarks, the matter was placed in the hands of the Grand Lecturer and the Ritual Committee. The conclusion reached was that ambiguity did exist between the familiar Mackey listing of twenty five Landmarks and the nine Landmarks and Fundamental Principles recognized in Chapter I of the Constitution.

The Grand Lodge had repealed, in 1930, a requirement that Mackey’s Landmarks be read once a year in subordinate lodges. Yet confusion concerning the Landmarks persisted. To end the confusion, a motion was presented in 1998, which read as follows:

- “That Chapter IX, Part II, section 22 (c) be deleted.”

Explanatory note; Despite its intent, the presentation of this booklet has fostered a misunderstanding of what Landmarks are recognized by this jurisdiction. The motion failed to gain approval.

Also presented at the 1998 Annual Communication were the following:

- A motion to replace the existing ‘Secretaries Long Service Medal’ (which bore the seal of the Grand Lodge) with a jewel similar to that adopted for presentation to Treasurers for long service, was roundly defeated.
- A motion to establish an additional Board of General Purposes committee to be known as “ The General Arrangements Committee” to organize and oversee the Annual Communication of Grand Lodge was approved.

At the 1999 Annual Communication, the following were dealt with:

- A motion to permit Associate Secretaries to qualify for the Lodge Secretaries Long Service Medal was not approved.
- An attempt to extend lodge membership to Entered Apprentices was defeated.
- A motion to allow Master Masons to wear dress regalia at Masonic Funeral Services was not approved.
- Another motion to make all Master Masons members of Grand Lodge, while members in good standing in a lodge of this jurisdiction, failed to gain approval.

The Long Range Planning Committee on behalf of the Board of General Purposes introduced

motions at the 2000 Annual Communication that seriously impacted the Constitution:

- That the Constitution be split into three parts: Constitution, Laws and Rules. This motion was approved.
- The procedure for amending the Laws and the Rules to be by a two thirds majority of the Board of General Purposes members present and entitled to vote. The appeal processes were laid out in separate motions. Both were approved.

A test of the credibility of the Board of General Purposes to properly function in its capacity as the amending authority of the “Rules” occurred one year later, in 2002. The Grand Master of the day had let it be known that a secret vote was to be taken on an amendment that had not been properly handled from the start. The secret vote was taken and the amendment was declared approved. Certain members present at the time of the vote objected and brought the matter to the floor of the Annual Communication, seeking to have the Board decision set aside. The case was made to the members present and when the question was called, the motion was lost. It could not be denied, however, that the Board’s actions could be deemed improper.³

At the same Annual Communication, the sensitive issue of Grand Lodge membership was again raised in the following motion:

- The Grand Lodge shall consist of all members of this jurisdiction who have attained the Degree of Master Mason.....so long as they remain members in good standing of a lodge in this jurisdiction. The motion was hotly debated and failed to receive approval.

In 2003, an incident with regard to the election of an Elected Member to the Board of General Purposes made it necessary to lay down a suitable procedure to be followed for the selection of Elected Representatives. The new procedure, proposed as an amendment to the Constitution, was duly approved.⁴

DISTRICTS

District Deputy Grand Masters have been described as the eyes and ears of the Grand Master within their districts. If all District Deputies

performed their duties to the high standard expected of them, Grand Masters could rest assured that the jurisdiction was in safe hands. Much has been said about the questionable ability of some of the Grand Master’s representatives and critical comment has appeared in successive Condition of the Order Reports, based in part on the information contained in the District Deputy Grand Masters’ Reports. On the positive side, one such report, submitted by a dedicated representative of the Grand Master in Halifax County District, was so well written it was afterwards used as an example of how a District Report ought to be written.

The Long Range Planning Committee had been formed prior to the creation of the Board of General Purposes and sought ways to improve the selection process of District Deputy Grand Masters. The Committee completed a full rewrite of **Chapter V - District Deputy Grand Masters** and presented it as an amendment to the Constitution, in 1996. All the Committee’s hard work was dashed when the amendment failed to gain approval.

District Deputy Grand Master selection, in the majority of districts, continued to be a hit and miss process, at best. Therefore it was inevitable that poor candidates, virtually lacking in leadership skills, would find themselves at the helm, unable to steer a true course. The complaints continued to be registered and the cries for help were invariably lost in the wind. The only saving grace was the knowledge that there would be a new crewman on the wheel the following year!

The Board of General Purposes routinely went through the motions of updating the content of the one day school of instruction for new District Deputy Grand Masters and overlooked the lack of suitability of some of those appointed by incoming Grand Masters. In fairness, the declining membership resulted in a shallower pool, but this only emphasized the need to make absolutely certain the best man for the job was selected.

Many Committees on the Condition of the Order took great pains to record their findings and make the necessary recommendations; but the lack of action to resolve or even address their concerns at the Board level became extremely frustrating. Years would pass before any real attempt would be made to correct the situation.

The size of many districts and the distance travelled by District Deputy Grand Masters was a concern to some in the jurisdiction. In 1997, two motions to change the makeup of the districts in the Halifax area were presented. The first was a proposal to take all lodges in the Halifax Regional Municipality and divide them into four equal districts based on geographic location and distance between lodges. The concept was logically sound and the motion was tabled for further discussion within the impacted districts.

The second motion was concerned only with Halifax County District and would split the District into two districts, with all lodges east of and including those meeting in the Dartmouth Masonic Centre forming one district and the remainder forming the other. This particular motion was rejected.

Not daunted by the failure of the last motion, another was presented in 1998 to split the Halifax County District into two districts, having been found acceptable to the lodges of the existing district. Second Halifax County District would comprise all lodges in Dartmouth plus Timberlea and St. Margaret's Lodges. First Halifax County District would consist of all other lodges. This motion was duly approved.

SUBORDINATE LODGES

Nine lodges elected to surrender their warrants in the period 1996 - 2005:

Composite Lodge, No. 105, Halifax, 15 April 1998

Zarthan Lodge, No. 82, Pubnico, 21 December 1999

Scotia Lodge, No. 31, Yarmouth, 31 December 1999

Margaree Lodge, No. 100, Margaree Valley, 31 December 1999

Inverness Lodge, No. 83, Inverness, 31 December 1999

White Ensign Lodge, No. 129, Halifax, 31 December 1999

Acadia Lodge No. 14, Halifax, 31 December 2000

Dufferin Lodge, No. 89, Port Dufferin, 31 December 2001

Atlantic Lodge, No. 103, Halifax, 22 February 2003

University Lodge, No. 110, Halifax, 20 September 2005

The warrants of these lodges are considered "retired", but may be reactivated at some future date.

Freeport Lodge, No. 65, Freeport, was recognized as a 100 Year Lodge, in 2004.

Unity Lodge, No. 4, Lunenburg, celebrated its 175th Anniversary, in 1997.

The Saint Andrew's Lodge of Cape Breton, No. 7, Sydney, celebrated its 200th Anniversary, in 2000.

Loge La France, U.D., originally issued a dispensation in 1995 (see Chapter III), formally requested a warrant in March 1997. However, certain irregularities were found in the lodge books and records and the warrant was not granted. Indeed, the Lodge was informed that it would be necessary to start the whole process over again, providing certain recommendations were adhered to. A new dispensation was granted to Loge La France on January 31, 1998, and **Loge La France, No. 138**, was duly constituted and consecrated on November 12, 1999, by Grand Master Lloyd Blagdon, at Bible Hill.

Sackville Lodge, No. 137, purchased Faith United Church on Gloria Avenue, Lower Sackville, in December 1999, and proceeded to convert it to a suitable Lodge hall. The first meeting in the new building was held on September 11, 2000. The dedication ceremony was performed by Grand Master Arthur Brown on September 20, 2000.

Grand Master Tabor Caulier travelled to Yarmouth, on November 10, 2001, to dedicate the new Lodge hall of **Hiram Lodge, No. 12**. A large crowd was on hand to witness the occasion.

Truro Lodge, No. 43, and **Fellowship Lodge, No. 112**, founders of the Tru-Fel Building Society, constructed a handsome new building in Bible Hill. More than 200 Masons were present to observe Grand Master Tabor Caulier conduct a Cornerstone and Dedication Ceremony, on April 27, 2002.

GRAND MASTERS SUMMONED TO THE GRAND LODGE ABOVE 1996 - 2005

In the period covered by this chapter, six Past Grand Masters were summoned to the Grand Lodge Above:

Cyril Leroy Collins	GM 1982	Died 27 Dec. 1996
W. Everett Moseley	GM 1960-61	Died 26 Feb. 2000
James E. McNairn	GM 1992	Died 2 April 2002
D. Frank MacKay	GM 1993	Died 13 May 2004
James Roy Hale	GM 1987	Died 14 Dec. 2004
Earl M. Faulkner	GM 2002	Died 27 Mar. 2005

Past Grand Master W. Everett Moseley was still active in his mid-nineties and was often seen at Lodge Installation Ceremonies. He was well known for his ability to deliver the Ancient Charges to a Master-Elect entirely from memory.

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

Membership levels continued to decline at a rate of an average of 2% per year. The figures shown below are indicative of the actual single memberships at the end of each year. This figure became available owing to the improved capability of the membership data base. Figures shown in earlier years were not a true reflection of the actual single memberships and were always dependent on the accuracy of returns by Lodge Secretaries and indeed still are. The figures presented below may appear to lack credibility, but they have been calculated using the data provided by Lodge Secretaries. Several members did hold multiple memberships and many lodges relied on these members for their existence.

Membership totals (actual Masons) for the years 1996 - 2005 are shown below:

Year	Number of Lodges	Membership
1996	114	5,841
1997	114	5,834
1998	114	5,832
1999	114	5,723
2000	109	5,609
2001	108	5,489
2002	107	5,408
2003	106	5,285
2004	106	5,186
2005	106	5,079

NOVA SCOTIA FREEMASONS' HOME

Although the Home was no longer in existence and the lands were up for sale, the Administrator, Reginald Stone, faithfully visited the former residents, now dispersed from Windsor to Truro, to Halifax and down the Annapolis Valley. He made himself available to the administrators of the various homes to assist in any way possible. In 1996, there were fourteen former guests for whom the Masons of Nova Scotia were financially responsible.

The financial cost of supporting our former residents varied from location to location, and the income from the Endowment Fund was not always sufficient to cover these costs. Consequently, it was necessary to use a portion of the Fund capital to make up the shortfall.⁵ The Fund had been boosted by generous bequests and the favourable return on investments came as a result of a healthy investment climate.

By June 1999, there were still seven former residents being taken care of in five separate locations.

The per diem rates to maintain the Homes' former residents rose 20% in only two years and reflected the surge in nursing home costs and the care of the elderly in general.

Little or no interest had been shown after a few years in the lands of the former Home, listed for sale at \$400,000. The taxes on the property were approximately \$2,000 and insurance coverage cost an additional \$800. The property had become shabby. Several large trees had broken limbs and some of the older trees were dying. To remove what had become a stain on the reputation of Freemasons, the Home Administrator took action to have the property cleaned up and made presentable. The property was finally sold in November of 2000 for \$350,000, well below its valuation.

The **Assisted Housing Program**, set up in 1993 and first mentioned in Chapter III, had provided assistance since its inception. The extent of its assistance was improved upon and given increased exposure by means of the Grand Lodge web site and through District Deputy Grand Masters in their lodge visitations, in 2001. Despite these attempts to reach the members of the lodges, it was evident that many were totally unaware of the existence of the program. Earl

Banks, the Chairman of the Assisted Housing Committee, had taken great pains to personally visit lodges to extol the benefits of the program and impress upon the members the need to be vigilant of the situation and needs of elderly members and widows of departed brethren.

The total value of the Endowment Fund had risen slowly over the years and by 2003 had reached \$5,000,000. The Board of Trustees had periodically approved grants to the very successful Masonic Foundation Scholarship Program and in the year ending December 31, 2002, a grant of \$50,000 was made to the Masonic Foundation of Nova Scotia.

Two former residents, now housed in Dykeland Lodge in Windsor, were the last remaining Masonically sponsored residents at the end of the year 2005.

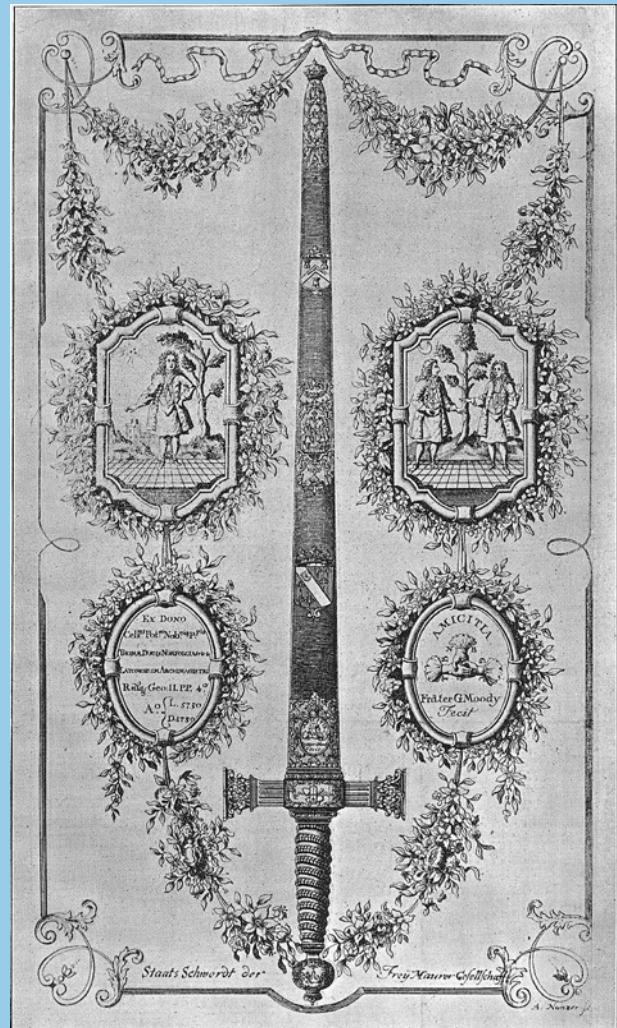
Further grants were made to the Masonic Foundation and an additional sum of \$50,000 was provided for the establishment of a Children's Learning Centre for dyslectic children. The Board of Trustees had managed the responsibility of their mandate in an exemplary manner and provided good management through a difficult period.

BROOM AND GAVEL COMPETITION

The Broom and Gavel Bonspiel continued to be held annually at Brookfield Sportsplex. The popularity of the event was very high during this period. As many as 114 Masons ventured onto the ice with every level of experience, but all with one aim, that of having fun and good fellowship. The number of sections had increased from 'A', 'B' and 'C', to 'A', 'B', 'C', 'D' and 'E'. Each section had a trophy with the runners-up also being recognized. The awards were presented at the banquet as usual on Sunday to conclude the weekend's events.

Notes

1. This program was probably the forerunner to the later "Shared Funds Program". **Proceedings** 1999, Pg.95.
2. See Nova Scotia Freemasons' Home Annual Report. **Proceedings** 2004 Pg. 94.
3. The preamble to this motion is compelling and convincing. **Proceedings** 2002, Pg. 37.
4. The procedure is here laid out. **Proceedings** 2003, Pg. 18.
5. In 1996, approximately \$29,000 was charged against the capital of the fund. **Proceedings** 1997, Pg. 105.



The Masonic Sword of State

Engraving by A. Nunzer, Nuremberg

Next Issue:

**The Sword in
the Craft**

JOHN ALBRO'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

This year our annual Christmas Party for 2014 was held at the Atlantica Hotel on Robie and Quinpool. What a great venue. All decorated for the season; lights, garland and a beautifully lit tree. But what makes a party, it's the people that make a party. In this case it was the brothers, and their wives, of John Albro who made it.

This year our Worshipful Master, Donald Doucette, added a new item to our monthly meetings. At the end he would ask a few brothers to stand up and talk about what Masonry means to them. Some great comments have come out of this. This new tradition was introduced to our Christmas Party. A few Ladies (wives of the brothers) were asked to say what it has meant to them. They did not disappoint. Everyone there was moved to tears and left laughing.

Look close at the Photos and you will see the parade of Christmas Neck Ties. Some might say thank god it's only once a year. Others will say finally I get to show off my Christmas Tie.

Music! This year's entertainment was special. The band was started by a couple of brothers; PM Jim Davison and Bro Andrew Granger. Their band, "Height Requirement", is an 80's cover band. And you know what? They are Good. No kidding, really good. Consider using them for your event, you won't be disappointed.

Our host and organizer was Pete Orser. He deserves a big "Job Well Done Brother". He was fabulous as a host. He even gave us a few laughs as he told a few masonic jokes throughout the evening. A Junior Warden usually falls flat on his face or rises to fame and fortune based on the success of the Christmas Party. Congratulations Pete. You did it. Another successful John Albro event. A big Thank You to all who attended.

Sid Chedrawe



MARKLAND LODGE CELEBRATES 80 YEARS



It is not often in that a Lodge of venerable age can have a slate of officers open the Lodge with all stations filled by members older than its age.

Recently Markland Lodge No.99 of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons celebrated its eightieth birthday at the Masonic Hall in Kingston. The Lodge offices, on that evening were all filled by members who were older than the Lodge itself.

The members filling the offices ranged in age from 80 to 86 years.

Officers in attached photo are,

Front Row L-R: Al Latham, Senior Warden, Bill Parks Worshipful Master, Doug MacKeil Senior Warden, Bob Cushing Tyler

Back Row L-R; George Leaman Marshal, Don McCoy Director of Ceremonies, Bruce Corkum Treasure, George Thompson Senior Deacon, Blair Williamson Secretary, Richard Coleman Junior Deacon, Dave Kennedy Immediate Pass Master.

W.Brother Bill Parks who filled the Masters seat is our oldest living Past Master.

Other Lodges from around the province were in attendance to help celebrate the occasion. During the meeting the members filling the offices told stories of their time in the Craft to the assembled Brothers shearing past activities of their Masonic careers much to the delight of those assembled.

A large birthday cake was cut and enjoyed by all after the ceremonies were finished.

Winston "Moose" Abbott, Historian of Markland Lodge #99.

GIFTS OF THE MAGI

“. . . and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.” (Matthew 21:11)

“A young man asks, ‘What will I receive from Freemasonry if I become a member? My father was a Mason, and I’d like to be, but I want to know what the Order has to offer me.’”

Freemasonry “offers” nothing. The petitioner requests; the Lodge may, or may not, give. But the question is entirely legitimate; any young man sufficiently thoughtful to want to know something of the Craft which he expresses a desire to join, is good material for a Lodge, and should receive a satisfying answer.

The first gift of Freemasonry is that of standing in the community. To pass the investigation of a competent committee, and the secret and unanimous ballot of a Lodge, is to be stamped with the earmark of a good character. Freemasons have an enviable reputation. To become one is to share in that reputation, since acceptance as a Freemason marks recognition of character by men well thought of in the community. Cicero said: “To disregard what the world thinks of us is not only arrogant, but utterly shameless.” If his Freemasonry makes the world think better of a man, it is worth all it may cost in time and effort.

The young man who becomes a Freemason has the privilege of giving charity and relief to those less fortunate, in a way which is beautiful, because it is secret and unselfish. Addison wrote:

“Charity is a virtue of the heart and not of the hands.” As all know who are concerned in Masonic charity, it is truly of the giving spirit.

The young Mason has also the privilege of receiving charity and relief for himself, should he need it. It is to be emphasized that Freemasonry is not primarily a charity and relief organization. These are incidental to her practice and a result of her teachings. No Freemason has a right to either, but he has certainty of receiving both, should he, or those dear to him, be in need.

This gift of the Craft makes a greater appeal to men as they grow older. To the young man just facing the world, with the future stretching hopefully before him, the possibility of needing the comfort of a hand on his shoulder, a check for a ton

of coal, a helping hand for a penniless widow, seem remote. But he receives the precious privilege of giving to those who have traveled further on life’s pathway.

Gifts of Freemasonry are the opportunities she provides for service other than charity; service in friendships, service to the ill, service to brethren in trouble, service to the Lodge. Nor care that the service to be rendered may not be great. Wordsworth sang: “Small service is true service while it lasts, The daisy, by the shadow that it casts, Protects the lingering dewdrop from the sun.”

As all know who have lived, service to others generates the greatest happiness. He who lives for himself alone, lives miserably. He who lives somewhat for others finds that peace which passeth understanding.

The Ancient Craft gives her sons a liberal education in the difficult art of character building. World activities are founded upon ramifications of character. We travel in a railroad train at dizzying speeds, secure in the belief that the engine is controlled by a man of “character;” sober, reliable, industrious, careful, cautious and able. We never see him; we do not know him personally; but we believe that he could not be where he is, had he not demonstrated character. Business is done on credit, which is only faith in a man’s word. We accept as money a piece of paper with a name on it, certain that the character of the maker of the check and the officials of the bank, will secure to us the money for which the check calls for. We have faith in the character of the doctor, our lawyer and the judge in the court. Character is the foundation of our civilization. Freemasonry offers such opportunities for the development and the increase of the stature of character as can be found nowhere else in like amount.

“Many men build as cathedrals were built, the part nearest the ground finished first; but that part which soars towards heaven, the turrets and spires, forever incomplete.” Beecher’s simile need not apply to Freemasonry; he who does not finish his turret and his spire of character in the Fraternity fails because he will not, not because he cannot.

To the Freemason the Lodge offers the gift of intelligent patriotism. Not the “one hundred per

cent American, America first and the devil take the hindmost” patriotism of the demagogue, but the real patriotism of genuine love of country, which comes to those who genuinely try to make their country lovable. The history of Freemasonry in this nation is inextricably intermingled with the stirring events and the deathless deeds of literally hundreds of Masonic patriots without whose devotion the United States might not have been a nation. Paul Revere, Warren, Washington, Marshall, Jefferson, Lafayette and Franklin - pages might be filled with immortal names of great men in our history who have known and loved and used the Ancient Craft for the betterment of the nation.

“For how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds
For the ashes of his fathers
And the Temples of his Gods?”

It is this patriotism which Freemasonry teaches; we may not keep the bridge with old Horatius, but in the Lodge we can and do learn to reverence the “ashes of our fathers” and the Temples of our liberties and our traditions.

Freemasonry gives to her sons the gentle gift of fellowship. Our fiends are those we know well, who love us, perhaps, as much because of our faults as in spite of them. Those with whom we fellowship we may see only once, and yet, because of our common bond, we know them as men who might become friends, did opportunity offer; it is to be hoped that they felt thus of us. The spirit of fellowship in a Lodge cannot elsewhere be found. We come to the tiled door a stranger; when passed within we are not among strangers, but brethren. William Morris phrased it thus:

“Forsooth, brethren, fellowship is heaven and lack of fellowship is hell; fellowship is life and lack of fellowship is death; and the deeds that ye do upon earth, it is for fellowship’s sake that ye do them.”

Freemasonry stops not with fellowship. She gives the gracious gift of the most favorable opportunity to make friends which can come to any man.

“If a man does not make new acquaintances as he advances through life he will soon find himself left alone. A man, Sir, should keep his friendships in constant repair.”

Samuel Johnson’s philosophy might have been written of his who finds the Lodge the cradle of new

friendships. The initiate is vouched for to his fellows. This is a “man,” so the committee has said. He is worthy. He is well qualified. His reputation suffers not under the tongues of his friends. He is honest, upright, of good character. What the committee has said of him to the Lodge which accepts him, other committees and the Lodge have said of every member the newly-made brother will greet. Surely no happier beginning to friendships could be imagined. The young Master Mason who cannot find in his Lodge the men who will later become the friends of his heart - surely is he fortunate in his choice of a Lodge!

The Lodge gives the gentle gift of innocent recreation to her sons. The initiate will find here a conception of “good time” quite different from that of the world without. The “good time” of a Lodge smoker, banquet, informal picnic, entertainment, ladies’ night, concert, Masonic talk or what-have-you; has a charm all its own quite distinct from similar functions arranged by other bodies. “Pleasure the servant. Virtue looking on,” wrote rare Ben Johnson, almost as if he had learned the phrase in the pleasures of refreshment in Lodge. The “camaraderie” of the social hour of the Lodge cannot be equaled elsewhere. Within these portals where men meet upon the level and part upon the square, the “good time” is not confused by questions of “who is he?” or “what does he do?” Men enjoy Lodge functions not only because of the “innocent mirth” which the Old Charges enjoin, but because of the freedom and happiness; one must accept all others in the Lodge at face value.

A great gift of the Fraternity is that of home in a strange place.

That “The Mason is never homesick” is a truism. In practically any town in the land - aye, in thousands of towns the world over - are Freemasons and Freemason’s Lodges. Come to any Lodge a stranger and knock on the door. If the knocker can prove that he is a member a royal welcome awaits, warming to the heart, easing the pain of loneliness, comforting to him who is far from those he loves and knows. One thinks naturally of Byron’s:

“Tis sweet to know there is an eye will mark our coming,
And will look brighter when we come.”

and Shakespeare’s:

“His worth is warrant for his welcome.” Nor is this “home for the homeless” all sentiment.

Many a Mason has been stranded in a strange

place - and been speeded to his destination by brotherly hands. Many a man in a town he does not know has entered it a stranger and departed with new friends upon his list. The Mystic Tie is a "real" tie, too strong for breaking, be the strain put upon it never so great.

A gift of the Fraternity which it is good to take from the box of memory and muse upon is that of kinship with the old. To do as all good brothers and fellows have done who have passed this tiled door before is inspiring to all but the most practical minded. To kneel where George Washington knelt; to take the obligation which was sacred to Benjamin Franklin; to sit, in fancy, with the first Grand Master in London; to be initiated with Elias Ashmole; to look over the shoulder of the unknown priest whose careful penmanship lives to this day on our Regius poem; to gather with Athelstan and the great Assembly in York a thousand years ago - to go back, back, and still further back, through the Roman Collegia, Ancient Mystery, into Egypt and perhaps the very birth of the legend of Isis and Osiris - be spiritually one of a long line of brethren who have knelt at this Altar, taken these vows, lived this life and loved these teachings - that is a gift all Freemasons may have for the taking, and which none take but value.

"O, there are Voices in the Past
Links of a broken chain;
Wings that can bear me back to times
Which cannot come again;
May God forbid that I should lose
The echoes that remain." (Proctor)

A companion gift is the kinship with the present day.

More than three million men in this nation are now living who have taken the Masonic obligations, and who hail the new brother, as he may hail them, with that dearest of titles given by man to men - "Brother!" These three million - more than four millions in the world - will look upon the work you may do in the Lodge as important. Anciently it was written "Laborare est orare" - to labor is to pray.

He who accepts the responsibilities of Masonic membership will learn to pray by unselfish labor; labor on committees, labor on fellowcraft teams, perhaps labor in conferring degrees. Labors of love, all, but all bringing their own reward. Not the least of her gifts is this opportunity the Ancient Craft

puts before her sons, that they may work for the common good.

One of Freemasonry's most precious gifts to those who seek her light is her emphasis on religion. Freemasonry is not a religion - Freemasonry is "religion," which, without the qualifying article, is quite a different matter. A Religion is a method or mode of worship of God as conceived in that system. "Religion", with no qualifying article, is knowledge of, obedience to, dependence on and utter belief in Deity. The Freemason may worship any God he pleases, and name as he will; God, Jehovah, Allah, Buddha, Christ, Primordial Urge or Great First Cause. Freemasonry's term for Deity is "The Great Architect of the Universe," but she cares no whit what her sons may call Him in their prayers.

For a thousand reasons men may wish to "become" Freemasons, but the great reason why men "remain" Freemasons, devoted to the principles and teachings of the Order, is vitally concerned with this non-doctrinal, non-sectarian, non-dogmatic teaching of religious truths which neither conflict nor interfere with the tenets and practices of any religion; nay, which buttress and uphold the teachings of the Church.

All men at heart are religious and desire kinship and communication with a Supreme Power. Many men do not phrase this need to themselves; many never think of it. Yet it is within all, as truly as hunger and thirst for material food and drink are present. Freemasonry satisfies this hunger in men who cannot, or do not, appease it in church; Freemasonry adds to the hunger, and therefore to the satisfaction, of men who "do" find in the church the gratification of a spiritual need the stronger that they may not put it into words.

In a Lodge emphasis is everywhere upon an Unseen Presence. Lodges are erected to God. Freemasons open and close Lodges with Prayer. A candidate receives the benefit of Lodge prayer and later must pray for himself. The number three is everywhere in Lodge - three degrees, three stations, three principal officers, three Great Lights, three Lesser Lights, three steps on the Master's Carpet, three pillars . . . and three is the numerical equivalent of the triangle, most ancient symbol of Deity. The initiate may learn of this as he will; he cannot escape the implications of the Letter "G" whether he will or no. As millions have learned

before him, he will come to the conviction that there is a "Winding Stair," which "does" lead to a "real" Middle Chamber the Letter in the East stands for a "reality," to know and understand which is the end and aim of life.

The young man petitions a Lodge, is passed by the committee, receives a favorable ballot of his fellows, and lives thereafter with the proud privilege of wearing a Masonic apron and saying to those who ask, "I am a Master Mason." For a little space he walks forward up the hill; then he turns his steps downward on the sunny side, facing the western sun. At long last the shadows fall and he steps into the sunlight beyond the horizon.

Then he has that precious heritage which is for all Masons, and only for Master Masons - to be laid to rest with the tears of his brethren, the white apron of initiation the only decoration on his bier, the solemn words of the comforting Masonic service in the ears of his relatives and friends, and, at the end, peace under the Sprig of Acacia of immortal hope. Surely this is not least among the gifts which the gentle Craft has for those who love her and whom she loves.

The greatest gift? It is, of course, a matter of opinion. To some it will be one, to others another of those here so slightly sketched.

Sadly sang the great Persian poet:

"There was a Door to which I found no key
There was a Veil through which I might not see;
Some little talk awhile of Me and Thee
There was - and then no more of Me and Thee."

To many, her greatest gift is this; Freemasonry gives to her sons a Key. Many never fit it to the door. Others turn the Key, but never push the portal wide. Some there are who swing the gate on its hinges to enter the "foreign countries" of Freemasonry, there to wander and to ponder, to study, and to learn, to delve and to dig into the foundations, the symbolism, the history, the inner meaning of the old, old society. For these are the gifts transcending gold and frankincense and myrrh; gifts of spiritual satisfaction, of knowledge gained, of understanding won.

For many pleasures of this life man has invented names;; the glory of music, the loveliness of painting, the beauty of sculpture, the satisfactions of the body, the happiness of unselfishness. For others, more ethereal, no words have yet been coined. But the Key leads to the door, beyond which stretches

the path to knowledge of those unknown, unnamed joys which only the possessors understand. In Freemasonry, as in the Great Light, it is said:

"Ask and ye shall receive; Seek and ye shall find;
Knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

He who asks, seeks and knocks, in Freemasonry will receive gifts as beautiful as they are indescribable, as desirable as they are imponderable. And here the word of those older and wiser in the Craft, since it is not given to any man to catalog in words that which no words may limn.

Say to the you man who asks you what he will find in Freemasonry; "You will receive what you expect and all you expect." Say to him:

"If you expect little and give much, you will receive far more than tongue may tell." Finally, say unto him: "Ask of Freemasonry what you will - and it shall be given to you, even the gifts of the Magi. But ask of her nothing, unless you come with a heart open first to give."

"FOR THAT, AND THAT ONLY, IS BROTHERHOOD!"



PRESENTATION TO WENTWORTH LODGE BY CHARITY LODGE

The December 4th Regular Meeting of Wentworth Lodge No. 108 held a presentation ceremony which witnessed Charity Lodge No. 69 of Mahone Bay donate its' "Working Tools" to Wentworth Lodge No. 108 of Dartmouth.

As this was the Annual Christmas Wine and Cheese Party with our Ladies, they were present in the Lodge Room for this event.

Charity Lodge No. 69 A.F.&A.M. passed into darkness on December 31st, 2014.

Included in the ceremony were V.W. Bro. Calvin Myra, R.W. Bro. Tom Rogers, Grand Archivist, and Worshipful Master of Wentworth Lodge No. 108, W. Bro. Chuck McLellan.

The following is the speech given at the ceremony by V.W. Bro. Calvin Myra, Past Master of Charity Lodge No.69, a 50 year Mason, and now affiliated with Wentworth Lodge No.108.

"Worshipful Master, Grand Lodge Officers, Brothers and Ladies. My name is Cal Myra and I became a member of Charity Lodge No. 69, Mahone Bay, in 1961, 53 years ago and was Master in 1969. Some brief remarks about Charity Lodge. It is located in Mahone Bay, Lunenburg County, N.S. and received its' Charter in 1874, 140 years ago. Over time, it became a very old but comfortable lodge to belong to. The lodge room is full of antiques and has very beautiful Masonic murals painted on the interior walls. Charity Lodge No.69 will close its' doors this December 31, 2014 and pass into darkness.

On behalf of Worshipful Master Kevin Ernst, myself Cal Myra, all Brothers of Charity Lodge No. 69, Mahone Bay, and Grand Archivist, R.W. Bro. Tom Rogers, we are happy to present the 'Working Tools'



Members of Wentworth Lodge # 108 Dartmouth, Nova Scotia receiving the Working Tools from Charity Lodge # 69



Grand Masters Barbeque

Paul Frank, The Grand Master of Masons Of The Province Of Nova Scotia cordially invites you to the Grand Masters Barbeque.

Where - Sahib Shrine Center Sarasota Florida

When – March 31, 2015 6 pm for 7

Cost - \$ 22.50 US

Dress - Smart casual

This will be a casual and fun event with entertainment and a great meal. Buffet including BBQ Chicken/St Louis style BBQ pork ribs or pulled pork, cole slaw, baked beans, corn, rolls, iced tea/coffee and dessert. It's a great chance to reconnect with your Nova Scotia brothers when you are so far from home.

Open to Masons, their ladies and friends of Masons.

For tickets

Paul Frank 902 225 4675 plfrank@eastlink.ca

Mike Schmid 902 877 8001 mike@reflectionscajaret.com

Ron MacDonald 941 505 7259 rd_macdonald@yahoo.com

Harry Rhyno Florida Number? herhyno@yahoo.ca



POT OF INCENSE

Just when the pot of incense became an emblem of the third section of the Sublime Degree can not be stated with certainty. It is, apparently, and American invention or addition; both McKensie and Kenning say that it is not used in the English work. The Monitor of Thomas Smith Webb, who worked such ingenious and cunning changes in the Prestonian work, gives the commonly accepted wording:

“The Pot of Incense is an emblem of a pure heart; this is always an acceptable sacrifice to the Deity; and as this glows with fervent heat, so should our hearts continually glow with gratitude to the great and beneficent author of our existence for the manifold blessings and comforts we enjoy.”

Jeremy Cross prints it among the delightfully quaint illustrations in the “True Masonic Chart” - illustrations which were from the not altogether uninspired pencil of one Amos Doolittle, of New Haven. However the Pot of Incense came into American rituals, it is present in nearly all, and in substantially the same form, both pictorially and monetarily. If the incense has no great antiquity in the Masonic system, its use dates from the earliest, and clings to it from later, Biblical times, and in Egypt and India it has an even greater antiquity.

In the very early days, as chronicled in the Bible, incense was associated more with idolatry than with true worship; for instance:

Because they have forsaken men and have burned incense unto other Gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and shall not be quenched. (II Chronicles, 25-34). To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me. (Jeremiah 6-20). Moreover I will cause to cease in Moab, saith the Lord, him that offereth in the high places, and him that burneth incense to his Gods. (Jeremiah 35-48).

However, when the worship of JHVH (Which we call Jehova) was thoroughly established, burning incense changed from a heathenish, idolatrous custom to a great respectability and a place in the Holy of Holies. Leviticus 12-16, 13 sounds this keynote:

And he take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil:

And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he dieth not.

Later, incense was associated with wealth and luxurious living, as in the Song of Solomon:

Who is it that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all the powders of the merchant? (3-6)/ Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense. (406). Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon. Spikenard and saffron; caslamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices. (4-14). In ancient Egypt incense was much used; sculptures and monuments of remote dynasties bear testimony to its popularity. Many a Pharaoh is depicted with censor in one hand, the other casting into it the oastils or osselets of incense. In embalming the Egyptians used all the various gums and spices “except” frankincense, which was set apart and especially consecrated to the worship of the Gods. In India incense has always been a part of the worship of the thousands of Gods and Goddesses of that strange land. Buddhism has continued its use to this day as a part of the ceremonies of worship - as, indeed, have some Christian churches - and in Nepal, Tibet, Ceylon, Burma, China and Japan it is a commonplace in many temples. The list of materials which can be incorporated into incense is very long; the incense of the Bible is of more than one variety, there being a distinction between incense and frankincense, although a casual reading of these two terms in many Biblical references makes them seem to be any sacrificial smoke of a pleasant odor. Ordinarily it was made of various vegetable substances of high pungency; opobalsamun, onycha, galbanum and sometimes pure frankincense also, mixed in equal proportion with

some salt. Frankincense, a rare gum, is often coupled with myrrh as an expensive and therefore highly admiring and complimentary gift; recall the Wise Men before the infant Jesus:

“And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his Mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they opened their treasures, they presented him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. (Matthew 2-11).” Where or how the use of incense arose, of course is a sealed mystery as far as evidence goes. Modern science, however, enables a reasonable guess to be made.

Of the five senses, smell is the most closely associated with memory and mood. To neither sight nor sound does the emotional part of personality respond as it does to odor. The scent of certain flowers so surely spells grief to many that they will leave a room in which tube roses or lilies fill the air with scent. Certain odors are so intimately identified with certain experiences that they become for all time pleasant, or the reverse; few who have smelled ether or iodoform from personal experience in hospitals enjoy these, in themselves not unpleasant smells; any man who has loved outdoor life and camping cannot smell wood smoke without being homesick for the streams and fields; he who made love to his lady in lilac time is always sentimental when he again sniffs that perfume, and the high church votary is uplifted by the smell of incense. In the ceremonials of ancient Israel doubtless the first use of incense was protections against unpleasant odors associated with the slaughtering of cattle and scorching of flesh in the burnt offering. At first, but an insurance against discomfort, incense speedily became associated with religious rites. Today men neither kill nor offer flesh at an altar, but only the perfume of “frankincense and myrrh.”

The Masonic pot of incense is intimately associated with prayer, but its symbolic significance is not a Masonic invention. Psalms 141-2 reads: “Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.” Revelations 8-3 reads: “And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.” The association of a sweet smell in the

air, which scattered after it gave pleasure with prayers to an Unseen Presence is easy to understand, even that it arose in primitive minds. Prayer was offered and rose on high - so its utterers hoped. It was never seen of men. It returned not. Its very giving gave pleasure. These statements are as true of burning incense as of prayer. What is less obvious, although the ritual is plain enough on the subject, is that it is not only incense, but a “pot” which is the Masonic symbol. If the sweet savor of incense is like unto a prayer, so is the pot from which it comes like unto the human heart which prays.

Now prayer may come from an impure as well as from a pure heart. But incense is invariably sweet in smell, and so the pot from which it comes is an emblem of a heart pure, sweet and unsullied. Just what “purity” is as applied to a heart is a moot question. Very unfortunately the word “pure” has been debased - the word is used advisedly - in certain dogmas to mean “ignorant” - as a “pure” young girl; a “pure” woman. According to this definition a female may be a virago, a cheat, a liar, slander her neighbors, steal, even commit a murder; but, if she is a virgin, she is “pure.” Masonically, the word means nothing of the kind. In 1921 M.W. George H. Dern, Past Grand Master of Utah (Now Secretary of War) contributed some thoughts on “Monitorial Symbolism of the Third Degree and Its Application to Everyday Life” to columns of “The Builder.” Originally written for the Committee on Masonic Education of the Grand Lodge of Utah, these paragraphs were at once so practical and so pungent that the (then) great Masonic Journal gave them wider circulation.

Quoting the Ritual about the Pot of Incense, M.W. Brother Dern said:

“A sentiment so lofty is not easily applied to the practical, prosaic events of a busy day. To have a pure heart is to be true to yourself, true to your best ideals, and honest with your thoughts. “To Thine Own Self Be True. . . Thou Canst Not Then Be False To Any Man.” Living a life of deceit and double-dealing never made anyone happy. Riches or pleasures acquired in that way bring only remorse, and eventually the soul cries out in anguish for that peace of mind which is man’s most precious possession, and which is the companion of a pure heart.

“Purity of heart means conscientiousness, and that means sincerity. Without sincerity there can be no real character. But sincerity alone is not enough. There must go with it a proper degree of intelligence and love of one’s fellows. For example, a man may believe that the emotion of pity and the desire to relieve the necessities of others is intrinsically noble and elevating, and he indulges in indiscriminate giving, without realizing the evil consequences, in the way of fraud, laziness and inefficiency and habitual dependence that his ill considered acts produce upon those whom he intends to benefit. Again, a man may be perfectly sincere in talking about the shortcomings of another, and he may justify himself by saying that he is telling nothing but the truth. But, merely because they are true is no reason why unpleasant and harmful things should be told. To destroy a reputation is no way to aid a brother who has erred. Better far overlook his mistakes, and extend him a helping hand.

“Without multiplying examples, let it be understood that the truly conscientious man must not simply be sincere, but he must have high ideals and standards, and moreover, he must not be satisfied with those standards. Rather he must revise them from time to time, and that means self-examination, to see if he possesses the love and courage that must go with sincerity in order to make progress in building character. For in this direction again there must be constant progress. To be content with what we have accomplished is fatal. As James A. Garfield once said, “I must do something to keep my thoughts fresh and growing. I dread nothing so much as falling into a rut and feeling myself becoming a fossil.” Many words in the ritual have changed meanings since they were first used. The Masonic term “profane,” for instance, originally meant “without the temple” - one not initiated, not of the craft. Today it means blasphemous, which is no part of the Masonic definition of the word. “Sacrifice” in our Monitor seems to come under this classification.

In the Old Testament, a sacrifice before the altar was the offering of something - burned flesh, burning incense, pure oil or wine - which involved the sacrificer giving something valuable to him; the sacrifice was an evidence before all men that the

sacrificer valued his kinship with the Most High more than his possession of that which he offered.

In our ritual the word has lost this significance. The pot of incense as an emblem of a pure heart “which is always an acceptable sacrifice to the Deity” can hardly connote the idea that a Mason desires to keep his “pure heart” for himself, but because of love of God is willing to give it up. Rather does it denote that he who gives up worldly pleasures, mundane ideas and selfish cravings which may interfere with “purity of life and conduct” as set forth in other parts of the ritual, does that which is acceptable to the Great Architect.

Masonically, “pure” seems to mean honest, sincere, genuine, real, without pretense and “sacrifice” to denote that which is pleasing to the most high.

So read, the Masonic pot of incense becomes an integral part of the philosophy of Freemasonry, and not a mere moral interjection in the emblems of the third degree. For all of the magnificent body of teaching which is self revealed, half concealed in the symbolism of Freemasonry, nothing stands out more plainly, or calls with a louder voice, than her insistence on these simple yet profound virtues of the human heart lumped together in one phrase as “a man of higher character” . . . in other words, one with a “pure heart,” “pure” meaning undefiled by the faults and frailties of so many of the children of men.

Author Unknown



IN AND AROUND THE JURISDICTION

A 50 year jewel was presented to Bro William Stephen MacDonald at the Nov. 2014 meeting of John Albro Lodge. The presentation was made by RW Deputy Grand Master, Peter Ponsford and Past Grand Master Owen Walton.



*A table was set up in the lodge for everyone to display any pictures, medals, or anything of remembrance from a family member. A remembrance ceremony was held during the meeting to honour all those who have striven to protect the freedoms we enjoy. WM Donnie Doucette read the names of some brothers from John Albro Lodge to honour their memory. Past Grand Master George Grant read the iconic poem 'In Flanders Fields' On the table were a few items commemorating the following: A photo of Brother Ray Gray Secretary Emeritus, the apron of Brother Gerald Settle's father and the medals and photos of W.Bro. Donnie Doucette's father.
We Will Always Remember their Sacrifices...*



A group photo taken after Annapolis Royal Lodge No. 33 was closed in peace and harmony on November 5, 2014. 'Happy to meet. Sorry to part. Happy to meet again.'



The Cumberland District Meeting took place at Widow's Son Lodge No.48 in River Philip. RWBro. Bill Merriam, DDGM, conducted the meeting which was attended by the MWTGM, MWBro. Paul Frank, and the DGM, RWBro. Peter Ponsford.



VW Bro Hiram Carver received 60 yr bar and his son Bro. Ernest Carver (above) received the Meritorious Service Award at Hillcrest Lodge's (#93) always very successful annual Ladies Night. TMWTGM was in attendance to make the presentations.





On the first day of December five brothers from Alexandra Lodge #87 traveled to Pugwash to present the Traveling Gavel to Acadia Lodge #13. There were enough brothers to make this an official lodge visit as well. Acadia Lodge was also visited by the GM, MW Bro. Paul Frank, and his GDofC, RW Bro. Kenneth Simmons, who had driven up from Halifax for an unofficial visit. After the lodge conducted its regular business which included their annual election of officers, the secretary of Alexandra, VW Bro. Michael Gaul, presented the Gavel to VW Bro. Wayne Arsenault, secretary of Acadia Lodge. The Masonic Education, which is part of the Traveling Gavel presentation, was given by RW Bro. Jack Boyd. He spoke on the significance of the "white apron".



Valley Lodge No. 90 held their Christmas and Installation Dinner in December; great meal and great fellowship.





Bro. David Nicks acted as Santa at the children's Christmas Party at Freemason's Hall in Halifax. Clowns and presents made it a great time for the children.



King Edward Lodge No.86 raised their newest MM on December 13th. VW Bro. Scott McNairn, Master of King Edward, Bro. Dale Langille and RW Bro. Bill Merriam, DDGM.



A great Christmas party at Eureka Lodge No.42

Queens Lodge No.34 celebrate 150 years.

The head table at the Queens #34 150th anniversary held the evening of Dec 2nd.



RW Bro Robert Crawford DDGM (Ant-Guys) pays Queens #34 an official visit.



Jr Gr warden RW Bro John M. Cody at the altar.



RW Bro Crawford welcomed at the East by W Bro Russ Mayne Master of Queens 34

Left to right: RW Bro Ed Grant PDDGM Antigonish - Guysborough; Alex Grant, and his father V.W Bro Darrel Grant. It is rumoured that a petition from the man in the middle will be read soon at Eastern Light 72. The Grant family have a long history with Eastern Light 72 and the former masonic lodge that operated in Canso until 1989.





Solomon Lodge 46 after lodge had closed. The occasion was the official visit of Rt WBro Louis Ibasz DDGM for Cape Breton North-South. The meeting was proceeded by a turkey dinner put on by the members of Solomon 46 and enjoyed by all who pulled up a chair to the feast. S.W. Waddie Long lovingly prepared the bird and the gravey, the vegetables were cooked to perfection by the Secretary, S.D. and Tyler Pro Tem. Dessert which was a genuine German Black Forest cake was supplied by the Mrs. Sybille Buschmann wife of W.M. Peter Buschmann. Not a crumb remained... Its been the habit of Solomon Lodge to put on a meal about an hour and a half before lodge opens which provides ample time to eat and engage in the fellowship that our craft is noted for.

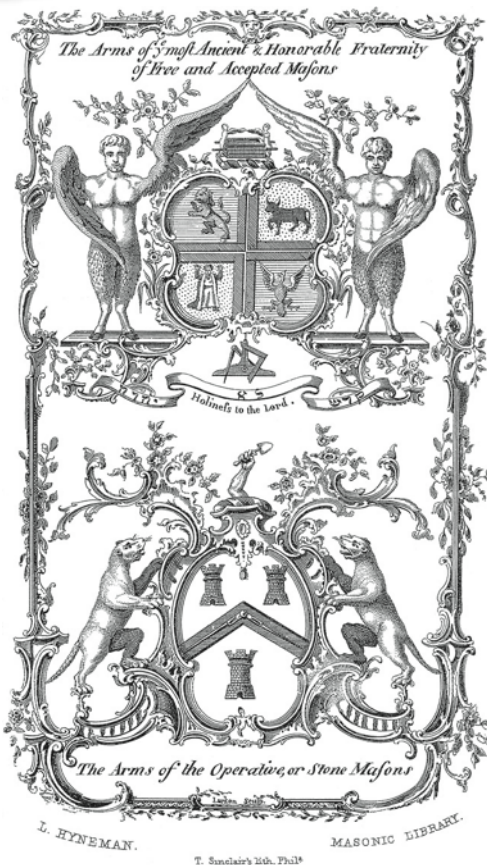


RWBro. Sean P. Reid of Temple 57 at Mulgrave proudly shows off his PDDGM's Jewel which had just been presented to him by V.Wor Bro Darrell Grant DGDC at Temple 57's December Communication.



The Antigonish Guysborough Masonic Dist Travelling Gavel is resented to VWBro Mike Nicholson Secretary of Temple 57 at Mulgrave by VWBro Darrell Grant of Eastern Light 72 and looking on is WBro Wayne Simpson Master of Eastern Light 72 in Gysborough. several of the brothers of Temple 57 had travelled to Guysborough to claim the gavel. The rules state it must lie on the secretaries desk for 28 days then another lodge in the district may claim it by visiting Temple 57 on a regular stated meeting night with 3 or more brothers.

The members of Loge la France attended the Feast of St. John Dinner at the Inn on the Lake in Halifax. This is the twelfth anniversary of the dinner which is held for members, wives and guests. As usual a great night was had buy all in attendance.



**The Arms of ye most Ancient & Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons
and below
The Arms of the Operative, or Stone Masons**

The Antient's Arms, as published in Ahiman Rezon, their Book of Constitutions, a design incorporating mainly "a man, a lion, an ox and an eagle", and based directly on the vision of Ezekial, I, 5-10

"Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings.

And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot: and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass.

And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings.

Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward.

As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle."

THE GREAT LIGHT IN MASONRY

From
“The Soul of the Craft”

What is the Great Light in Masonry? The Holy Bible, open upon the Altar for all to read - open for each to interpret for himself? No, though the wise old Book does bring the radiance of revelation to guide us in the dim country of this world, at once a lamp to our feet and warmth to our hearts which, if a man follows it faithfully, he will not lose his way in the Valley of Illusion.

The Square, by which we are taught our duty to our fellow men in the fellowships and conflicts of life - to do justly and show mercy and build our lives on the laws of God? No, though by the little try-square of moral right which each carries in his bosom we are taught to walk uprightly, and work righteously, and speak the truth in our heart.

The Compasses, by which we are shown our duty to ourselves in life, how each must live alone - how each must circumscribe his passions and keep his desires within due bounds; and that he that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city? No, though if a man fail of self-knowledge, self-reverence and self-control, he fails utterly, and his life ends in a rubbish heap.

The great Light in Masonry is the soul of all these symbols, the sum of the truths they teach, builded into a character of moral strength, spiritual beauty, and human service; a glad, faithful, heroic, gentle soul - your soul and mine - more than any temple, a sanctuary of faith, a shrine of love, an altar of pity, pity and unconquerable hope.

“LET THE LIGHT SO SHINE.”

Joseph Fort Newton.

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Submissions for upcoming editions can be sent either through the Grand Lodge website or can be sent to the Grand Secretary:

Grand Lodge of Nova Scotia
167 Coronation Avenue
Halifax, NS, Canada B3N 2N2.

Please send written submissions as text files.